Crowded metropolises, sacred sites, precious rainforests, natural disaster areas, lonely rural roads; these are just some of the landscapes MORGAN PARKER passed through during his recent four-month charitable motorcycle expedition across Australasia.

The epic 25,000km route took the Aussie from Hong Kong – he’s been an expat there for almost seven years – through mainland China, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, East Timor and his native Australia.

Over the course of the expedition, Wheel2Wheel, Parker’s non-profit organisation, raised awareness and provided financial assistance to ten under-recognised charitable organisations in the region.

Expat Living spoke to the philanthropic adventurer shortly after his arrival in Brisbane at the end of the trip.

You’ve literally just hopped off the bike after a 125-day epic. How do you feel?

I have mixed emotions; in some ways I’d like to just keep riding off into the sunset, finding more worthy causes and new horizons to reach. In another sense, I do miss my family and friends. The best word to describe my feeling on completion was “surreal”: I really couldn’t believe I’d finally made it to the finish line.

How did the idea for this trip – and Wheel2Wheel in general – come about?

I was looking for a more strategic way to personally get engaged with philanthropy, then realised I needed to understand what charities want – which is awareness; so I then developed a fun way to package humanitarian story-telling in the overall construct of enduro-motorcycle adventures.

The key objective for Wheel2Wheel is to intermediate between grassroots charitable organisations that we have thoroughly evaluated, and financial donors. We provide these small charities with reach beyond their own capabilities and provide donors with research and validation they simply don’t have time to undertake themselves.

How long did the planning take? Any particular challenges?

It was three years in the planning – the final 18 months full-time for me and part-time for three other people. There were countless challenges in the logistics of the actual journey,
building the online community, and explaining the concept to all.

**What bike did you ride, and what kind of supplementary equipment did you carry?**

A BMW F800GS. I was completely self-sufficient, carrying 175 items in six main bags and panniers, including computing, photographic, communications and camping equipment, spare parts and clothing. The ride was carbon neutral, which we achieved via an environmental group based in Perth that executes reforestation programmes throughout the region.

**Where was the starting line?**

We started in Wyndham Street, Hong Kong, for the first leg up to Yangshao in southern China.

**How close to Singapore did you come?**

Melaka in Malaysia was as close as I got. I then crossed the Straits to Sumatra.
What were some highlights of the trip?
Meeting Nobel Peace Prize Winner and President of Timor-Leste, Mr Jose Ramos-Horta, to discuss Wheel2Wheel and the future of Timor-Leste; successfully completing a 37-hour continuous ride from northern Sumatra to Jakarta; all the charity visits.

You battled with hypothermia, heat exhaustion, and even a head-on collision on the trip. What was the worst moment?
Being taken advantage of by unscrupulous tour operators in Vietnam and Laos!

In what ways did the ride aid the charitable organisations you were supporting?
We not only raised money for them but enabled them to be part of a regional television series, which will hopefully extend their reach to tens of thousands of potential donors globally.

Thinking about future adventures yet?
Yes, Wheel2Wheel II is already in planning for 2013! 🚴‍♂️

To read more about Wheel2Wheel and its plans for future adventures, visit www.wheel2wheel.tv. To donate to one of the worthy causes it supports, visit www.wheel2wheel.tv/ownakm.
Current projects include building a school in Northern Laos with Child's Dream, the construction of a Moon Bear Education Centre in Vietnam with Animals Asia, the financing of a Legal Aid Fund with Women's Aid Organisation in Malaysia, and supporting GECKO to develop an online environmental education platform targeted at Chinese students.