

Matt Bowles: My guest today is Sandi Oluoch. She is an avid hiker, diver, and surfer who promotes diversity and inclusion in the world of solo female travel. Originally from Nairobi, Kenya, she grew up in both Kenya and Tanzania, then got her master's degree in the United States and has now been traveling the world for over five years. She is also a travel photographer and has contributed to the recently published book [Adventuress: Women Exploring the World](#).

Sandi, welcome to the show.

Sandi Oluoch: Thanks. I'm super excited to be here.

Matt Bowles: I am super excited to have you here. We need to just set the scene and start off talking about where we are recording this from today.

Unfortunately, we are not in person, but we have agreed to make this a virtual Wine night. So, let's also talk about what we are drinking. I am actually recording this from the Blue Ridge mountains of Asheville, North Carolina on the East Coast of the United States. And I have just opened a bottle of Chianti Classico from Tuscany. So, I'm going to be drinking through that this evening. But where are you, Sandi? And what are you drinking?

Sandi Oluoch: So right now, I am home in Seattle, Washington, and I am drinking a nice glass of Rosé.

Matt Bowles: Amazing. You know, Washington state, I feel like people sleep on the wines from Washington state and Oregon. People know about Northern California wines for sure, but the Pacific Northwest has some seriously good wines.

Sandi Oluoch: It definitely does, especially in Eastern Washington. Like there's a lot of great wineries out there. People should definitely check them out if they're ever in the state.

Matt Bowles: Totally agree. I just went through the Pacific Northwest, like two years ago, and did a wine tour, actually in the Willamette Valley in Oregon. Uh, but Washington and Oregon both have fantastic wines and people should definitely look into them if they have not. Well, you and I just missed each other. We were in Brazil at the same time. We didn't get to hang out in person, which is why we're doing this virtually, but I do want to hear a little bit about your experience in Brazil, where you went and your reflections in Brazil. What were some of the highlights?

Sandi Oluoch: Brazil was amazing. It's so crazy that we just missed each other, but I've been dying to go to Brazil, and I saw an opportunity to go, and I was there for about two and a half weeks. I went to Rio and then Ilha Grande and then I went down to Iguazu Falls. And that was the majority of my trip, but it was so beautiful out there.

There was a lot of nature, lots of beautiful waterfalls, lots of hiking, and like the people were really great. The food was amazing. And the nightlife was also pretty amazing.

Matt Bowles: Absolutely agree. I spent about two months in Rio, which is the first time I went to Brazil, fell in love, was totally enamored. The Iguazu waterfalls though, we got to put people onto those because I've actually been to them from the Argentina side.

You can see them from three different countries. They're right on the border of Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay. I went there from Argentina, and I was just completely blown away because I went to high

school in Buffalo, New York, right next to Niagara Falls. So, everybody would come visit. We take them to Niagara Falls and it's this big, famous waterfall.

And then I went to Iguazu. And that's just an entirely separate, different type of level. It's like 2.7 consecutive kilometers of waterfalls in the middle of the jungle. There's like rainbows everywhere. I mean, it was completely over the top.

Sandi Oluoch: I thought it was crazy. So, they say that if you want really close-up views, like Argentina is the best side to view from. And then if you want more of a panoramic view, Brazil is a really great place to see them from. It's funny.

My hotel was actually right on the border of all three. So, like looking out my window, I could see Paraguay, and which was a 10-minute drive away from Argentina. And then going to the falls was another quick 10-minute drive. So, it was so cool to just see. Three countries all at once. But yeah, the scale of the falls is incredible. Like it's a natural world wonder, UNESCO world heritage site. I think it exceeds expectations. You can't really gauge the scope of those falls just by looking at pictures in person, it's just so much more majestic.

Matt Bowles: Totally agree. Well, I want to start. this by going all the way back and talking about where you grew up because you are from one of my favorite countries, Sandi. I was just in your homeland of Kenya just last year. It was my second time there. I've spent a couple months in Nairobi, one of my all-time favorite cities. I talk about it all the time. You're from there.

So, can you talk a little bit about where you grew up specifically and what your upbringing was like?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah. So, I was born in Nairobi and I lived there till I was 10. Like you said, Kenya is just a beautiful country and I feel like growing up I knew that, but it took me leaving to the U S to be like, wait, Kenya is amazing and beautiful and just so unique.

It just feels like a tropical paradise. The city is really fun. Fast growing and it just feels like somewhere you want to be. So, I lived there till I was 10 and then I moved to Tanzania and that was also a very beautiful country to grow up in. I lived in Dar es Salaam, which is right on the beach. My elementary school, middle school and high school all ended at 1 PM.

So, we could all go to the beach afterward because it got too hot to like being in school. And I got to do a lot of cool things. I got scuba-certified. I climbed Kilimanjaro as a kid. So, it was pretty incredible. East Africa is one of my favorite places in the world, even after traveling all this time.

Matt Bowles: East Africa is one of my favorite places too. It is super special. I keep going back. I had been to Tanzania and Kenya already. I went back again last year. I spent another month in each of them. I just summited Kilimanjaro last year.

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah. That sounds cool.

Matt Bowles: Yes, I know it's so special, but I want to see if you can put folks on to what they should do in, let's just start with Kenya. If folks want to go, they haven't been to Kenya before, let's say. What would be some of your top recommendations on visiting and spending time in Kenya, either short term or maybe even longer term, a nomad wants to go and post up for a while.

I mean, people need to understand, I mean, I explained this to people about Kenya, Nairobi is like one of the top entrepreneur tech hubs in the world. I mean, it is remarkable. And they have all of these coworking spaces in Nairobi and stuff. I mean, it is incredibly conducive to digital nomads and stuff to go and just plug into like really, really vibrant entrepreneur communities and stuff like that. Amazing coworking spaces, all that. So, it's very conducive to, you know, for like a long-term stay, but for folks that want to go and experience Kenya, what would be some of your top?

Sandi Oluoch: I think the number one place I would tell people to go to is Lamu in Kenya. I think that's just like kind of stepping back in time into this beautiful Swahili culture and beautiful coastal life. There's a lot of history there. And it's just so different from anything else that I've ever seen. You got to learn about how, you know, there was like the spice trading with a lot of India and Oman and just like the culture they brought in.

And then you learn about the slave trade that happened on this side. I know people always focus on the slave trade that happened on the West coast, but we did have a slave trade route going through Eastern Africa as well. So that's like just a lot of history there. The people are really friendly.

