

Matt Bowles: My guest today is Kristin Wilson. She is a location independent entrepreneur, the author of the best-selling book [Digital Nomads for Dummies](#). She is the host of the [Badass Digital Nomads](#) podcast, and she is the creator of the Traveling with Kristin [YouTube channel](#), which now has over 150,000 subscribers and is syndicated on streaming services such as Hulu. She has lived and worked in over 60 countries in the last 15 years. She has run the [Ready to Relocate](#) group coaching program that has now helped over a thousand remote workers relocate worldwide and she has been featured in Bloomberg Businessweek, ESPN, the New York Times, the Huffington Post, and the list goes on.

Kristin, welcome back to The Maverick Show.

Kristin Wilson: Thank you, Matt.

Matt Bowles: It is so good to have you here. You're one of my favorite people and you are one of the most prolific guests. This is actually your fourth appearance on The Maverick Show and for anybody that has not heard of your first three appearances, we're going to link them up in [the show notes](#). I highly suggest people go back and check those episodes out because of incredibly important and inspiring stories about how you became a nomad and a lot of your initial travel, a lot of your professional pivots and all of that good stuff. But for this episode I thought it would be really cool just for you and me to catch up because you've been doing some amazing things recently and we haven't talked in a really long time.

Kristin Wilson: It's so great to be back on The Maverick Show. One of my favorite podcasts, as you know, and I hope that people are not sick of me yet since it is my fourth time on the show.

Matt Bowles: Not at all. You always provide an amazing level of energy and an incredible amount of nomad wisdom and insight every time you're on the show, so I aim to have you on about once a year. I've been doing this since 2018, you are a pillar episode in the creation of this show. You're [episode number three](#) of The Maverick Show. So, I'm super excited to get you on because you've done a lot of new and impressive and interesting things since the last time I had you on the show.

And what might be a great place to start is we all slowed down our travel for the pandemic and we sort of found a place and stayed in a place for a while, or at least most of us did for the pandemic. And that gave us a lot of time to sort of reflect on travel and reflect on our lifestyle and reflect on what we wanted to do and what we wanted to design, how we wanted to live once we could have all of that freedom to travel again.

And so, I'm curious for you, you've been nomading longer than I have. You have been a digital nomad for over 15 years. And I'm curious when you think back on your different periods of your nomad life and then going through the pandemic, and I know you were based mostly in Miami during that, and now that you have the freedom to travel again, what have been some of your reflections on just the concept of location independence and how you've exercised the freedom of location independence and your choices for how to travel, how long to stay, where to go, all that kind of stuff. And coming out now of the pandemic and being able to have that freedom again, how are you going to choose to structure your lifestyle? Can you share some of your reflections on that?

Kristin Wilson: Yeah, I mean, I think the ability to be location independent using the Internet is a defining part of this generation. There is a very distinct before and after the Internet where before I felt like my life and my future were very confusing. I didn't know what to do. And then after the Internet made it possible for people to live and work in more places, that just changed all of our lives forever. I feel like the way that I

came into this lifestyle was by accident, just stumbling my way through life. I had these jokes with my friends about the quarter life crisis back when we were in college. And then it kind of felt like we never got out of it. And then you just go into the midlife crisis and yada, yada, yada, because there's just like no rule book for life in the context of the postindustrial education system.

And so, I feel like that creates a lot of anxiety and worry because we're not really in touch with what we should be doing here. Like, why are we all Here there was a big movement on finding your path. And I think that it started back, I think in the 70s, when this book about what color is your parachute came out. I wasn't alive then, but in the 60s or 70s, I read about it, one of Cal Newport's books. But there's been this question of how people can combine their passions with a way to make money. And for the past hundred years or so, it's been very clear that you would have to just work to make money and work to survive, and that wouldn't necessarily be connected to things that you are interested in. Like you might be working on a farm or in a factory, or more recently, in an office building.

And so, when I was faced with those choices when graduating from college, none of them really resonated with me. And so, this created a lot of anxiety and strife in my life. Many people know the story of how I ended up in Costa Rica. That's in the other podcast. But it was working in a traditional job in real estate, which was also a means to an end. I wanted to be able to travel, I wanted to be able to live abroad. Ever since I first went outside of the country as a teenager and then studied abroad twice, I just didn't know how I could do it. And so, the Internet made that possible, first by being able to sell properties to people from different countries. From Costa Rica, they found us through the Internet.

