

Turning Dreams into Adventures: Josie Kelsh's Gap Year & Bucket List (Episode 29)

Episode 28 of the Global Travel Planner podcast features Josie Kelsh

Tracy: Hi and welcome to the Global Travel Planning podcast. I'm your host, Tracy Collins, who with my expert guests, will take you on a weekly journey to destinations around the globe, providing travel inspiration, itinerary ideas, practical tips and more to help you plan your next travel adventure. Welcome to episode 28 of the Global Travel Planner podcast. In this episode, I'm joined by travel lover, writer and blogger Josie Kelsh of Josie wonders now if you've ever dreamed of taking an adult gap year or creating a bucket list that turns dreams into reality. This conversation is for you. We kick things off by chatting about the concept of, adult gap year's, diving into the story of how Josie and her husband turned their own gap year idea into a 13 month adventure. Now Josie shares ups and downs of the journey, from the initial planning stages to the unforgettable experiences they collected along the way. Then we turn our attention to Josie's bucket list journey. What began as a 50 before 50 list during the COVID pandemic has now evolved into her 60 by 60 list. Josie's approach to setting and achieving her travel goals is both motivating and practical. And believe me, I am sitting down to write my own bucket list as we speak. If you've got a bucket list floating around in your head, Josie's story will encourage and inspire you to get it down on paper. Prioritise your plans and start making some of those dreams a reality.

Josie Kelch is a travel blogger based in South Australia

As always, I started the podcast by asking Josie to introduce herself and to tell us a little bit about what she does.

Josie Kelsh: My name is Josie Kelsh. I'm, based in South Australia, in Adelaide. I've lived here pretty much all my life. I've only a few months I lived up in sunny Queensland, not too far from you, when I was a teenager because my parents decided to live up there. But the rest of the time I've been here, I, currently work as a travel blogger and, writer. I have, well, two of my own travel websites. One is Josie wonders and the other one is exploring South Australia, our local south australian travel blog.

Tracy: Yeah, and I was, to say, when I was last in South Australia, you weren't there, which I was really disappointed about because I would love to have been able to meet up with you because it was our 1st, 1st ever trip to Adelaide in South Australia. So next time, Josie, when I'm down in South Australia, we are going to meet up for sure.

Josie Kelsh: We'll just have to try and coordinate it in advance because I'm, not here quite a lot.

Tracy: Well, that I guess, is the thing I say, because you travel. I travel. We're always travelling all over the place. Exactly. one of the things that really, really has caught my imagination about what, you've done is your gap year that you took a while ago now. and I also just going to say as well, my mum is a massive fan. So I was actually in the UK and she was saying, oh, yeah, I follow Josie. So I know, I just had thought I'd let you know that. So I didn't even. I hadn't mentioned, but she was like, her stuff's brilliant and it's really good. And I said, well, and I was telling the other day, I said, I'm going to talk to Josie all about her gap year and how she organised that, because that is something that myself and Doug really want to do. So I don't know where you want to start. How,

when. I guess when the idea came to you.

Josie Kelsh: Well, I'll actually start. I'll go back a little bit. I was not brought up as a traveller. I didn't travel when I was a kid, even to today. Neither of my siblings or my parents have passports. Never have. They rarely go anywhere. we were brought up in country, South Australia and we just didn't travel. It wasn't even that. It was. We can't afford to travel. It wasn't even in the psyche to consider travelling. I didn't know anyone who'd been overseas. I didn't know anything. my very first international trip was to Bali for my honeymoon, but that was paid for by my in laws. They just bought us a package tour to Bali for a week. And if you're Australian, that's pretty much standard. You know, it's almost like another state. It's not anything too exciting. and then I didn't travel again until my 35th birthday. So it wasn't until my late thirties that I started getting excited about travel. And the reason I travelled on my 35th birthday was, my husband got offered a job in Dubai and we had to go there to take a look at schools and houses and all that sort of stuff. So it wasn't actually a tourist type visit anyway. It was just, you know, doing, moving stuff. We didn't end up moving to Dubai. It, all sort of fell through and it was kind of, kind of worked out really well because that was 2008, with the global financial crisis and I think things might have gone particularly bad because we would have arrived there around about August or September, which is when the GFC hit. So by not going, we did ourselves a bit of a favour. But all the research that I did for that, trip and the potential move got me, thinking that I kind of like this travel business. Maybe I should go a few more places. So we started, travelling a little bit more just after that. But we'd also just put our children into a private high school.

