HE gypsy couple is back home in Pune. In one piece, as it were. Manas Dewan, 43, and his wife Anuradha, travelled across

Europe covering a whopping 20,000 km across 18 countries in a span of 100 days on their customised Ducati Scrambler. "We explored a little more of this beautiful planet, experienced nature and elements in the raw, and found bonds of love and friendship with strangers who

opened their homes, hearts and

lives," say the Dewans. The couple rode across Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Liechtenstein, and the Czech Republic, before turning south to Italy and exploring the Balkan nations as well as Greece and Turkey. After fixing six sets of travel

When world becomes your backyard nia, they were in for quite a warm



documents, the couple shipped their motorbike into the port city of Valencia, Spain. But when they reached Europe in the beginning of June, they found their bike stuck in customs. "We nearly gave up hope, but the local Ducati dealer heard our story and offered us a bike from his showroom to complete our dream trip," Manas narrated. But luckily, things were sorted out at the customs and the dealer's large-hearted gesture became the first of the many

treasured memories of the journey.

Their adventure continued throughout their route: they braved forest fires in Portugal, passed thunderstorms and freezing weather in France and braved temperatures as high as 55 degrees in the Balkans. Friends cautioned them about the risks of travelling through Bosnia and Herzegovina, as it was a country still recovering from a war in the '90s. "But the border control officers were incredibly warm and welcoming. They took pictures with us, and told us of places to visit. Bosnia, and most of eastern Europe was breathtaking," the couple recalled. In Alba-

welcome. "We went to a tiny village and to our surprise, most people knew India, our leaders, and politics, mainly through Indian soaps dubbed in their language ... they opened

radha said. During their 100 days on the road, the duo had 100 strange people opening up their heart. "We shared homes and meals with all kinds of people. Our friends helped us learn lessons from the book of life," Manas said.

their homes and hearts to us," Anu-

Michael Gonsalves

Ending on a high

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