I remember learning about SEO for the first time around 2005. And then as I was living there, by complete synchronicity, chance accident, technology was increasing at a rate that it just made it easier and easier to do other things on the Internet. So, whereas first when I went to Costa Rica, it was a very seasonal place where I was living, it was only open half the year because when it was the low season, the town would like to shut down. All the restaurants would close, and it would rain, and people would go home. And our Internet was from a satellite, and it was super slow, and it would go out when it was raining.

And it went from that, like, basically America online, like living in muddy streets, to today they're having BPM Costa Rica music festivals and things like that where I used to live. And there's people working remotely from home, and there's super luxurious yoga and retreat centers, and there's paved roads and there's more bridges. Like, there is this boom in not just digital infrastructure, but also physical infrastructure and the tourism and the investment that came with that. And so, I think that location independence, when that term finally permeates into the Mainstream awareness and historians look back, I think they'll first go back to 1997 with the book *Digital Nomad* and see how significant that was.

And then they will look at how the pandemic changed things to allow for more people to work from home and work remotely, and then how that was like a tipping point into what we're going into now. So, there have always been nomadic people. There have always been travelers and people wandering around the world. It's just that without the Internet; those people weren't broadcasting what they were doing. And they also had to find different ways to support themselves while they were doing that versus today. I think now, as I've been doing this for a long time and I've gotten older, I've learned in more to I'm doing this, and I'm also doing it in a way that I want versus before doing it in a way that I thought this was too good to be true. It can't last forever. Eventually I have to stop doing it. Eventually I have to move home. Eventually I have to get a real job. And now it's like, no, actually, I can just continue building my business and my brand and continue having this lifestyle in whatever form that is suiting me at any time.

And I don't have to apologize for it. I don't have to stop doing it. And it took me years to come around to that mindset. And so that's what the mindset that I would like to share with other people. Like, if you don't think that it's possible, or you think you can only do it before you have kids or before you get married or after your kids move out or all these other, like, restrictions that we put on ourselves when things seem too good to be true, then I would just say, yeah, basically all of the rules are lifted. The walls are obliterated. It's like, if you want to make a living being a TikToker or a YouTuber or creating apps or being a virtual assistant or whatever, you can think up, you can do it. And no one can tell you that you can't do it or how long you can do it.

Matt Bowles: Well, one of the things that's been so inspiring for me about watching your journey, and you and I, of course, are in touch regularly. We text each other. We're very close and all of that. And one of the things that's always been so inspiring to me about you is watching you just decide that you want to pursue an additional passion of yours. And so, I remember when you were like, you know what? I really want to try to become a DJ, which I particularly had love for because I was a DJ back in the 1990s, right? So, I really have love for DJs, I have a lot of friends that are DJs and all that. And I remember when you were like, I wanted to become a DJ, and can you talk about that journey and where it has currently evolved to now and how you have integrated it into your personal brand, your nomadic travels and everything else?

Kristin Wilson: This ability to just decide to be a DJ is something that fits in perfectly with the curve of the technological revolution. Because I wanted to be a DJ since I was in middle school. When I went to my middle school dances and I saw the DJs playing vinyl, I was like, what are they doing? We had a record player at my house, but we had one and it just played one song at a time. And to see people mixing music together, I used to love this song in middle school that was like, hey, Mr. DJ, I'm not going to sing it because that's not my thing yet. But it's wild to think that I was 11 years old and that was my favorite song because I really think that we're born with a propensity for certain activities and interests and talents.

So, I always wanted to do it, but back then it was vinyl. It was not practical for me. I had no money to acquire a record collection, you know. And then when I moved to Costa Rica, technology still hadn't really caught up with where it is today, obviously. And I signed up for a DJ course in 2008 when I came back from Nicaragua, and I was the only one who signed up, so it got canceled. So, I still didn't learn how to DJ because it was after like the Napster years and stuff, but there weren't good ways of finding music and downloading it. And I was living in the jungle, so I just didn't do it. And it really wasn't until I went fully nomadic in 2013.