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Josie Kelsh: And if you've seen the fees on the elites, well, I say elite as a. Ah, it's not

really that elite, but, you know, one of the private high schools that it's, kind of, yeah, expensive, shall we say?

Tracy: Yes.

Josie Kelsh: So we made that decision to do that. So the only way I could afford to travel was to learn budget travel. And I backpacked for the first time in my late thirties. We did our first backpacking trip to Malaysia and Singapore. We did a few other local, more southeast Asia. We did a quick trip over to London once. but yeah, just about once a year, we'd go away for two or three weeks, take the kids and do that. Then, as we were paying for this high school, and this does come into it, I was working full time and pretty much my whole wage went towards paying for their school, their, activities, because they always did half a dozen sports and dance and music and all the things I've been there. Yeah. And, things like, you know, one of my daughters went to Cambodia on a habitat for humanity trips. So I felt like all. And they held all their trips, ski trips and this trips and that trips that they all did. So all I did pretty much was to work to pay the bills. So I started joking probably around about 2012 that, I kept saying to my youngest daughter, when you leave school, you're not having a gap year. You two are both staying home, paying the mortgage for a year. We're going on gap year. So we started talking about it probably five or six years before we went. And I even started saying to my work, I'm only here until this date. I'm leaving in 2017. Beginning of 2017, I'm resigning. I'm giving you five years notice, and we're going to go on gap year. So we had a long time building up to it. And, in that time, I sort of started learning as well that people do this. People travel for these long amounts of time and they do it and they work on the road and they make this a profession. Ah. Because again, it wasn't even really in my something I thought about. You come across it one day online. So, 2017 to 18, we packed up and we went for twelve months. Well, but nearly 13 months, on a gap

year. And you say it takes a lot of organising but really in lots of ways it didn't for us because our children stayed in our house. So our mortgage is much cheaper than renting elsewhere, so therefore they didn't have too much to. They paid the mortgage, they did, that was the deal. They had some friends moving as well, another couple, there were four of them here, and my eldest daughter was working. It was in her first year of actual work so she had a proper job and the youngest daughter had decided she didn't want to go to uni so she was just doing retail jobs and things like that. But she had enough money to afford to pay the mortgage and pay her bills.

Tracy: Oh, that helps. That helps a lot as well, though, not having to think about covering the mortgage when you're away. And bill.

South Australia companies give employees long service leave on top of normal annual leave

Josie Kelsh: That's right, that's right. I mean we still paid some, of course, but mostly they paid for it. We had our cars, they each drove one of our cars, they didn't have a car each. So again, we didn't have to think about getting rid of cars or dealing with any of that. So, they did that in terms of our work. My husband was able to take a twelve month sabbatical, like leave without pay. That was fine. I resigned from my job, which was, always in the plan. I would have resigned anyway, I think. And But I'd been there eight years. So after eight years we have pro rata long service leave for those people not in Australia. I'll try and explain. Long service leave. We have a awesome benefit here that if you work in a company for ten years, you get a certain amount of paid time off on top of your normal annual leave. In South Australia we get 13 weeks. So all the states are a little bit different. I know some only get ten weeks and things like that. Now

after, if you've been in the company for seven years, when you leave, you get it paid out, the prorated amount paid out to you as a cash lump sum. You can't take the leave then, but it gets paid out. So I had a nice little payout for when I left based on my eight years in my company of long service leave. So that was a nice little cash bonus. Now my husband had been in his job at this point, I don't know exactly, about 25 years.

Tracy: Wow.

Josie Kelsh: And he'd never take a long service leave so he had about 28 weeks of paid long service leave. Available to him, plus his normal, annual leave, which we'd been saving a little bit each year for the past five years. So all in all, he had ten months of our 13 months on full pay. So that's pretty much how we funded our, ah, twelve month trip with, of course, a little bit of savings as well.

