

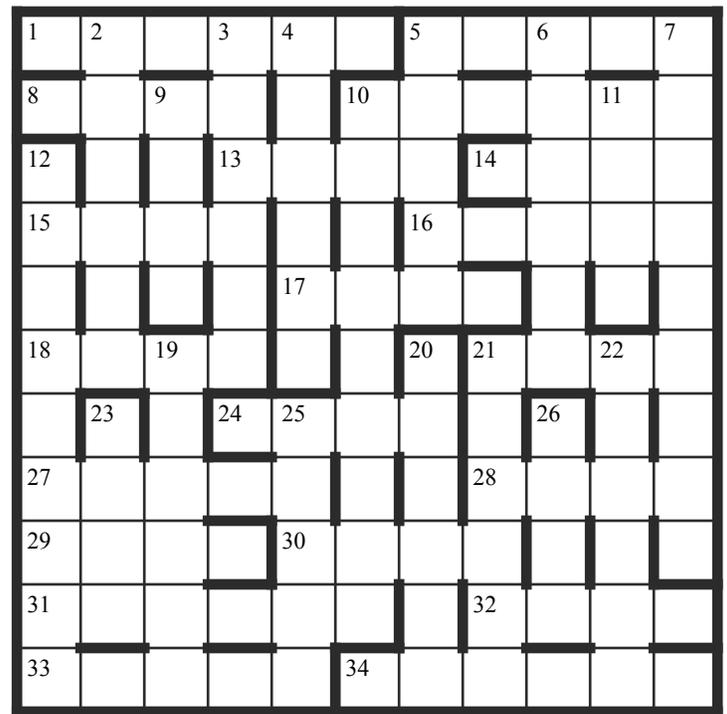
Earthly Travels by Ucaoimhu

In honor of my 20th journey across the earth to the ACPT, this cryptic incorporates a special item. Specifically:

(1) All but four Down answers must be altered before entry by adding one of four one-or-two-letter sequences; altered entries will include two hyphenated words and a cheese. The wordplay in each Across clue yields a letter sequence that either (a) is missing one letter, or (b) has one extra character (not always one letter); the (a) letters, and separately the (b) characters, each in clue order, will each tell you (in different notation) what all the one-or-two-letter sequences added to Down answers collectively constitute.

(2) The four other Down answers (which share a common ending) must be altered before entry by selecting the letters in certain positions, in a certain order (the same in all four cases); one altered entry will be a brand name's slang form. In each Across clue, where (i) the letter from (1a) or (ii) the character from (1b) would be in the n th position from the end of the *answer*, circle the n th letter from the end of the *clue*; the circled letters for (i), and those for (ii), will each describe one pair of altered Down entries, and will also describe how I could have gotten to the ACPT (but did not).

(3) Apply (2)'s alteration to (1a)'s result to see where to put (1a)/(1b)'s result to get the special item. For each Down answer from (1), (1b)'s result assigns a number m to its added one-or-two-letter sequence; circle the corresponding Down



clue's m th word. The circled words will form an ambiguous cryptic clue with two answers, whose enumerations are the number of (1a) Across clues and the number of (1b) Across clues. The former answer will be the special item; the latter answer will be something else reached (this year, at least) by going to the ACPT.

ACROSS

1. Cosmopolitan lass holds bola backward (6)
5. Tampa Bay team's cash (5)
8. Maine's flat-topped high spot (4)
10. Township near a 900-acre city in the northwest (6)
13. Confused sow utters a bovine cry (4)
14. LDL-blocking unit left in avuncular twin (4)
15. Dye social insect with petroleum product (4) [NI3]
16. A spar Roosevelt (by the way) will whirl (5)
17. "Cinders? Gevalt!" is the cry of a mariner (4)
18. Greetings sent west, furthermore, express derision (4)
21. Source of milk, tea, and water drunk by youngster (4)
24. Gambling game is OK with musician Brian (4)
27. Provide more staff to zany Erma (5)
28. Actor Jared of *E.T.* and of *Blocking with Vitality* (4)
29. Thick slice turned blue as well (4)
30. Endlessly vex that guy's groups of geese (4)
31. Don't give me any more attitude about ultimately caving (1'1 4)
32. Before our convention provided a pic (4)
33. What may come after chop is full of fat (5) [NI3]
34. Old St. Nick'd evacuated one of Belgium's ports (6)

DOWN

2. Slanted study about dropping river temperature
3. Mark that you don't see on a flawless paper collection!
4. A Spanish article is too bad
5. Officers won't hold on to red fish
6. Utter oaths as scoundrels get naked
7. No one that's ignoring Henry's rising rank
9. Stranger I locate is debutante, perhaps
10. Felt small pangs linked in a twisty way with ingested guanine
11. Timid Ian itemized, in part, what Moses's wife was
12. Some with heretical beliefs cheer up when amidst cats
19. Person who enchants crop makes one Zulu \$1000
20. The heart is going out of food place on *Alice*
21. Turn around slightly when upset, cross, and drunk
22. Egg near borders of China elevated protein
23. Lagomorph swallowing fifty-eight-legged invertebrate resident of Manhattan
25. Wanting what others have essentially gutted outside of Nevada
26. Incorrectly intone "Alien cake-finishers I'm flipping over" [NI2]