Like, January of 2013 is when I moved out of my apartment in Costa Rica, and I moved to Europe that I was finally immersed in the electronic music culture and started going to more festivals and getting more interested in it because I'd been seeing European DJs who came to Costa Rica to play at the beach and stuff like that. But it was like, who is this person? You couldn't Shazam a song. There wasn't Instagram, like, there weren't flyers to say who the people were. Like, we just didn't have any information. And so really, it wasn't until I started living in Amsterdam or, like, traveling through there, and then I finally took my first DJ class in 2018 that I was like, okay, I'm going to do this. But then, of course, I was still traveling and doing. Traveling with Kristin and stuff.

So, it wasn't until the pandemic happened that I actually had more time, and I could buy equipment and practice at home. So, like, I have such empathy for people that are older. Like, my grandmother passed away a couple years ago. She had so many things that she was interested in that she was just born too soon to be able to do it. And I get so excited to know that anything that you want to learn about you can.

You can become an expert at anything if you just patient and dedicate the time to it. Like today I was eating lunch, and I was watching some cooking show and I was like, learning how to ice cupcakes. You know, like, you could just watch a tutorial on how to make the perfect cupcake. Whereas before, you had to, like, go get a cookbook and ask people who knew how to bake if they knew how to make cupcakes. You know what I mean?

So, it's like, we can do things so fast now. And so now I'm DJing, even though I was horrible at piano when I was a little kid and I know nothing about music theory, but yet, for some reason, I select songs and mix them together in a way throughout the course of a set that has a visible impact on people. And when I went public and played my first DJ gig, I was completely hooked because of the response from people who I didn't know in the venues, who would, like, come up to me and talk to me or send me Instagram messages, who I didn't talk to them. I just was playing music. Like, that blew me away. And I've seen how music is a universal language.

And so that just really appeals to me. And now I'm so ecstatic that I get to get paid to play music when I'm traveling in countries and cities and islands and places that I really love, and then now to actual other remote workers and digital nomads and travelers. It's just mind boggling. So that somehow that's now part of my life.

Matt Bowles: It's amazing. And I can relate to so much of that because I was a DJ back in the 90s during my high school and college and all of that. And the same thing, right? It was such an exhilarating feeling to be able to play for a crowd and be able to move the crowd just through the music that you're playing. But I think you've done such an amazing thing. I mean, one saying I really want to pursue being a DJ, even though it's a traditional thing that doesn't necessarily lend itself to location independent of the digital Nomad life, at least not the way that I was doing it. But you've done it in a way where when you're in Miami, you can get gigs in Miami, and when you're traveling around the world and nomading, you can just get gigs all over the world.

And you've started DJing in all of these international spaces, including at Nomad conferences and events and all that kind of stuff. And so, you've just integrated this into your personal brand. I want to do this, and now this is part of what I do. And in the same way that I go around, and I speak at conferences, I can also DJ at those conferences, and I can do this thing and I can play this music for all these people all over the world. And I think that's just such an amazing example about how whatever your passion is, whatever you want to pursue, you can figure out how to do it and then you can integrate it into your lifestyle.

Kristin Wilson: Yeah, that's a great point. Because my first international gig was in Istanbul in the summer. It was around my birthday, July of last year. And the reason I was in Istanbul was with the Safety Wing Ambassador program, because I'm an ambassador of Safety Wings. And that's because I shared about Safety wing on [my YouTube](#) channel and [my podcast](#). And so, because of that, I was invited to Istanbul. And then I was able to DJ at an underground techno club in Istanbul on my birthday, on my 40th birthday, like, it was wild. The whole reason I was there because of my travel lifestyle and being a digital nomad. And then the first class I took of DJing in Amsterdam, those guys invited me to play at a show that they had during Amsterdam Dance event, which I went to for the first time 10 years ago.

So, it's so surreal to now be able to play in those places that were like such a big part of my previous identity, I guess. And then the most recent one, which was the most mind boggling that you can't even like make up, is being able to speak at a Nomad conference. As you mentioned, I was at the Nomad Island Fest

by the Nomad Escape in Madera Island in the Digital Nomad Village, Matt, the Digital Nomad Village, giving a talk about how to make money with online content. And then the same day in the evening, playing at a party for digital Nomads, which is called Purple Fridays, which is hosted at the Estalagem Hotel. And Nomad X, who I was working with for videos for [my YouTube](#) channel.