People always ask about how you go abroad on long service leave

So people always ask about how you. How you do it and.

Tracy: Absolutely. That's the question. And, we. So my husband's coming up for his long service leave, so immediately. That's what springs to mind is. Right, okay, this

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Tracy: gives us the opportunity.

Josie Kelsh: Yes.

Tracy: So that helps a lot. And that's something that is very unique to Australia. I've lived everywhere, all over the world, lots of different, and nobody does that. When I came to Australia and I found out about that, I was like, well, this is fantastic. And it is, I feel a, kind of way to, reward employees for staying long term in the same job. but also gives Australians the opportunity because we are quite far away. We are places to go and do a reasonable amount of time exploring the world. When you knew you were going to have that 30 months to go and explore, how did you start deciding where you wanted to go?

Josie Kelsh: Well, the start and the finish points ended up being set because of an, event that I attend almost annually. Not quite, but, It's a little bit complicated to explain, but I am involved in a, I guess, organisation called bookcrossing. It's about sharing books. There's a website called bookcrossing.com dot. You can go and have a look at it if you want to know more detail. But every year they have an international convention. And we started our, gap year in Oslo because that's where the convention was in April that year. And we completed our gap year in Bordeaux, in France, because that's where the convention was the next year. So we set it up like that for our dates. We knew those in advance. The general idea, we didn't really plan a lot. Let's just say we didn't plan a huge amount the first month our daughters joined us in Europe. So we did a bit of a whistle stop tour around Europe with all the major capitals. You know, just the crazy fast three, four days in. You know, where we go, Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Krakow, Budapest. And yeah, it was just a few days in each one for the kids as well to see it. And we ticked off some of the main sites and, then after that, we're on our own. But the general idea was fly to Oslo, backpack back to Australia, that was the whole plan we had. So apart from that first month being a little bit planned, because the kids were with us, we didn't have any other plans, so we made it up as we went along. Normally about a week or so in advance, we were booking, if that. Sometimes I'd make decisions, like,

we got to, about my initial thoughts. We'd probably spend two months in Europe and then head off towards Asia. Well, five and a half months later, we're still in Europe. And so I made a choice then that, no, I'm going to book a flight on a set date. We're going to. Well, at least it was to Turkey, so I guess it wasn't that far out of Europe, but it was, We hadn't. We hadn't had done any flights since the kids had left us, so we hadn't had. We'd just been on trains and buses for four and a half months. So I booked a flight to, to Turkey and it was like, like, that's it, I have to make a date, otherwise we're going to see me pottering around Europe for, you know, the whole year and we won't get to any of the other places.

Tracy: And I guess at that point you could have done as well, because I think. Because now it's more difficult. It's a six months out. six months in. And then it was still.

Josie Kelsh: It was still the same.

Tracy: Yeah. Was it still the same? We did have to.

Josie Kelsh: We got to, We had to go to Romania because. To get out of the Schengen zone, but there are more countries in the Schengen zone now than were back then. So because of that, I think, you know, Croatia wasn't Schengen. you know, I think that's Schengen now. And a few. There are a few others in that sort of era, I think Romania or Bulgaria or Shingon now even.

Tracy: I think so, because far too many have joined, it makes it far harder to get out and spend a bit of time before you need to get back in again, which was obviously exactly right before. Brexit was never a problem for those of us who. UK passports, which is now a problem, unfortunately. So I guess. So you travelled around Europe by. By train

and buses. It's a. I mean, it's a great continent to do that with. You can hop on, hop off. Brilliant.

I was amazed at how little you took on your recent trip to Europe

and I'm just going to ask you this, because I was looking at how much you took on your recent trip to Europe and I was amazed by how little you take now. Have you learnt that over time or were you as disciplined as that when you went on this 13 month gap trip?

Josie Kelsh: I have learned it over time. I was fairly disciplined, exactly the same backpack I had on my gap year, the same, setup. But, I did cut it down a lot more for this year trip. So for twelve months I had in my rear pack I had about 15 kilos. Anything, as soon as it got a bit more over 15, it was just becoming too difficult for me to carry around. And of course, as soon as you're doing, the more budget you go, the more walking and carrying of the backpack you are doing, so.