There are no cars. I was actually listening to your podcast earlier with Eva and she was talking about how, if you want a James Bond-esque type of experience, Lamu is one of the only places in the world where you land in the airport and then you have to take a speedboat to your destination immediately after.

Like that was something that was really unique. And then there's beautiful boats that we call dhows out there and they're usually taken out during sunset. The food is amazing. So Lamu is definitely really great.

And then a second place that I really like, especially if you're a beach person, is Diani Beach. It's truly one of the most beautiful beaches I've ever seen. Really white sand, warm crystal blue water, really great diving there, and there's like dolphins, whale sharks, that's cool too. I think a lot of people just come and they do Maasai Mara and then they leave, but there's a lot of stuff on the coast as well.

Matt Bowles: Yeah, I mean, Maasai Mara is, of course, where you can do one of the greatest safaris in the world. It's amazing. I did it my first time that I went to Kenya, super special. So, all of that is available in Kenya as well. And then the city of Nairobi is just unbelievable. Like I kind of go, and then I just like, I'm like, yeah, I should do all this stuff in Kenya.

But then I just like love Nairobi so much. I just ended up staying there. The nightlife is unbelievable. I mean, I'm posting pictures from and videos from clubs. And it's three, four in the morning on a Tuesday or a Wednesday. And it just goes on all night. It's unbelievable. It's some of the best nightlife anywhere in the world I've seen in Nairobi.

So definitely highly recommend that. Let's talk about Tanzania now, what would you put people on to and recommend in Tanzania?

Sandi Oluoch: I think especially for the Nukile, I really love the areas of Moshi and Arusha. Gorgeous, so green, really natural, and then there's these hot springs in that area called Kikuletwa

or something like that. I keep forgetting what the exact name is, but the most beautiful hot springs I've ever seen.

I love the national parks there, but another cool spot is Zanzibar. Of course, everyone knows that, but definitely just like check out the whole island and the little like tiny sub islands like Pemba or like Kendwa. Just a lot of great things to do there too. Yeah

Matt Bowles: Zanzibar was incredible. I went in 2018 and it has so much different stuff that's amazing. Like first of all there's like really super important history in Stone Town.

Sandi Oluoch: Similar to Lama it has that Swahili culture too yeah.

Matt Bowles: Yeah, exactly and it's 90s something present Muslim. And it's like a little bit of a different vibe. They're really important history. And then it has some of the most beautiful beaches you'll ever see. And then you just like learn stuff like, oh, by the way, Freddie Mercury, like grew up here too.

Sandi Oluoch: And then the giant tortoises and on the Island as well are pretty cool too.

Matt Bowles: Yeah, it's a super special place. And then not far from Dar es Salaam, you know, you can just kind of come back to the shore and spend time in the big city and it's just, it has a lot of amazing stuff, but also if you're interested in safaris, the Serengeti and the Ngorongoro crater, I just went to this past year. Oh my gosh, unbelievable.

Sandi Oluoch: There's actually a big four for safari parks there. So, you have the Serengeti obviously, then you also have Tarangire, which is really good. Mikuni, Manyara, and Ruaha. Tanzania is beautiful and just has so much to offer in terms of wildlife.

Matt Bowles: Totally. Yeah. Super incredible. So much to offer. So, I highly, recommend East Africa for any of all those things, whatever you're into, it has it for you. So, I'm curious also, Sandi, can you talk a little bit then after growing up in Kenya and Tanzania, what your next move was in terms of coming to the U.S.?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah, so when I was 18, I went to upstate New York for university, so for college, and I went to the University of Rochester, and I got my undergrad degree in Biomedical Engineering, and college was super fun.

I had been to the U.S. before just to visit, but actually moving there to live there and start school was a totally different experience. I feel like I fit in quite easily. It was a very welcoming community in upstate New York. The school I went to had 5,000 undergrads. So, it was big enough to feel like a big school, but also small enough where you had a sense of community.

And that was something that was really important to me. And I met people who had gone there and the way they talked about it. Especially for STEM subjects was really cool. So, I really had a great time there. Like I felt like it was a great way to be introduced into American culture. So that was pretty awesome.

Matt Bowles: Yeah. I was going to ask, what was some of that cultural transition? Like, can you give us a sense of when you were growing up? How much travel did you do? So, you visited the U.S.,

where did your interest in travel sort of develop and what were your travel experiences like before you got to the U.S.?

Sandi Oluoch: I think I've always just been a curious person. In terms of traveling, my family and I didn't do too much, but we went to really cool places. So, I went to China when I was younger, and I went to Dubai. And then when I was in high school, I went to the Netherlands. And so, I think just little trips like that were like, "Oh, wow, I really like to travel. But I think I would say my love for travel and curiosity for exploring just kind of came from the schools I went to.

I went to very international schools. And you'd meet people from all over the world, different religions, different backgrounds. And it was just so fun to be in that melting pot of like culture. I feel like once you get that, a homogenous community is not enough, you know, like you want to get out there and explore. So just a lot of little things came together.

Matt Bowles: So, after you went to school in Rochester, big up to The Rock represent, I have been there a number of times. Both my parents went to school in Rochester, and I went to high school like in Buffalo, which is like an hour away. So, I know, I know it pretty well. So, after that, then what was your next move?

Sandi Oluoch: So, I had a family, like my aunt and my cousins lived in Bellevue, Washington. And once I graduated, I had no job lined up and I wasn't really sure what I wanted to do. I think my goal at the time was to end up in California, but I wanted to spend the summer in Seattle because I'd always loved the summers there.

So, I like crashed with my aunt and coincidentally, some of my best friends from college were also in Washington for the summer. And it was just like the three of us. Unemployed, broke, one car between us. And we just started hiking and exploring this area. And I had never really realized how beautiful nature was out here.

And so that was all we did that summer. And we'd call ourselves Fun Employed and would call people up at like Tuesday at 3 PM being like, Hey, you want to go hiking? And of course they'd be like, no, I'm like working. I have a job, but that was such a formative summer. That was one of the best summers of my life.

And things just lined up so perfectly. Like I got a job in Seattle at the end of the summer. And so, you know, suddenly I was like, you know. I might just be stuck in Seattle. I might just stay because I realized I fell back in love with hiking, especially after Kilimanjaro. So that was kind of just like me rediscovering my passion for the outdoors.

Matt Bowles: Well, you have done some of the best hiking in the United States. You have been to a number of places in the U.S. that I have not been, I have been scouring your travel photography and your [Instagram](#) and everything else. And I am like, wow, can you share a little bit about that, about your passion for hiking in general, and then some of your top experiences in the U.S. in the continental U.S.