It's a housing company for digital nomads by Digital Nomads, who I was introduced to by [Dave Williams](#) during the pandemic when he was part of Flat IO and NomadX. Because of those connections, I was in Portugal working with them. They're sponsors of the party that I played at. And Dave also put me in touch with the organizers of Madeira Nomad Friends and all these things. And so, it's like all fully connected. And I just had to even go by myself for a couple hours and just stare at the ocean and just let it sink in, what was happening. And I'm still not over it. And that was two months ago.

Matt Bowles: It's so amazing. I mean, first of all, shout out to [Dave Williams](#) because he's been on the Maverick show and what an amazing human being, what an amazing connector, an amazing networker in terms of putting incredible people together.

Kristin Wilson: Totally.

Matt Bowles: The number of people that he's introduced me to, obviously the number of people he's introduced to you to. What an extraordinary guy. Also, [Goncalo Hall](#), who currently runs NomadX. Big shout out. He's been on The Maverick show as well. Maverick Show listeners know [Goncalo Hall](#) to the stuff that he's going. So really, really awesome that you were there and able to DJ and able to speak. I'd like to go a little bit deeper on that because you were asked to speak about monetizing content and you have done some incredible, I think, in my opinion, some of the absolute best digital Nomad content that has ever been done.

I'm a big fan, as you know, of the Badass Digital Nomads podcast. I'm a regular listener, a big fan of the *Traveling with Khristin* [YouTube](#) channel, which now has over 150,000 subscribers and growing rapidly. And as a result of all of that, you were asked to speak on monetizing content. I know it was a very long talk and you went very deep on a lot of stuff, but just sort of a high level, sort of maybe summary of what were some of the main points for people that might be interested in. In monetizing a YouTube channel, a podcast, that kind of stuff, in terms of how you've done it.

Kristin Wilson: Thank you, Matt. I appreciate the kind words. And yeah, as you mentioned, this is a topic you could write a series of books about and do online courses for years. But I would say the most important things are kind of going back to this whole topic of this conversation is first, being aware that you can make money with content. Anyone can make money with content. You can decide, like me, to be a travel blogger. You can decide to start a cooking channel. You can decide to start a sports podcast or something about a very specific topic.

And you can be bigger than mainstream media. Just let that sink in. You don't need Hollywood connections. You don't need millions and millions of dollars. You don't need to work your way up the corporate ladder at NBC or whatever. You don't need to go to film school. Like, you literally don't need any qualifications. You just can pursue whatever form of content that resonates with you, that you're interested in and that makes sense for your business model or your idea for your business model. You can do that, and then no one can stop you. No one can tell you how big you can be, how much money you can make.

And I love looking at the example of Mr. Beast, who's, I think, still 24 years old, or 25 if he's not already, he will be the first YouTube billionaire. He will eventually run for president someday. He's beat McDonald's and other world record holders for the most amount of hamburgers sold in a day by, like, four or five times the world record. And it's the permissionless economy. No one can tell him what he can do. Like, he can do whatever he wants because he started a YouTube channel, and he didn't give up.

Now, for some of us, I don't necessarily care about being the biggest YouTuber in the world. So, I'm not trying to compete with Mr. Beast, but that's his goal, and he's doing it. And for some people, it will take longer than others. For some people, they might go viral and start making money within three months on YouTube. For other people, it could take, like, 10 years. Like, I actually know some really big YouTubers that I was just curious, and I looked back and I saw that they had been doing it for 15 years or 12 years, and their channels were super small. And then one day, it hit a tipping point, and they got big. And now everyone's like, oh, they have 500,000 subscribers. They have a million subscribers. Like, yeah, because they've been doing it for 12 years.

So, if you just don't give up, you can do it. And you can have a basketball podcast that gets more downloads than ESPN and that to me blows my mind. So, we're living in a time now where each individual human being can become a media company. And I think that's what we should all think of ourselves as not just a solopreneur or an influencer or an affiliate marketer or a YouTuber. I think those terms kind of belittle us in a way. I think we can each think of ourselves as a communications company or a media company and build a real business that way.