Tracy: Yes.

Josie Kelsh: and the front pack I think I had heavier as well because, I had my iPad with me and I had a camera with me. It's more that tech stuff that takes the weight. And I had a third sort of sling bag I would often wear outside of those two. Like just a little handbag type sling bag that I'd wear as well with. You know, it might only be another extra kilo or two, but, you know, it all loads you down and then if you've got

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Josie Kelsh: a little bit of shopping in another bag, you know, sometimes it would just become so. So, yes. So in this latest trip when I did go and I only had, what Tracy's referring to is I had a eleven kilos in my backpack for, nearly eight weeks in hot and cold temperatures. So, yeah, very limited, but yeah, that was a lot less. I did call more.

Tracy: I think it's such an important skill to learn because honestly, I remember Doug and I backpacked around Europe over the six week summer holiday because I was teaching in the UK. And, we did it two years on the bounce actually, with my daughter. And actually I think the third year she's. That she refused to do it. So I'm not doing it again. I think even it might have been the third year. And I just said to Doug, I, can't carry this anymore. And he ended up, he ended up carrying it and that was the last time we did the backpack around Europe because I just, I couldn't deal with carrying it. I probably wasn't strong enough. But also I think by that point I was like, you'd think after three years I would have learned to take less. So now I try as hard and really, really hard to make sure that I have something that I can carry or pull more often. Pull now, I mean, I should say. I mean, I'm not using age and excuse late, fifties because I should be strong enough to do it. But I've got to the point where I think I just need to pull the thing and maybe put it on my back if I really need to. but like you, the tech becomes such an issue for us because we have so much to take with us. but I think, yeah, being able to do that, I say, hats off to you. I know you didn't take any earrings, which I, which made me smile because I take loads of earrings.

Josie Kelsh: Yeah, no, I don't, I don't change them very often. I don't wear the earrings very often. So therefore it was, you know, jewellery is not. Jewellery is not. I just wear my little stud earrings and my wedding band and all the rest of the jewellery stays home. That's it. So, if I had an actual event I had to go to, maybe I'd think about it.

Tracy: Well, I'm busy packing for my trip to the UK and I have to say I'm already started to sort the earrings out, which is really funny. People aren't really interested what earrings I take rather than what I'm actually going to pack. But I'm like, no, I have to have the earrings out. But no, hats off to that.

So you went to Turkey. Where did you go after that?

So you went to Turkey. So let's pick up from Turkey. Where did you go after that?

Josie Kelsh: I love turkey. Istanbul is my favourite city in the whole wide world. So this was my second I've been to Turkey before. We spent, I think, where'd we spend in Turkey? Something like a week in or nine days in Istanbul. And then, we went down to Bodrum and Antalya, like along the coast there. from there we went, to Jordan, which, is one of my favourite. Another. I love the Middle East. I just really enjoy it. And into Dubai, where I have a cousin we stayed with and one of our daughters came across and met us in Dubai for four or five days. And so we sort of recharged there across to Oman, did a road trip through Oman and then, India, Sri Lanka, into southeast Asia. So while we're in southeast Asia, my other daughter came and met us in, Malaysia. And I spent my birthday morning climbing Mount Kilabalu Kinabalu on Borneo so that I could watch the sunrise on my birthday over the top of the mountain, which was pretty cool.

Tracy: So we ask how old you were turning.

Josie Kelsh: Yeah, 45. So because it was a five, it wasn't a zero, but it was a five. So I thought I had to do something reasonable, on that birthday. So, yeah, which was, which was fun and painful at the same time. we struggled to walk for about three days after

that, but, while we were in Southeast Asia, because we visited nearly all the. All the countries around there. Many we'd been to before, but we also went back to most of them. We decided, we knew we were going to go back to France for the Bordeaux thing, but the plan was initially, we'll just pop back. We'll just go back for a week. You know what? I'll use my points. We'll fly, you know, it'll be fine. it ended up being, well, if we're going back for that, we should also go back. Let's go see the northern lights. Let's try and work out the northern lights and m. Let's try anyway. We ended up going back and spending two more months back in Europe at the end of it. So our whole nearly 13 months, we spent seven and a half months of it in Europe, and we still didn't even get close to seeing, everything.