Sandi Oluoch: I always say that. I think my love of hiking just makes me feel like a little kid, you know, at that child, like joy, like I just love being in the fresh air, running around, climbing up things,

enjoying a really good view with friends are on my own. Like it's just great in any season and the sunshine and the rain and the snow.

It's incredible. And I feel like the U.S. is one of the most diverse countries in terms of nature. In terms of people to just any kind of climate, any kind of terrain you have. And, you know, it has the best national park system in the world. I think there's like 63 national parks and they're kept so well. I love the efforts that, you know, people put into those places.

So, I want to see it all. I want to do it all. I think some of the best places I've like hiked in, well, to start last June, my friend and I did the Kalalau trail in Hawaii, and that's known as the most beautiful, but most dangerous trail in the world. Cause it's like this ledge that you're up for it for 22 miles and you get to this secluded beach and it's a permit system and it's really grueling and, you know, you're hauling a backpack, but you have this ocean and beautiful towering cliffs. It was very beautiful and very different. So that's a really great one.

And then I'm a really big fan of Arizona, especially Havasupai. If you've ever seen a beautiful waterfall surrounded by all this red rock, it belongs to the Havasupai people. And it's just this beautiful place, like in another pyramid system, but the money goes to the community, I think, which is really cool. And it's like you hike down into the Grand Canyon, which is awesome. I think those are like my top two, but again, in Washington, I've done a lot of scrambling and I'd love to do more mountaineering stuff, just a lot of like peaks and I love doing those hikes where you're hiking for so long and then you get up and like, it's just 360 views of mountains and ground below you really high up.

Matt Bowles: Well, I know that one of your other loves is surfing, and I want to ask you about how that began and maybe talk a little bit more about Hawaii and your initial experience there and how you connected and fell in love with surfing.

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah, for sure. So, I'm a big water person. Scuba diving was my first introduction to the underwater world. I loved it, but I'd always seen surfing. I thought that looked pretty cool. And you know, there's not a lot of Black people in surfing or diving for that matter. So, it was really me being like, you know what, wouldn't it be cool to just see people who look like me? I want to be part of that movement of Black people surfing.

Like we should be out there. Let me go for it. And so, this is when I was really excited. I think 24, just out of my first serious relationship and just kind of feeling really directionless and feeling an itch to go somewhere. And because Seattle's really close to Hawaii relatively, plane tickets are really cheap and had always been curious about solo traveling because everyone was busy working, but I had some time off.

So, I was like, this is the perfect time for a solo trip. I booked the trip and I went for about a week and I always talk about this experience because it was like my first foray into hostel culture and at the time I booked my flights and they got to Hawaii at like 10 p.m. And I roll into my hostel, and I open the door and there's all these like friendly and happy, excited people being like, "Hey, welcome to Hawaii".

We're going to the beach to go swimming; do you want to come? And so like, I just put my bags down and I go with these strangers and we all just go swimming in the ocean and it's so warm and

so beautiful and there's a full moon. I just remember feeling so carefree and I'm just excited. It's like the happiest I had been in a really long time bobbing in the ocean with all these wonderful people who I still keep in touch with to this day.

And so, I also learned to surf one of them actually taught me how to surf. I was going to pay for lessons, but he had an extra board, and he was like, "Hey, I can teach you". That was where it began. And so, I've been surfing maybe about a couple of times a year for the past couple of years. I wish I could surf more. I'm not super consistent with it, but. It's just a lot of fun, you know, even if you're not that good at it.

Matt Bowles: Well, I know that also then sort of jumpstarted your solo travel journey. Can you talk a little bit about your trip through Latin America?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah. So, the Hawaii trip was in February of 2018. During that time, I was still kind of figuring out my professional life, jumping from job to job.

And one thing I decided was to go back to school and kind of switch up my career. I had been doing a lot of lab research with my Bioengineering degree, and I felt like that wasn't a good fit for me. And that was when people were starting to talk about AI and machine learning, especially in the biotech and like healthcare space.

And I was like, you know what, I think I could go back to school and do something really great with this. And so, I applied to grad schools, and I got in and the job I was at, at the time, I'd been there for six months, and I told them, "Hey, I got into grad school. But I really want to see the world. So, I want to just quit my job and travel for the summer".

And they were so excited for me. One part of the world I hadn't been to at the time was South America. I have been to Asia. I have been to Europe, Africa, obviously, and now North America. And so South America and like Latin America in general, just felt like this really unknown region to me that I was super fascinated by had everything I needed. It had really great oceans, really great hiking, really great food, and a different culture.

And so, I devised this plan to go see Mexico, Belize, and Peru. So, I did, um, North America, Central America, and then South America. And so, I did three weeks in Mexico, and I did a lot of diving in the Cenotes down there, which was incredible. Met a lot of cool people. I remember I had a big 55-liter backpack. On my back and then I had like a 20 liter like day pack on my front and then like a little satchel and my travel pillow and like you're walking around the streets and backpackers are everywhere looking like that. I took a lot of night buses.

I didn't speak Spanish at the time, especially when I was in like really remote places. In Peru, like I like just had to learn how to speak Spanish. Some people had never seen black people in Peru, which was crazy, but everyone was so nice, and I met a lot of cool people again, I still keep in touch with them. I learned so much about Mayan civilization and learned about the Incas. Belize is really great for diving. And I learned a lot about the marine conservation that happens there. And so, it was just like a really great two months of immersing myself in so many new and different adventures. I also went surfing in Peru, which is really cool.

And so, I did three weeks in Mexico, one week in Belize and then five weeks in Peru, and that was perfect. And I got so good at Spanish, which is great.

Matt Bowles: Can you describe some of the top diving experiences? Explain, for example, what is a cenote for people that aren't familiar with that? And then what was it like diving in both Belize and Mexico, which are two of the top dive spots in the world?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah. So, cenotes are essentially these underwater caves, which sounds really scary, but they're usually not super deep, and there's a lot of light that gets in. So, it's like you're basically in this underwater world. It's not really confining like a cave. It's kind of like a fishbowl kind of situation.

And there's a lot of unique ecosystems down there. There's like fossils. There's like Mayan pottery. It's so the Yucatan Peninsula, where all these cenotes are, is actually where like the asteroid that killed the dinosaurs hit the earth. And so, there's just a lot of really cool minerals and different kinds of rock signatures down there.

So, it's a very unique piece of land and those cenotes are really unique and different from just diving straight in the ocean. So, I did this one dive where we would go down to about, uh, 30 meters or 100 feet and there'd be a halocline. And a halocline is essentially where fresh water and saltwater mix.