So, first is knowing that you can do it and no one can stop you and the resources exist for you to make money doing that and support yourself. Second is to choose a platform that you like. I remember when TikTok first came out and [Gary Vee](#) and everyone was like, you have to be on TikTok and blah blah, blah. And I kind of started it and then I was like, no, you don't have to be on every single social media platform. You only have to be on one, like the one that works. And I've even learned through YouTube that it can actually hurt you to share your videos on YouTube because you might be sharing them with people who don't like them, who don't want to watch them, or who watch two seconds of it and then click off. And those are showing the YouTube algorithm that the people that you shared that video with are not interested in it.

And so even things like that, it's like everyone's like, you have to share your stuff on every social media platform. That's not true. So, you pick the platform that you're really interested in. In my case, it was more than one. I couldn't decide, I just couldn't. Like I had to do three. I had to do video, audio and writing. That's just like what I'm called to do. So, I have to do it. But for some people it will be different. And then you need to think about why are you creating content. Like, for me, I felt like I had to scream from the rooftops that this lifestyle that I was living was possible for a ton of people.

And that's why I started a relocation company to help 25-year-old poker players move from Kansas to Costa Rica to change their lives and like let them play poker from wherever they wanted, from the beach instead of their parents' basement. I just wanted to let people know that they could do this. And I'm still doing that now. So yeah, basically know that you can do it. Choose a platform that resonates with you. If you hate LinkedIn, don't start a LinkedIn newsletter because you think you have to don't start a TikTok because everyone else is doing it. Like just pick one and then figure out why are you creating the content? What is the outcome that you're giving to people? What is the problem that you're solving for them? Why would people consume your content? You need to really deeply think about this.

And then as soon as you start publishing content and you start to get your first five or six views, your first two or three downloads, try to get in touch with the people that are consuming your content. If they're reading your blog, leave something at the bottom to ask them to leave a comment. Try to leave a contact box for them to contact you. Like offering them an Amazon gift card if they send you an email. You know, like try to get in touch with them and figure out what they want your with. And yeah, I wish I did that at the very beginning when I was getting like 10 views and 10 downloads.

And then there's your monetization strategy. It's not built to a million subscribers and then do affiliate marketing. It's like how do you help one person who listens to your podcast? How do you help one person who watches your video? How do you help one person who searched for something and found your blog post and Reddit? Like, what is the best way for you to help them? Do they want consulting calls? Do they want your recommendations for some kind of products? Do they want a book from you? Do they want a course? Do they want a community to be a part of? And that's how you figure out your monetization strategy and then you can build from there.

Matt Bowles: What have been some of your primary strategies or tactics that have benefits effective in growing your audience? Because you've had now a number of YouTube videos that have gone viral, gotten over a million views. Like huge, massive, well-known videos. Your channel has over 150,000 subscribers. You have one of the tops, most well-known, most well respected digital nomad podcasts, Badass digital nomads. So, both in the audio and in the video space, you're a significantly well-known influencer. What have been some of those primary leverage points that have really helped you to grow your audience, would you say?

Kristin Wilson: Well, time, consistency and practice. I really think that's it. Because it's easy to look now, five years later and say, okay, these videos went viral, these blog posts went viral, she got this book deal, blah, blah, blah. But I started with nothing but a GoPro, no knowledge of how to do anything. I just followed the steps that I just gave you. I had a very strong why, like a reason why I wanted to create content that I had had since childhood. I could remember watching Brooke Burke on Wild on E. In my bedroom at 11 pm, turning the volume down so my parents wouldn't know I was still awake and wanting to have my own travel show. And that was something I wanted since I was a little kid, and my grandparents worked for Pan Am Airlines and I always loved travel.

So, it's like, do you do who you are? And if you follow that, then you can learn all those tactics and stuff. So just starting and committing to it and then publishing. I've had videos, blog posts, podcasts don't go viral. Videos went viral, blog posts went viral on medium, and I've had photos published on Unsplash that have gotten tens of millions of views and a million downloads. I'm not a photographer. I just would like to set up my camera on a tripod and take a picture. Okay. So, it's just putting yourself out there. It's like repeating it. I've missed a couple weeks of the podcast, but I pretty much haven't missed a week, maybe one a year and four years.

