



Q&A

NAME

Ed Droste

AGE

34

BORN IN

Cambridge, Massachusetts

RESIDES IN

Los Angeles, California

JOB DESCRIPTION

Singer, songwriter, and founder of the U.S. indie rock band Grizzly Bear

TIME SPENT ON THE ROAD

6 to 7 months per year while on tour

PLACES VISITED IN THE LAST YEAR

Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Scotland, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, and 18 states in the U.S.

INDIE TRAVELER

BY SERENA RENNER

Q. When you're not touring with your band, Grizzly Bear, you still like to travel. How do you fit it in?

A. It's easiest to do bookend trips, connected to a first or last tour stop. I was able to extend my time in Australia and do some exploring there and in the New Zealand countryside. I also took a trip to Burma; it was just something I planned with my husband and some friends. We thought we had to go to Burma before it has high-rise hotels everywhere. And it was amazing.

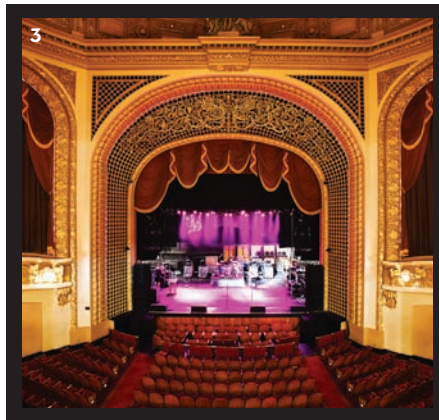
The band has been around the world several times since releasing its fourth album, *Shields*, last September. Do you have a favorite memory from the tour so far?

There are certain audiences that stand out. We recently toured South America and Mexico for the first time, and the crowds were so excited. There's a unique Latin spirit where people break out into song *between* songs, like they're cheering you on at a soccer game. The energy that the Brazilians gave in

São Paulo was through the roof, maybe unprecedented. There was this wild buzz in the room that doesn't exist in most places.

How does being in a band give you unique access to a place?

In Burma, a guy who lived in Yangon got in touch through Instagram. He managed a local Burmese indie band and wanted to show us around and have us meet the group. So we met these guys and listened to their music. They took us to their favorite



ED DROSTE'S FAVORITE MUSIC VENUES AROUND THE WORLD

1. THE BOWERY BALLROOM New York City

"Nothing beats the Bowery. We've probably played here more than anywhere else in the world. It's a nostalgic concert hall for us, and one of the better places to see live music in New York. I often opt out of bigger venues in the city, but if a band I like is playing here, I usually go." boweryballroom.com

2. O2 ACADEMY BRIXTON London

"One of my favorite shows of last fall was at the O2 Academy Brixton, which packs in nearly 5,000 people. I thought a huge, sold-out place would make us seem miles from the crowd, but the audience was so fun that it felt intimate. It was my birthday, and they sang 'Happy Birthday' to me in unison." o2academybrixton.co.uk

3. THE PABST THEATER Milwaukee

"The Pabst is a beautiful seated theater that was modeled after the grand 19th-century European opera houses. It has excellent acoustics, and the staff is wonderful. They can book you as a small or big band, since the large space can be scaled down for smaller shows. We've never played anywhere else in Milwaukee." pabsttheater.org

4. WHELAN'S Dublin

"Irish audiences are crazy in the best way. Whelan's holds about 450 people and is one of my favorite venues; I would love to play there four nights in a row. It's gorgeous, with a rustic wood and stone interior, and the attendees love being there as much as the band does." whelanslive.com

5. LA CIGALE Paris

"Once, our bus broke down in Belgium, and we arrived late to La Cigale. When we pulled up, the line was around the block. Everyone rooted for us as we did the fastest setup in history. The concert hall always has great energy and sound, but that night, the anticipation from the crowd was unmatched." lacigale.fr

6. THE GREEK THEATRE Los Angeles

"The Greek has the sound quality of an indoor space, yet it's set in the foothills of the Santa Monica mountains. The theater holds close to 6,000 people but still feels small. I think it's one of the best venues in Los Angeles, which, in my opinion, has the best in the country—so that's saying something." greektheatrela.com

restaurants and showed us a side of Yangon that most visitors would never be able to see. It was a case of music totally giving us access to the people.

You are very active on Instagram when you travel—you have posted more than 1,300 photographs and have over 380,000 followers. Is that public relations or personal? For me, it's a road diary, with geotags and snapshots that help me remember moments from my sometimes insane travels. That's not to mention the people I've met all over the world by interacting with them through the app. When I'm traveling, I'll hang out with people I wouldn't necessarily be socializing with at home. I end up having the best time, and it's eye-opening.

When you're not performing, how does music play into your travels? I don't bring music with me to listen to while I'm traveling. My attention is focused on the street life and culture—the food, the people, and maybe the local music. The last thing I want to do is shut all that out. I don't need to put on my headphones and play my most recent favorite indie rock album.

How does travel influence your songwriting or recording process? I find that I work better when I'm not in the giant city where I live. Writing or recording usually involves domestic travel, where we try to get closer to nature. [When Grizzly Bear was based in Brooklyn], we'd go to Long Island or Cape Cod. Our drummer, Christopher Bear, and I once spent a month in Todos Santos, Mexico, working on music. We got to know the town's laid-back vibe and the three taco stands near our place. We didn't feel like we were missing out on something when we spent all day working, but the breaks were really fun. We ate awesome shrimp tacos. **A**