And then a barrier formed in this underwater of like a hydrogen sulfur cloud. So, you're like diving and then there's this giant cloud underwater. And then we dive deep underneath it. And then it's a different world altogether because now you're in freshwater. So, it was just like really cool.

And then, you know, this was like a hundred feet or something. And so that was, you know, just like different experiences like that. Definitely recommend for scuba divers and if you're a snorkeler or like learning to like swim or dive, there's like a lot of snorkeling excursions that you can take. There's about like 7,000 cenotes in Mexico. So, there's something for everyone.

Matt Bowles: And then in Belize, did you dive the Blue Hole?

Sandi Oluoch: Actually, no, I didn't. I did the Hol Chan Marine Reserve. I told myself I would come back and do that one and then do a helicopter tour once I was making a lot of money. But I was more interested in the Hol Chan Marine Reserve.

I think it has some history of being like the first reserve of its kind in that area and there's a lot of nurse sharks, a lot of sea turtles, just a lot of healthy coral. And the thing to do there is you go to Belize and then you take a ferry to this place called Caye Caulker and a yacht sailing trip. And so, like you get this boat and it's super affordable, which is great.

Like all of this, this stuff is super affordable, and you take a boat and you dive in all these different locations or you can snorkel and there's like stingrays and like nurse sharks and just so much life out there. So that was really beautiful.

Matt Bowles: And then I also want to hear about Peru because you did Machu Picchu. Can you talk about how you did Machu Picchu? How did you get to Machu Picchu and what that whole experience was like? And especially for folks that have never been.

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah. So, I think the best way to do Machu Picchu is to hike to it. So, you can usually just take a train or do a quick day trip. But what I decided to do was do a five-day trekking adventure.

Through the Andes and through all these like mountain peaks and stop at different villages each day and camp out in the wilderness. There was even a hot spring in the middle of nowhere. And then on the fifth day you wake up super early and you get to Machu Picchu by sunrise and you're in the jungle, in the Incan jungle, just climbing up all these giant steps.

After four days of being in the mountains and in the wilderness, that was just. I keep saying the word crazy, but it was unbelievable, you know, especially for my first time in South America, and I like being the avid hiker that I am. It was pretty unique and just being out there with all these people who are like minded like you are.

Drinking a lot of coca tea, coca tea is made from coca leaves in Peru. It helps with altitude sickness. And you know, when you're young, it's like your body's just pumped up and ready to go and you party a lot, but you're also hiking a lot. So, um, I feel like it was really great to get to interact with people in those more remote spaces, you know, and celebrate and just learn about Machu Picchu.

And we lucked out with the weather because I think Machu Picchu is covered in clouds like 200 days of the year. But the day that we went, it was cloudless, which is really cool. And there's like a certain kind of magic in the air, just walking around those ruins, listening to the stories and the history behind them.

It was really special. Oh, and then like, you know, halfway through the track, you actually start to see Machu Picchu in the distance. So, you are like in the forest and then there's this clearing and there's this beautiful vista of like views and stuff. And then you see in the very far out distance, just Machu Picchu. And you're like, wow, I'm actually trekking to go there. And so, I a thousand percent recommend to everyone to try. It's called the South Kentucky track. You can do a different one called the Inca trail. There are the Laris tracks. There's like different lengths for like different like skill levels. But the South Kentucky one is for super adventurous people. I think it's awesome.

Matt Bowles: And then once you completed that three month long solo trip, what would you say was the impact on you and the future trajectory of your life from that trip?

Sandi Oluoch: I think I just became a person who was more fearless. I think when I was younger, I was always so skittish and intimidated. And I struggled so much with self-esteem and doubting myself. And then, you know, as you grow older, you know, you just start to learn more about yourself, you get stronger. But these trips just really taught me that I can do anything. And I'm so thankful for all that adventure because it made me want to push even further to see more and to do more and to learn more.

The more you see of the world, it's like we're all so different, but there's so many things that are the same between so many different cultures. And I think I love that a lot. And just the kind of people that you meet when you're traveling, especially solo traveling. So yeah, I think it just made me want to do more, see more, be more.

Matt Bowles: Well, I also want to ask you about your trip to the Philippines. And I want to ask also about getting into free diving.

Sandi Oluoch: It's my other love.

Matt Bowles: Yes. You were an experienced scuba diver and then talk a little bit about the Philippines in general. I mean, for folks that have never been, and then how you connected with free diving and what that means to you.

Sandi Oluoch: So. Once I got back from my Latin America trip, I started grad school. And when I had first, when I got my acceptance letter to grad school in March, I was like, this means I'll have a winter break. And, you know, all the way back in March, I was like, I should travel somewhere for winter break. I didn't even know the dates or like how it was going to work, but I saw really cheap tickets to the Philippines for like 800 bucks round trip.

And it had been somewhere on my bucket list because I knew it had this beautiful ocean, beautiful marine life and really great diving. And so, I booked it without a care in the world. And then when the time finally came, because I was in grad school and like my finals were a week early, I actually had four weeks to kill.

So, it panned out pretty perfectly. And the reason I chose the Philippines was because free diving was this really cool sport, I had heard of that seemed like advanced snorkeling, essentially what free diving is you learn how to navigate the underwater world on a single breath. When your scuba diving, you have a tank full of air, but I feel like free diving is more of a, they say that scuba diving is a hobby and then free diving is a sport.

And so, you really learn how to train your body. There's a lot of mental influences in it. Like you really learn to meditate. Be calm, learn to be, you know, just pretty zen, which is really cool. You'd really learn to listen to your body, which I love. And just the feeling of being underwater like that, diving for minutes on end, like realizing how strong your body is.

Like that's a feeling that I think everyone should experience at least once. Like that was just something that really left an impression on me. And so. I kind of have since kind of made the transition more to free diving than scuba diving, because I love that weightless feeling. I love training. I love how my body feels and I'm underwater like that.

One of my big flex points is that I can hold my breath for three and a half minutes. That's my record. And in the free diving world, that's nothing, you know, like people can do eight onwards, you know. I learned how to do that after like, um, like a few weeks of like training. So, you know, like now I'm like trying to like to see the world and like diving all over the world just to capture that feeling again.

Matt Bowles: So overall in the Philippines, if folks were going to go there for the very first time, what would be some of your top recommendations? In the Philippines, where to go?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah. So, first of all, I think the thing you should know about the Philippines is that it's a cluster of islands and it can be really challenging to navigate if you're not used to like ferries and timetables and speed boats, it's like not a straightforward way to travel in the Philippines and everything's always delayed or late or canceled.