And when I quit doing YouTube last year to write my book, I was off YouTube for six months just like a normal human. My stats plummeted because I stopped publishing. So yeah, it's just showing up and being consistent and as you go, you will start to come up against things you don't know how to do. And so, you need to figure out those things and then you just improve 1% per week and that's compound interest and eventually you get better. And I think also you are starting to get more confident to talk about the things that you really care about. And are really important. It's not just like a top 10 list or something that people are

Googling, like SEO friendly. When you start to open up and really be yourself and be emotional and be vulnerable, then those are the videos that tend to go viral and the blog posts that go viral.

I published a blog post about why Facebook's remote salary policy was bullshit. And I was really annoyed with them. I was like pissed about it when I read their policy. I was so mad I got on Twitter. I was like looking around and I saw other remote thought leaders tweeting about it. I wrote this article, and it was one of my top earning articles ever on Medium. And it got shared on Hacker Noon and Reddit and stuff. But it was because I was super angry about it, and I didn't write it in a disparaging way. You could tell that I cared about the topic. And that's like the video I made about why Americans leave Costa Rica. Like, I lived there for almost eight years. So, I had a lot of personal experiences. Friends who were murdered, friends who had home invasions, their houses were broken into, they were tied up. I had personal friends who either died from violence or had bad things happen to them. I witnessed things and I even get worked up now talking about it.

So, for me to put that out in a video is like, I really cared about that topic. I don't want it to happen to other people. I want to share my personal experience and like what I saw. And also, people don't talk about it. The media doesn't publish about it. So, I think if people just stay true to themselves and keep improving their craft, that's like a lifelong process. But also, just know that if you keep going, eventually you're going to find success. But it's not really accidental. It's because you kept putting yourself out there. And out of hundreds of videos, like a couple of them go viral and then maybe you can replicate that success later.

Matt Bowles: Yeah, And I think I'll find people to support you and you to support them. Like, for example, Kristin, you and I, I can remember very distinctly during the pandemic especially, right. We're all locked down, we're not traveling, we don't have all of the social connections we normally do. And you and I were like leaving each other voice messages and giving each other really positive feedback on our podcasts and all that kind of stuff. I mean, I've obviously listened to your podcast since the beginning. I'm a big fan. You. I remember one thing that just lit me up and like really inspired me during the pandemic is you put out a blog post where you named your top five podcasts, and you listed The Maverick Show up there with, like, Naval Ravin Khan, all these, like, legendary, epic podcasts. And I'm like, oh, my gosh. Like, she thinks my podcast is that good, you know?

And then, like, I would leave you messages and tell you, you, like, I'm listening to all your episodes, how amazing this part of this interview was or this thing or whatever. And, like, I feel like that's a really important piece, too, because, like, sometimes it's really hard to keep going, right? And you're like, are people listening to this show? Like, are they appreciating the show? Like, I'm putting an enormous amount of work in all that kind of stuff. And so, I feel like that, for me, was a really important part, especially through the Pandemic and stuff like that, which I really appreciated that feedback from you.

But one of the things that also happened around that time is that you landed an amazing book deal, and you were tapped to write the [Digital Nomad for Dummies](#) book in the international bestselling series for Dummies. And when I heard about that, obviously, I was happy for you, because you're a friend of mine. But I also thought to myself, I cannot think of a single Nomad that I know that would be more qualified to write this book than Kristin Wilson. They really, really, really picked the right person. And so, I was super happy for you that you got tapped to do that.

But I'm curious, now that the book is out, it's amazing. I have a copy. I have the physical copy. I have the audio copy. I have the copy and everything. And it's amazing what you produced. But I'm curious if you can

take us back sort of to the beginning of that process. Because writing a book, oh, my goodness, is that a serious commitment? And someone like you that has over 15 years of experience and knowledge and expertise and wisdom to sort of condense down into that book, can you take us through that writing process and how you approached such an enormous project?

Kristin Wilson: Well, it goes back to what you just said about community and helping each other, because it really takes a village. I don't, I can't even count how many people have helped me in my career or, like, I've sent them things for feedback. I used to send you my podcast and ask you which cold open was better. You know, I could still do that, probably, but getting feedback and advice from people and then realizing that there's no competition because, like, you're just being yourself and there's room for everybody. And I've done collaborations with people on YouTube, and we've invited each other to each other's podcast; [Johnny F.D.](#) all different people, [Mitko Chase](#) from about abroad.

