

First and foremost, I hope that all of you are safe and healthy and your families are doing well. This year has brought many changes and surprises to our world and the concepts of quarantine and safer at home have given all of us time to pause and analyze where we are personally, professionally, spiritually and more. For me, I have learned to embrace the slower pace that my business is currently experiencing and put more thought around better ways to communicate and share ideas and stories with my clients.



I have started a new podcast series entitled [“Behind the Travels”](#). I plan to host podcasts with partners and travel suppliers from other countries, client guests and industry guests with the goal of sharing new ideas for travel and learning about other countries. I will be hosting the podcasts on various platforms, including Spotify, and will also publish them on my website. I welcome your participation and listening! In fact, I’ve recorded this newsletter for my more audible friends, and you can find it on the Podcast Page of my website.

Speaking of websites, I have taken advantage of this time to enhance and update my site, making it more informative and interactive. I encourage you to check it periodically, as travel specials and the ability to search for specific types of travel, pricing, and more will be included on the site. My goal is for the website to be your one stop shop for all things travel! Check out the new site: [Ordinary Couple Travels.com](http://Ordinary Couple Travels.com)

## OC Travels Has Grown

As many of you may know, my daughter and best friend, Jennifer, joined my business in 2018 as a Travel Advisor. She specializes in, and is certified in, everything Disney, Universal, Hawaii and family travels. She is a busy mom who understands how to plan successful trips with children and other family members. We are a family run Travel Agency, and as a family, we have always loved to travel. Jennifer and I both have a passion to so share our love of travel with others through helping create magical travel experiences and lasting memories.



Tom McMillen, my husband, is my team photographer and videographer and I love sharing his photos and videos on my website, Facebook page, and Youtube channel. Please enjoy his pictures on the updated website and review the galleries of his amazing shots! Our earth is so beautiful, and I am so happy to have him on the team to capture the memories of the destinations we visit. We are memory makers!!!

[For travel inspiration and ideas please take a look at Tom's photo gallery.](#)

## THE BUBBLE EXPERIENCE...

### Traveling In 2021 and Beyond



The term “social distancing” meant nothing to me a year ago. Now, it is all we hear and there are signs and designated spacing markers everywhere. As I have observed this trend, I realize that this is a good practice that will make for a better experience for my clients during their future travels, especially as they tour iconic museums, sites and landmarks. Creating the personal space or “bubble” experience for my clients will not only bring about greater peace of mind when traveling but will provide the traveler with a much better experience as they enjoy their destination. How do I plan to accomplish this? By doing the following:

- Working with local, in-country partners (small businesses!) to arrange personal guides in cities and destinations.
- Arranging private transfers and drivers as much as is practical and available to avoid public transportation
- Arranging small and/or private tours for museums, iconic sites, and more
- Designing more group travel experiences with groups that come together organically or by design. In other words – if you are going to travel, why not invite the folks you want to travel with, and I’ll help you create the best possible itinerary and experiences!
- Selecting smaller, boutique hotels that excel in quality and cleanliness

## THE BUBBLE EXPERIENCE...

### Supporting Small Business Around the Globe



As a small business owner, it is extremely important to me to support other small businesses around the globe in order to help all of us succeed coming out of this pandemic. Thus, as I create your “Bubble Experiences”, I plan to use a network of high quality, mostly independent, small businesses to support my clients. This will include tour guides, hotel owners, restaurant owners and chefs, wineries, cooking classes, and more. I already have a network of several small businesses and I will continue to add to that network over the next several months/years, ensuring the success of small business everywhere and the satisfaction of my clients as they travel abroad.

## THE BUBBLE EXPERIENCE...

### Design Your Group – Invite Your Friends!



Since the first trip I have ever taken, I've appreciated the benefits of group travel. From adventures in Peru, to city hopping in Europe, I love group travel. Yes, it has its downsides, and sometimes you just want to travel solo. However, if you get like-minded people together, looking for the same thing, it can be amazing. Some of my lifelong friends have come from these trips.

I would ask you to consider what trips you and your friends/family might enjoy taking together. Is there a group that you would want to put together, with a destination or an experience in mind for all to enjoy? If so, give me a call and I can help you pull this off.

I specialize in groups and I've put together many, including reward groups for sales teams, destination weddings, family heritage treks across Europe, and fun friend trips and cruises. Often, when I work with you to design a group trip, I can get extra perks or amenities for your group that you wouldn't be able to get alone, and I can do all the leg work of organizing, planning and detail management so you can simply invite your friends and enjoy! This is another great way to travel in 2021 and beyond, when we are not as enthusiastic about traveling in large groups of strangers.

If you don't have a group in mind but would like to participate in one, Tom and I have developed a new concept for group travels. We will be arranging small group tours and experiences, most of which we will escort and lead, and will be inviting you and your friends to join us. I will share these trips on my website and would welcome any of you to join us for unique and fun experiences!



My first Patricia trip to Italy was cancelled in 2020, but of course, I will be planning this trip again in 2021!

Please watch my newly updated website for the [latest Patricia trips and dates.](#)

## In Conclusion... THANK YOU!!

I would never wish away time and I am always grateful for the time that I have and the opportunities to learn and share with others. That said, I will be glad to see the travel restrictions and cancellations of 2020 disappear and a brighter, more promising travel landscape emerge. I have worked hard to maintain my business and be here for my clients, and I will continue to do so into the future and beyond. This agency has been my dream and it is not one I am ready to let go of.

Did you know that you are paying Travel Advisor commissions even when you book a vacation or cruise by yourself? Our compensation is built into the prices by our supplier partners, and you do not get a discount of those commissions just because you book directly. In fact, the money goes back into the coffers of the large supplier, and not into the local economy and neighborhood of your Travel Advisor's business. You are paying for services that you're not benefitting from! When you work with us, we advocate for you, help you maximize your time and budget and remove the stress of planning and sorting through details.

I thank you for your continued support of OC Travels, and I thank you for contacting me to help you plan your future adventures once it is safe to do so again. Without you, my clients, I would have no business and no work. I am incredibly grateful for each of you and I cannot wait to help you all again. Thank you for your referrals and for your thoughts. Blessings to each of you!



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