So just have patience if you go there, it's worth it. I would say the islands you guys need to go to are Coron and El Nido or the Palawan area, that's actually where I got scuba certified and Barracuda

Lake, and you can do this really cool live aboard thing where you go from Coron to El Nido or vice versa.

And you're there for like three days or five days. You can choose. And each day you sleep on a different remote Island, and you eat on the boat, you hang out, and at the end of the day, the boat kind of docks out in the ocean and you swim to the island and you sleep in these cute little like huts on the beach.

That was really cool to experience. And there's like bonfires and you're just like, you know, there's like no electricity, there's no internet, you're just out there, which is really fun.

Matt Bowles: Well, you have also been to another place that I want to ask you about. I have heard from a number of divers, scuba divers and free divers, that it is arguably the best in the world, which is Raja Ampat in Indonesia. So, can you talk about that?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah, so this year I got to go to Indonesia for the first time. And I kind of have been working on this like bucket list of countries that I want to go to. And Indonesia was always at the top. And I knew that in Indonesia, I wanted to go to Raja Ampat. I'd heard about it maybe about two years ago.

And Raja Ampat is this untouched, beautiful paradise, the healthiest coral reefs of Indonesia. And it is so remote. So, I didn't even know how remote it was until I got there. But essentially it is in the Southeast of Indonesia. It sits right on top of Australia, and it is Papua New Guinea being on the right and then Raja Ampat on the left side.

It's part of this state called West Papua. And I found this free diving school online that like took people to Raja Ampat a couple of times a year. And it just coincided with my birthday in November. And I was like, I have to do this. All my friends and my parents are just used to me being, I'm going to go travel to this remote part of the world.

See you later, everyone. And so, it took about 24 hours of travel. I took a flight from Seattle to Tokyo to Jakarta and Indonesia. And then I took two domestic flights to get to that area, then a two-hour ferry, and then a speedboat to kind of illustrate how remote it was. Me and about 11 of the strangers got together and all we did for two weeks was we would wake up at 6 am, do yoga, then we would dive, go free diving, and then we would have breakfast, take a nap. Dive, have lunch, take a nap, dinner, dive, and then go to bed. And then just repeat the entire day again. And we lived in these little huts that were on top of the water, like standing huts in the water. We took bucket baths. The people out there were really, really sweet, really kind. All we did was just dive all day.

And coral reefs are so healthy. I think Raja Ampat has only been a tourist destination for the past, like not even 30 years. So, it's still super brand new. So, if you ever go there, treat it with so much love and respect. It is beautiful out there. And just getting to free dive, just with a lot of likeminded people.

We got along so well, and this is the joy of solo travel. You get to meet so many people and then you keep traveling together, which is really fun. So, all of us got along so well, we decided to go back to Bali together as a group and just keep hanging out there. But I will always look fondly on my time in Raja Ampat and recommend it to anyone who is curious about the underwater world.

Matt Bowles: Well, it is so high on my list, and you have just moved it up even higher with that description. So, I'm very excited to go there. Well, as you know, Sandi, I am so in love with your amazing continent, and I am always trying to put people on to amazing things to do and places to go on the continent of Africa.

And you have been to a particular place that I have not yet been to that I want to ask you about, which is Namibia because I have seen your pictures, and they are just the landscape is mind-blowing. Like it. Unreal. And so, I want you to explain for people who have not seen pictures of Namibia, they know nothing about Namibia. Can you share a little bit, describe what it is like, and put people on to any recommendations that you have?

Sandi Oluoch: It's like another planet. It's like Mars or something out of Star Wars or Dune, just all rolled into one. Namibia is, it's so hard to put into words. It is just this isolated, barren, but beautiful landscape, you know, you have these really tall sand dunes that come in so many different colors. There's this one really unique place where it's like sand dunes meet with like a raging ocean and you can like walk along the crest of the sand dunes, which is really cool. I have a really cool picture from there that my brother took, which is awesome. We got to a road trip through the country. That is a road trip country for sure.

It is barren. It is huge. Everyone has like four-wheel drives and everyone's car is white because it's like so hot out there. You want the white cars to reflect the heat off. So, Namibia was somewhere that my family and I had on our bucket list for as long as I can remember. And I told them this year I'm going to plan for us to go there.

And it was really special to spend that time with my family in Namibia. I loved it solo travel, but I also love traveling with my family and with my friends. I think having a mix of everything is really great. And just finally making that decades long dream come true. Going to Namibia with my family was insane.

Matt Bowles: That is so amazing. Well, I really genuinely was so enamored with your pictures, both the description of like how lovely it was for you personally, with your family, but also, I was looking at that landscape and I was like, I have seen nothing like this before I must go. It's crazy. Can you share a little bit Sandi, about just your career trajectory and how you moved into the remote working nomadic lifestyle where you can do some of these trips and work remotely and what you're up to these days?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah, for sure. So, I touched on me going back to grad school after feeling a bit lost career wise, just because I feel like Biomedical engineering is such a huge umbrella term.

It's like you get that degree and you're like, okay, cool. This is awesome. But what am I actually going to do? So, it took a lot of trial and error. I had a lot of fun during that time going through different jobs and figuring out what worked and what didn't. But I think the real turning point was when I went to grad school because I went to grad school for bioengineering again, but there was a concentration in machine learning and computational biology.

And so that's essentially just like doing coding and programming, but in a biotech space, I feel like AI is like the big buzzword, you know, the last couple of years. And so, I feel like I started doing that

before, like it like blew up and I'm like, well, that's crazy. But I do that stuff that applies to research and healthcare stuff, which is really cool.

And so, the company I work for, I got the job in 2020 and that was when, you know, the world had shut down. And so, my job was fully remote. So, they were kind of like playing around with having people. Work from home. I told them, Hey, like I'm from Kenya. Like I need to go home, and you see my family and they were super kind and they let me work from home.

And I like, you know, was able to build up so much PTO because I was always working remotely and I didn't have to go into an office that now most of my travel, like sometimes I can like work from different countries, sometimes I can work from home, but now it's just working off of PTO. It's, I get to experience what it's like to be a bit of a digital nomad and like seeing the world and getting to work at the same time.

So, a lot of people think that I'm full. I'm not necessarily remote because I'm always traveling, but I feel like I found a really great way to just balance it both. And I think the flexibility of my job is a huge blessing and I'm super thankful for that.

Matt Bowles: But I also want to ask you a little bit about the travel photography that you have been doing, which is amazing. And I also want to ask you about getting published in this book called *Adventurous Women Exploring the World*. Can you talk about that?