Tracy: Easy, easy to do that, honestly, even seven and a half months, you kind of scratch the surface of what. There's so much. There's so much to see, so many places to visit, so many countries to visit, that it. And there seems to be more countries all the time.

Josie Kelsh: Yes.

Tracy: You know, I was kind of proud of the fact that I'd been, I think, every country but Finland and. And, Portugal. I've not been to Portugal. And then, of course, now I've got all these european countries I've not been to either. So I've been Czech Republic and Hungary, and I think, that's about it. I've been to Romania, so there's a whole load more that I think, well, I need to go and visit those.

What was your favourite experience out of your two weeks in Jordan

I'm gonna ask you. I'm gonna. Because I really want to ask you this, and I know this is a really hard question. I get asked it all the time. you know what? I'm gonna ask you. So was there a favourite. I don't want to say favourite country, because I always get asked, what's your favourite country? And I know you've already mentioned turkey, but what was your favourite experience out of that time?

Josie Kelsh: I will. I will talk about a particular country simply because when I do get

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Josie Kelsh: asked this question, I have a couple of answers, and one of them is general, which is, I tend to love the mountains. so I normally say, you know, New Zealand, Canada, Austria, those sort of. Which is crazy, because I don't know why I have my beach, personally, by the beach. I don't know why but I just love the scenery and for the mountains anyway. But on the gap here, there is one country that particularly stood out to me. And the reason I say it is because I said, wow. I think we were there for two weeks and I think I said wow, nearly every day. It just blew my mind. There was just so many big ticket items and amazing experiences. And that was Jordan. Ah, okay, it was Jordan, which is, there's no mountains, there's no greenery, there's no snow topped mountains. There's none of that. But I. It was just. I mean, you've got, of course, Petra and you've got Wadi Raman, you've got the dead Sea, you've got the biblical sites, you've got the, incredible roman history. we went and did, two or three nights at an, eco lodge in one of the biospheres, which is completely off grid, run by the Bedouin people. No electricity, no running water. You've dealt with what they dealt with, but it's a luxury. Like, it was luxury, but it's done in a really interesting way. you can go snorkelling in the red Sea and see some of the best. Lots of coral reefs, outside of Australia. We didn't do that because the day before we'd made a fatal

error and, done a three hour camel ride in wadi rum. Anyone going, wadi ride? Don't ride. No, don't. Just don't do camel rides. Do a really short little half hour ride. That's fine. But, oh, my goodness, bits of me hurt that I didn't even know should hurt after 3 hours on the back of a camel. I don't know what I was thinking. And the next morning, we were meant to go snorkelling in the red Sea at, aqaba. And we, could barely move. So we didn't. Whoops. But yes, Jordan. Jordan is. And that was two weeks in Jordan. And there's still more I didn't see and would love to go back and more. We did it all on a budget. We, You know, they don't really have public transport, but we did things like catch the local buses with the, with the locals. And we had a two hour conversation with a couple of young boys that didn't say. Couldn't say anything other than I love you and football. So, not, Manchester United, probably, but we didn't get that out of them. But, Yeah, no, they didn't. They couldn't really, speak any English, but they're having great old time and I think the fact that every single other woman on the bus was completely covered with just their eyes, you know, able to be seen. And, I was of course, a white blonde woman sitting there, you know, chatting to them. So, it was good fun.

Tracy: It sounds like I have not been to Jordan, I have to say. So that'll be going on to my bucket list, which we're going to talk about in a minute.

Josie Kelsh: We will.

After 12 months away, you were ready to come home

Tracy: so how did you honestly, when you, when you got back after this, you know, epic time away, was there a kind of come down after that? Because I know when I've been travelling for a reasonable length of time, I kind of come back and I kind of go, okay, I

look forward to being back and then I kind of go, ah, no, no, no. I need something else.