Sandi Oluoch: In 2020, again, I feel like we were all cooped up. And I had spent the past couple of years hiking and always taking pictures on my phone. And just like with surfing and diving, I was like, you know, like, I think it'd be really cool to like, see more like women of color, black women doing these things.

So, I started having people take my pictures of me out in the outdoors and also started taking pictures of the landscapes myself. And I like built up a tiny bit of a following on [Instagram](#) and, you know, I got into photography because I'm a huge painter and I love art. And photography was something I'd never really touched until 2020, and I was like, this is a great hobby I should do.

It'll combine my love of art and like the outdoors. So, I bought the cheapest camera that I could at the time. I think I used one of them, what were those checks that they gave us during the pandemic? Those like little checks that came in every, I forget what they're called, but I think they were like checks.

There was like, you know, there'd be like 600 bucks, 600 bucks, 1200 bucks. So, I used one of those checks to buy a camera and a lens and I just started taking pictures. I still consider myself a bit of a, it's like a hobby, like I'm not like a professional or anything, but it fills me with so much joy to like, you know, learn how to work a camera and like to get that shot and like to go out and like at sunset or like sunrise and like take pictures and stuff. So, I do love the creativity that photography gives me. Oh, stimulus checks. That's what they were called. Yeah, that was a great use of my stimulus check.

Matt Bowles: Throwback good use of the stimulus check. And then talk about this book that you're in girl and how people can get it and check you out.

Sandi Oluoch: So, it was really cool.

So back in 2022, this publisher reached out and she was like, I really love following along. I think, you know, you would be perfect for this project I'm working on. This author is great. She usually gets women from all over the world from different backgrounds to tell their stories. And it's always revolving around a certain theme.

So, there's one for surfing, there's one for skiing, there's one for just, you know, like for every kind of like hobby. And so, the book she wanted me to be a part of was solo travel and just like exploration and adventurous activities. And so, she told me to write the story and include some of my photographs.

And I was one of 20 women involved in that project and the book came out last September, which was really cool. And you can buy it on Amazon. It's also sold in certain stores. And so, it was just really cool to be part of something that meant a lot to me. I'm so thankful to that publisher and to the author for letting me be a part of it.

Matt Bowles: Well, we are going to link it up in [the show notes](#). So, there'll be a direct link to it. So, folks can go and grab it and check it out. Out. I want to also ask if you can go a little bit more in depth in terms of some of your experiences as a black traveler and also traveling on a Kenyan passport. Can you talk a little bit about that dynamic?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah, so Touching on being a black person in the outdoors. So, it is something that is getting more popular and like, you're seeing more people of color and like women of color being a part of this world, but for the longest time, you know, you see all those like Columbia or like Patagonia, it's always white people, you know.

And I think growing up, one because of my insecurity was just never seeing. People that look like me doing the things I love. And so, one thing I like to say is that representation matters because I know that like a 10-year-old me would have loved to see someone who looked like me doing those things, just because you want to feel more included, and you want it to be more accessible.

And so, I think that you know, through this, my photography and through my telling of my adventures and encouraging others to get out there after it, they can see that you too can do this. And so that's been something that's really important to me. And to touch on traveling on a Kenyan passport, because I still use my Kenyan passport.

I hate that there is this, like, the hierarchy of, like-powerful versus, like, least powerful passports. And so far, it hasn't been too much of a barrier, but, you know, I'm so privileged, I'm so lucky to live the life I live. Like, I have a lot of, you know, U.S. visas and the Canadian visa and like, I have so many stamps in my passport that it is a lot easier for me to travel, but you know, I still am always double checking and triple checking, you know, requirements and stuff.

You know, you do feel like you are more scrutinized in certain places for having the passport that you do, and there'll be like sign-up sheets and all these. Hikes are like activities of like where people are from and it'll always be like USA, Canada, EU, and then there's like one little Kenya, you know?

And I just think that it's so hard for us as Kenyans to get out there. But you know, with a little bit of luck and a little bit of hard work, I think it is possible. Like don't let having a weaker passport slow you down. Like I've traveled more than any American I know at this point, you know? And I recognize

that that is a huge privilege, you know, from my upbringing and like the experiences I've had, but I still believe it's possible even for any type of Kenyan or anyone else on a weaker passport. Just go for it.

Matt Bowles: I was going to ask you if you had any particular tips for black travelers who may be at the earlier part of their travel journey, and maybe especially folks from the continent that are interested in that.

Sandi Oluoch: Really take advantage of the visa free countries. You can go to start with those first, build up those passport stamps, you know, and they're always like really great countries. Like there's so many visa-free countries within Africa itself. So, start with that. A lot of Southeast Asia is available visa free for people on Kenyan passports or a lot of African passports.

So, I always say start off with visa free places. Those are also the cheaper places as well. And then when you're applying for the bigger places, like a Schengen visa, they'll be like, oh, you've already been to such and such place. So, it gives you credibility. Um, and then, you know, like make sure you don't overstay your visa.

Be polite. Don't worry about what people think about you or, you know, if you get weird looks or anything, that's their problem. Don't worry about it. Just put your best foot forward, I think. Yeah. So those are just a few tips.

Matt Bowles: The other thing that I would mention is that there are actually some places where it's easier to travel, which would be on the continent of Africa.

As I can remember when I went to Nigeria for the first time, I went to Lagos for a month and I went with my home girl, [Agnes Niyomwange](#), who is Kenyan and travels on a Kenyan passport. And I interviewed her on The Maverick Show for anybody that hasn't heard of that episode. We talked about Nigeria, but her experience getting into Nigeria was easier than my experience getting into Nigeria. Right? So, there are some places, you know, on the continent that you can get in with an African passport that is easier than getting in with, say, even an American passport in some cases. And there are so many amazing places on the continent of Africa.

Sandi Oluoch: That's what I was saying. Like, I think just to really utilize just Going to places within Africa itself first because their visa free to a lot of us. So, it's great.

Matt Bowles: Yeah, absolutely amazing. And then how about for the solo female travelers who might be at the earlier part of their journey contemplating the solo Female travel dynamic? What tips would you have for them?

Sandi Oluoch: I would say just like, do your research about the places, make sure if you're landing in a new country for the first time, book a flight that lands in the daytime, share your like phone location with people, have an itinerary that you like check in with people with, stay in hostels, join group activities, stuff like that, just like, you know, like safety precautions you would take at home, just take them with you and you go abroad as well.

Matt Bowles: All right, Sandi, let me ask you one more question and then we'll wrap this up and move into the lightning round. When you think back about all the travel that you've done up to this

point, you think about the impact that it's had on you as a person. Why do you continue to travel? What does travel mean to you today?

Sandi Oluoch: That's a really great question. Again, I think even though I've done so much travel, I still feel like I'm so curious about the world and I still want to see so much. I want to meet new people. I want to learn more about, you know, different cultures, experience new things. I want to take advantage of the fact that I can do it.

You know, like I feel like privilege is a big thing for me and I'm so lucky to live the life that I do. I want to make the most of it. I don't want to take anything for granted. Um, I want to make sure, you know, I'm traveling ethically and like, you know, like sustainably and just like being respectful.

I want to have fun. I want to do more and see more. I'm a very goals-oriented kind of person. And so, I want to do this here. I want to do that there. And like, I feel like I'm always like such a dreamer and I want to like do as much as I can with, you know, whatever time I have on this earth.

Matt Bowles: Can you give any reflections on the ethical and sustainable dynamics of travel and in your experiences, what types of things have come up or have you been pushed to reflect on?

And at this point, after thinking about that stuff, what tips might you have for others as well about how we can move through this world most ethically and sustainably possible?

Sandi Oluoch: I think one thing is like consumerism like you really don't need too much stuff. And I think that sometimes in America and in a lot of places, other places in the world, we can be so wasteful.

I think we don't think about the food that we throw out or like we buy too much stuff and like we accumulate things, and you just don't need that much stuff. And I think traveling has taught me that you can get by on so much less and you can be happier about it. As much as I love airplanes and like.

Flying around, I think also just opting to, you know, do the bus or like take the train or like other modes of transport instead of flying, always flying does have a really big carbon footprint, like just, you know, opt to take the train or like a bus or something, because that's also a better way to like see the country and like give back to the economy and stuff.

And then also shopping locally, don't always go to chain restaurants, go to like people on the streets, like buy like the, you know, the stuff that like people hand make. So, stuff like that, just like a lot of little things. Yeah.

Matt Bowles: Awesome advice. And I think that is a great place to end the main portion of this interview. And at this point, Sandi, are you ready to move into the lightning round?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah, let's do it.

Matt Bowles: Let's do it. All right. What is one book that has maybe significantly impacted you over the years? You'd most recommend that people should read.

Sandi Oluoch: So, it's a book I read in 2022. It's called the Island of Sea Women, and it's a historical fiction based on the.

South Korean women called the hanyeo. I don't think I'm saying that right, but they're the hanyeo and they're essentially just these amazingly talented women who back in like, you know, the 1900s up until like maybe the 1970s would free dive down and catch abalone. And a lot of societies that's, the men who were doing all the work and like bringing home money and stuff, but they were like matriarchs of their society, and they propelled their communities forward.

And so, the book kind of follows this young girl growing up in that society. And you learn a lot about Korea, Japan, China, and like a lot of what happened during that time. And so, it was just a really great cultural insight into that part of the world. And the author is actually half Korean. And I think her grandmother was one of them.

these people, one of these women. And so it taught me so much. I would walk around with this book and people would stop me on the streets and be like, that's a great book. So, and the women lived in an area in South Korea called Jeju Island.

Matt Bowles: All right, Sandi, who is one person currently alive today that you've never met?

Sandi Oluoch: So, this is a really great question. I thought about it quite a bit. And I think one person who I've always had in the back of my mind is Malala Yousafzai. She is a wonderfully brave woman who fought for women's right to education in Pakistan. People know her because she was literally shot by the Taliban in the head, and she survived, and she put her life on the line and fought with everything she had.

Everything she had for a better future, and I think someone like that would be worth sitting down and learning from and just talking to like I'm so thankful for her and like she's so brave. She's younger than me. It's crazy. She has an autobiography book that had a really big impact on me. So, I think I would choose her.

Matt Bowles: That's a great choice.

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah.

Matt Bowles: All right. Sandi, knowing everything that you know now, if you could go back in time and give one piece of advice to your 18-year-old self, what would you say to 18 year old Sandi?

Sandi Oluoch: I would tell her to just go for it, even if you're scared. All these big dreams that you have, just go for it.

You don't have to have everything figured out. You don't have to feel like you're ready, because the truth is you're never going to feel ready. Just go for it. Do the things that scare you, step out of your comfort zone because it's always worth it. Even if you fail, you learn something. And most of the time there's always something you can learn.

So, there's really no failure when it comes to just stepping out of your comfort zone. So yeah, just go for it. Even if you're scared, do it, fake it till you make it.

Matt Bowles: All right, Sandi. Out of all the places that you have now traveled, what are three of your favorite destinations you would most recommend that people should definitely visit?

Sandi Oluoch: This is the hardest question because I want to recommend everywhere because I feel like I fall in love with everywhere that I go to, but I had some time to think about this one and I chose three places that are super different, but had a really great impact on myself and I felt like I told a really great story about the areas that they're in.

So, I would choose Peru, I would choose the Philippines, and I would choose Namibia as places that everyone should visit at least once. And those are countries that are so different from one another, so you'll just get the whole breadth of experiences. Going to those places.

Matt Bowles: All right, Sandi, what are your top three bucket list destinations? These are places you have not yet been highest on your list, you'd most love to see.

Sandi Oluoch: So again, another hard question. I want to go everywhere. I want to see it all, but there are places that I think about. Over and over my whole trip to like the Philippines and like Indonesia. Those are countries that I had in my mind for years.

And so currently the places that are on my bucket list that I would keep thinking about, I'd really love to go to Bolivia. That one's been on my bucket list since I went to South America. I want to go there specifically to see the salt flats. The people are really kind there. I want to go to the highest, largest city in the world.

Um, I think their way of life is really cool out there. The second place I really want to go to is French Polynesia as a free diver. I want to go during the humpback whale season and dive with the whales. You know, they have their babies and they're like singing. Like, I think that would be really, really cool to see.

And then thirdly, I'd love to go to Senegal. So, I've been to Eastern Africa. I've been to Southern Africa but West Africa feel like it's somewhere that I daydream about. Like, I think it'd be really cool. Like, their culture is so different from, like, East African culture. And Senegal in particular stands out to me because, you know, they just have a really great coastal culture.

They surf there. The people are just so beautiful. And like, they seem like they have a lot of fun. I like the way they speak French. I think I would have so much fun in Senegal. And the way people talk about it, like, I think I would thrive there.