Josie Kelsh: I don't think so much like I was. By the, by the time the twelve months was nearly up, I was ready to come home. It sounds absolutely ridiculous, but I, I was just like, oh my goodness, can I please have a kitchen and a laundry? And the insane thing is I'm not a very good housewife. I don't cook. My husband does all the cooking. I know. You know, Doug does your cooking as well. Yes. Yeah, he does. I'm not, I'm not a cook. And just being able to, you know, get up and make yourself a coffee or just easily, or have the, ingredients for a simple breakfast or lunch on hand, it just after twelve months you start to miss that. So. And not having to Google where the nearest laundry mat is or hunt down the laundry or find out if I've got the right change or just, it was those simple things that were I was ready to come home. I think it took a few months before I was like, right, okay, where's the next trip? What can I be planning? I mean, I was probably already had two or three trips in the bag planning, so I was probably already working up towards the next trip anyway. So I don't, I didn't, it wasn't as bad, you know, I still remembered the things, the reasons why I wanted to come home. And my husband was right back in it. Back to work, straight back to work. And that was about when I got a little bit serious about the travel blog as well and, you know, threw myself into learning, how to do that. So I was, I was quite content.

Tracy: Which is just, it's just about a full time job, learning all of that. I think about, I don't know, when was that? What year was that?

Josie Kelsh: 2000, 2018, we came back home 18.

Tracy: Yeah. So I started my first website about 2016, and, it just, when I say to people, people ask us, I'm sure people ask you about it as well. So it was the steepest learning

curve of my life for me personally, because I come from teaching background to accountants. Ah, okay. There you go. It's. I love the fact that we come from such a

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Tracy: diverse background, but we all just love travel. That connection, isn't it, between all of us. And, So this was before you turned 50, so you did this travel?

Josie Kelsh: Yes.

Tracy: So I know. And I've been following because you. I'm absolutely fascinated because you had a 50 before 50 bucket list, and now you have a 60 before 60 bucket list.

Talk to us about your bucket list and where the idea came from

Now I'm going to ask you, I really want to talk about this because I've been fascinated right from the time I first heard about the way you do it and how you have your bucket list. Now, I'm not that far from 60, so I need your advice about whether I should still have a 60 by 61 when I've only got a couple of years to go. but talk to us about your bucket list and where the idea came from and what you have on it. And did you achieve all 50 before you turned 50?

Josie Kelsh: The bucket list? Well, 2018, we returned from the gap year. 2019, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. So as I was coming out of the treatment, which luckily was only surgery for breast cancer, so I didn't need, any chemo or radiation at that time,

so when I, was recovering, and early 2020, which, if you can think about what's happening in the world right about that time, you'll know where this is kind of going, I decided to write myself a 50 50 bucket list early 2020. And at the time I wrote it, I did not know that we would be locked in Australia for two and a half years, so. But it was just the reason I wrote my own bucket list. Washington, firstly. Well, you know, cancer kicks your butt, and it gives you, a good incentive to start ticking those things off rather than saying, oh, one day I'm going to go. And assuming you've always got time, because, yes, we have time, but we may not have time, so why leave those things? Just do them now. Do them now is my message. so I decided to write my own bucket list because I have some other lists floating around. Like, I have a list I printed off the Qantas website at one point back in the day, and another list I probably got out of the newspaper or something. I don't even know where they came from. But these lists that, you see published, written for top hundred bucket list places to travel in the world, or whatever that is. But those lists don't work for me or didn't work for me, because there were always things on them that I knew I would never do. So it was always an unachievable list. For example, things like, I don't know, running, with the balls in pan ploma is not something I'd ever wanted to, I'm sure there are other things, but that just is one that comes to mind that's often on bucket lists. Or perhaps there are things like places, like Syria, that you just no longer can go in and see the things that were on. It's just not trans Siberian Express, which.

Tracy: Was always on our list, and you can't do that anymore.

Josie Kelsh: Yeah, things like that, that are, You know, people just like to have on these lists. Anyway, so I decided to write my own list, which is where the 50 before 50 came in. I thought, oh, I've got nearly three years. I can, Or was three years. I thought, I can, I should be able to get through a fair few of those now to do that, though. If I wrote 50

things that were all, you, know, I don't know, my top thing was an antarctic cruise. So to do that and to go to Europe for different things and to perhaps, you know, climb the great wall of China and do an african safari and do. To try and fit all those things in two and a half years is absolutely unrealistic. So I created a list that, in hindsight was good because it included lots of local things as well. And not just local things as in, you know, how you say, oh, I want to go and eat at that novelty restaurant, but, I want to go do that. That walk that's just there, there. I want to go, you know, visit that town that's only 3 hours away, but I just have never been there, those sort of things. So I included. It would probably at least in the 50 by 50. I haven't actually counted it, but it's probably 30 things that were within Australia and perhaps 20 things that were international. So I had a nice little blend of things. I also, left three or four blank spaces at the end with the idea that I would be inspired by other people as I went along. And, I even asked some of my readers for suggestions as well.

Covid hit 50 by 50 list and we were locked in Australia

So then I've got this 50 by 50 list Covid hit and, ah, we were locked in Australia, so I got 31 out of the 50 done. Thankfully, in South Australia, we were fairly free to travel within the state. A bit like Queensland. We only had about ten days of lockdown, so we could, travel around the state quite easily. It was a little bit more complicated to go interstate, but there were some of those that I managed to tick off as well. And I did get a couple of trips in 2022, early 2023, which was able to tick off a few of the items as well. And yes, yes, I did get to Antarctica. So with just days to spare before I turned 50, we, did a cruise, not an expedition cruise, but

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we did just a standard cruise ship cruise out of Santiago in Chile and, finishing in Buenos Aires in, Argentina. And it was awesome.

Tracy: Well, it's on my list, that's for sure, so.

You say you could have 50 things that are going to cost you a million dollars

Okay, so you've passed the age of 50.

Josie Kelsh: I did, and then I rewrote the list, including all the things that I hadn't done. So the 19 things that I hadn't achieved are all the top 19 things on my list now. And I've just added on a whole pile more things to do.

Tracy: That's, top of your list now.

Josie Kelsh: It's really hard. I think african safari is the big one this time.

Tracy: Okay, well, you should come and join, join myself and Doug next year because I grew up in southern Africa, so I'm determined to get over there. So actually seeing the great migration at the Masa Omara is mine next year because I've not done that before. So that would be awesome. That would be amazing. I think it's a really good idea that you have this, like, local stuff as well, because also because you can get overwhelmed when you put this bucket list together. You say you could have 50 things that are going to cost you, like a million dollars.

Josie Kelsh: That's exactly right.

Tracy: So it's the fact of, like, having something achievable. So would your advice to me being like a few years, two and a bit of turning 60, would you still suggest I looked at doing. Because I really want to do this, because I've had ideas floating in my head for such a long time. One, and I have quirky ones, like singing along to Michelle Schott's anchorage while landing at Anchorage airport, which has been on my list for, like, that's the.

Josie Kelsh: Sort of stuff you have to put on there. Yeah, yeah, that's the sort of stuff. I mean, I have some and, and non location specific things. Like, I have things like eat an insect. I don't know how I've managed to avoid it in southeast Asia, but I have never eaten a cockroach or a, grasshopper or, I don't know, a tarantula. So that's one of our, you know, and things like, do a cooking class was another one of mine. As I said, I'm not the cook, so cooking for me is a bit of a challenge. So to do, I can do that. I could do that at home or I could do that away. But, yeah, I think you could still write yourself a list. You don't have to achieve it. It's not a, If you don't. Yeah, that's right. It's not a competition, but it gives you some guidelines, it gives you a, I guess a framework, something to aim for. And, when you're in places like, it could be back in the UK, and, you're like, oh, I could do.

So is your, um, bucket list public? Yes, absolutely. It's on my blog

There's three things on here that I could add to my, you know, get myself out of my comfort zone a little bit.

Tracy: So is your, bucket list public?

Josie Kelsh: Yes, absolutely. It's on my. It's on my blog. It's actually right on the front page of my blog is linked to it. So even if you go to jcwanders.com, on the front page, it's right there, so you can see it and follow along. Each time I achieve one of the items on the list, I try and I take. I try and remember to take a selfie of myself somewhere in front of doing, you know, some sort of selfie. So you can actually see it's not always the most, glamorous photo of me that you've ever seen in your life, but, the idea is to prove that I was in that place. And then I will link to any. Anything I've written about it. So you can read more about the experience that I had.