Matt Bowles: Sandi, those are amazing pics. I have spent three months in Senegal. I have gone back multiple times and my image in my mind, I have a couple, but one of them is sitting on the beach at sunset, drinking a lovely cocktail and watching all of the Senegalese surfers surfing the waves. It is just, I mean, as a surfing destination, it is, you know, it would be spectacular, but it's spectacular for a giant litany of reasons. Dakar, Senegal is one of my favorite cities in the world, and I've been putting everybody on to it. So, I think that's a great pick. And then Bolivia is. Also, unbelievable. I have been...

Sandi Oluoch: You've been to Bolivia?

Matt Bowles: Yes.

Sandi Oluoch: Wow.

Matt Bowles: It is perhaps the most mind blowing landscape I have seen anywhere in the world. And for someone like you who thrives on natural landscape, both in terms of your photography interests, but also in terms of your hiking and adventure and exploration.

You would love it so much. So, I think that's an amazing bucket list for you. Highly endorse and cosign on that. And definitely hit me up when you're ready to plan those trips. All right, Sandi, we have now come to the two most important questions of this interview. I am going to start by asking you to name your top five Afrobeat artists.

I have been putting my audience onto Afrobeats for many years now, but before you name your five, can you share a little bit about what Afrobeats means to you and what you love about it?

Sandi Oluoch: I think it just represents the spirit of having fun. I love how it's Africans way of being like, this is how I interact with the world.

This is how I move through it. Like whenever you hear the music, it's just so carefree and fun. I take an Afrobeats workout class once a week and it is so much fun. Every time I go out dancing, when they play an Afrobeats song, my friends and I go crazy. And so, I love Afrobeats.

Matt Bowles: Well, I will also tell you this, my introduction to Afrobeats was In East Africa, when I was living in Nairobi and in Kampala in Uganda and places like that.

And I was going out to clubs with local friends of mine that were taking me out. And I was just so enamored with the music. I was that white dude on the dance floor, like shamming every song. I'm like, what is happening? You know, just building these playlists. And then I start looking all these artists up. A bunch of them obviously are from Nigeria and stuff like that. So, I'm like, I'm like, I have got to go to Nigeria.

Sandi Oluoch: Another reason to go West Africa.

Matt Bowles: Totally. So that literally inspired my trip to West Africa, you know, from East Africa to go there. So absolutely amazing. Totally agree on all that. So, who are your top five favorite Afrobeat artists?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah, so the first one is Asake. He's really good. I feel like he's newer on the scene, but his albums are albums you can like listen to from start to finish, which is something I really appreciate in artists. And then my second one is Tyla, especially her song Water. Like that's such a great song. And then I love Rema, obviously, Masego, and Thames.

Matt Bowles: Amazing. I was just about a year ago. I was in Ghana for December, Dettu December, as they say, in and around the New Years' time. And I got to go to the Afrobeat festivals there. The Afro Nation was there and Afro future. It was called Afrochel and now it's called Afro future was there at the same time. So, they had two festivals their and.

All of the Afrobeat artists from Burna Boy on Down, descended on Ghana and performed in Accra, and it was, I mean, all-night parties, every night, like there's no sleeping, there's like day parties, night parties. The concerts are all night till three. Then there's the after-party that goes on till seven. Then there's, I mean, it just, it was like around the clock.

Afrobeat is like heaven. I mean, it was unbelievable. So, I've been putting people onto that as well. I was like, listen, Ghana in December is like a whole different type of situation. Like if you love Afrobeats, you definitely got to check that out. I also, for the final question of this interview, I want to ask you about your Top Five Hip Hop Emcees.

But before I do that, can you talk a little bit about hip hop music and hip-hop culture and what that means to you and why you love hip hop?

Sandi Oluoch: Yeah. So, I love hip hop rap, that whole sphere of like music. Sometimes I feel like it blends into one another, especially with like RnB and like neo soul stuff.

But hip-hop rap, I think again, it's just such a great insight into a culture. There's a lot of history, a lot of power behind it. People's words, especially in a time when I feel like Black people couldn't really speak or like had no voice. So, it is very powerful, and I love that it is as mainstream as it is now.

And I love that it plays such a huge role in history. So, it's really important to me and it's really great to listen to. It really fires you up. You know, it's like a all-good things.

Matt Bowles: All right, Sandi, who are your top five?

Sandi Oluoch: So, this was hard, but Kendrick Lamar is someone who has always had a really big impact on me.

He's another artist where I can listen to an album from start to finish, and it's several of those. His music is catchy and it's also just like really powerful. I love the way he speaks. I love the stuff he raps about. I hate that he like drops an album and then disappears for like five years, but when he drops the albums, they're always great.

A second one is who's currently my favorite artist for the past couple of years. He does a lot of like hip hop and R& B mixed together and it's Anderson Paak and he is great. When people ask me who's playing in the car, it's always Anderson Paak. It's my goal to see him live. He's incredible. I love his music.

Third is Mac Miller. I listened to a lot of Mac Miller in high school. I just love that teenage rap. And like when you're a similar age to someone and they're like, they're Careers blowing up and there's rapping about, you know, really cool stuff. I really enjoyed his music. It's also very emotional, which I like as well.

And then I feel like no hip hop list is complete without Jay Z, especially his stuff from the nineties. Very important, very cool. Really just. unique standalone music. And then my last one, which I feel like I'm going to get hate on, but I really like Logic. I know he's really corny sometimes, but his mixtapes when he was younger were really, he's just so talented at like rapping over a beat.

And I really liked that. And so, mal was a day one fan and no matter what, Trajectory he takes, I'm always going to be there.

Matt Bowles: All right, Sandi. I want you to let folks know at this point, how they can find you, follow you on social media, connect with you, and learn more about what you're up to. Get the book, all that good stuff. How do you want people to come into your world?

Sandi Oluoch: So, [Instagram](#) is my main way. Just my first and last name, *sandi.oluoch*, that's my Instagram handle. And then I am working on my website this year. That's a resolution of mine for the year. I currently have my photography up there, but I want to start writing more about my travels, doing little guides and stuff.

And so, my website is sandioluoch.com. So that's a great way to reach out to me. And then there's like an Amazon link to the book as well.

Matt Bowles: We are going to put all of that in [the show notes](#). So, folks can just go to one place at themaverickshow.com. Go to the show notes for this episode. You're going to see everything linked up there: social media handles, everything we've discussed in this episode, the link to get the book, all that good stuff is going to be in one place: themaverickshow.com.

Sandi, this was amazing. Thank you so much for coming to the show.

Sandi Oluoch: Thank you for having me. It's been great.

Matt Bowles: All right. Good night, everybody.