Tracy: Oh, that's brilliant. Well, I will put a link to that in the show notes. I'm just gonna say that because I know, and I'm gonna do one too, and I'm gonna do exactly the same. You've really inspired me, honestly, just to do it, because I was like, stop just thinking about it and just bloody do it, saying, you know, just do it. It's fun.

Josie Kelsh: Yeah. It's so easy to have this list in your mind.

Tracy: Yeah.

Josie Kelsh: But you don't have. Once it's written down, it kind of gives you a way to think about it. You know, it's there. It's a reminder. It's one of my most popular posts on my blog. People really like to go and have a look at it and see what's going on. And, I keep people updated. I have a tally in the bottom of my emails that go out each week, like to say where people are up to, where I'm up to, and, what I'm doing. So, people enjoy seeing the achievement, I think.

Tracy: Oh, definitely. And where can listeners find you, apart from, obviously, your website? you have Facebook, page.

Josie Kelsh: I do.

Tracy: M follows you.

Josie Kelsh: That's crazy. I didn't know that. But yes, you can find me on Facebook and Instagram. OC wonders. It's, very easy. So that's, the best places to find me.

Tracy: Okay, so, yeah, absolutely. We'll put links in the show notes about that.

Josie is currently going through chemotherapy for breast cancer

So what about next plans, josie?

Josie Kelsh: Well, as you know, as Tracy knows, I'm currently going through chemo for, cancer. Breast cancer again? Well, not again. This is the first time I've done chemo. This is my second diagnosis. So I'm kind of stuck here in Adelaide until December at the very earliest. But, I've already got plans. I've already booked a trip to Cairns in Queensland for April, so that's already booked. Ready to go, next year? I'm planning Japan in May, June ish.

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Josie Kelsh: one of my bucket list items from the 50 before 50 list was to attend the

World Expo in Dubai in 2020, which got moved to 2021. And we snuck in there when Australia opened the borders just a few weeks before it closed early 2022. So we were able to, tick that one off. But the next world expo is in Osaka next year. So that's the plan, is to get to Japan. I've never been to Japan. This will be my first trip.

Tracy: Amazing.

Josie Kelsh: So, yeah, everyone says it's amazing.

Tracy: It's amazing. Except the food for me, because I just don't do fish. And everybody tells me that there's other things that I could have eaten, but I, don't know. Next time I'm going to do far more research on what I can eat.

Josie Kelsh: Oh, I think I like your idea of eating in all the little convenience stores. That sounds so easy.

Tracy: It was. It really was. And then, are you going to be joining me at TBEx and island?

Josie Kelsh: I hope so. I hope so. August, September. I'm hoping for a month in, Europe. I was actually only talking to my husband about it this morning on our morning walk and trying to, because, he has to try and get some time off work, which is complicated. And trying to say, well, where else can we go? Like, what can we. If we go over there, what are we going to do? So we'll have about a month. And one of my bucket list items on the 60 before 60 list is to visit all the remaining european countries I haven't been to. So I said, oh, I, ah, wonder if we can fit in two or three. And I'm thinking it might become my eye trip, as in flying into Italy, going through San Marino and Monaco that I haven't been to before, then flying to Iceland, spending a week or two in Iceland before flying

back to Ireland, to Donegal for the, TBEX convention. And then before we head home. It's a very early, very early plan.

Tracy: Well, hopefully I will see you there. I'll certainly look forward to it. But thanks so much for joining us on the podcast this week, Josie. It's been fantastic to chat with you.

Josie Kelsh: Yes, thank you for having me, Tracy.

Tracy: Thank you for joining us on this episode of the Global Travel Planning podcast. For more details and links to everything we discussed today, cheque out the show notes at, globaltravelplanning.com. remember, if you enjoyed the show, please consider leaving us a review on your favourite podcast app because your feedback helps us reach more travel enthusiasts just like you. Anyway, that leaves me to say, as always, happy global travel planning.

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