It's just like sharing and growing with people and that's very important. And that actually helped me write the book. So, we can link this. I have a [podcast](#) about how I wrote the book and tips for writing the book and we can link to that one because I go into more detail. But for me, and I think for all writers, writing is hard, but also sitting down to write is hard and sitting down to write every day for a consistent amount of time is really hard. So, it was a really difficult process for me. But I've always wanted to write a book. And I wrote manuscripts for multiple books in high school and college that never got published because there was no Amazon, there was no self-publishing industry back then. I bought a 500- or 600-page book of publishers to try to get books published back then. It wasn't that long ago, you know, like 20 years ago.

And so now we have all these opportunities to publish our own books. So, I think finally I was able to publish a book that I wanted to write for a long time. But I also had other failed books before that that never got published. So yeah, we live in a good time where we can publish our books if no one else will publish them for us. So, with Dummies, they have a very specific structure for how the books are written. So, I was able to follow the layout for how four Dummies books are structured. So that made it easier in a way, but then also harder because it had to fit in with this method. And I had a technical editor, and I had another editor. And so, I really leaned on them a lot for feedback and definitely voice messages with friends, my family members, I mean, multiple meltdowns, basically not believing that I could do it. I was like, I don't know if I can do this.

But then logically knowing like what you said that I was qualified to write the book, like overly qualified to write the book, but then just lacking the confidence or being scared that it was going to be my first book. What if it wasn't good? Or what if I forgot something or left something out. And I actually did get an email this week from someone who's like, here's five things that you should put in your next book. But they were like very advanced topics that I specifically didn't go into a lot of detail on because it's like just getting started guide anyway. So, I would say having a support structure is important.

The table of contents is the most important because the table of contents gives you the structure for the book. And then every day you have a place that you go to write at the same time every day for a certain number of hours and that's all you can do. Whether it's one hour or 20 minutes or three hours, whatever, you just do it until it's done. And you have to have deadlines. The reason I didn't self-publish a version of this book before was because I didn't have any self-imposed deadlines. But when you have public accountability or when you're working with a publisher, you have to meet those deadlines. So, there were some really, really late nights and even when it got to the end, we got hit by a tropical storm. The power and the Internet went out in my co working space.

So many things were happening, and I did not care, like had the blinders on. I was like, I don't care if I have to write out the rest of it by hand and then go to like Kinko's or the library and rent a computer and type it, you know, like I was like, I'm going to finish this book. So yeah, those are all helpful things. But if you want to write a book, it's the same thing as with content marketing. Like what book are you writing? You don't have to have a title, but like what's the concept of the book? Who is the reader of the book? That needs to be very clear. And then as if you were just talking to a friend, how would you explain the concept to them? How would you solve the problem? If it's relationship advice, like whatever the book is, if it's business related, if it's how to use QuickBooks, you just talk it out.

And there's even people who will record their books and then have them transcribed. So don't overcomplicate it. Just have a clear idea of what the concept is, who it's for, and then spend most of your time on the table of contents. Then it's all about showing up consistently on the page every day and not caring how good it is. Just do the first draft, which Tucker Max calls it a vomit draft, and then you can edit it. And then if you need to do three or four or 18 rounds of editing, like Steven Pressfield, you can do that. You know, you can make it better later. So just don't worry about it first. And I think I went through three drafts of the book before it was done, but I wish I had six drafts, you know what I mean? But deadlines, that's the other thing.

Matt Bowles: Yeah, I remember you were in touch with me while you were writing the book and a lot of our conversations you were like, oh my gosh, I could put all of this other stuff in and what if I'm not putting enough stuff in? And all this kind of stuff. I was like, Kristin, you could write a 5,000-page book with all the knowledge you have about all the nuances in the digital nomad lifestyle. You just need to focus on the essential core pieces for people that want to get into the lifestyle. You and I had a lot of those conversations, I think over the time you were ready.

Kristin Wilson: You sent me a lot of messages and I cried like, I need to save your messages because I listened to them like five times and I was crying, like, I was so emotional. Anyway, your messages really helped. I'm crying right now.

Matt Bowles: Like, aw. When I saw the final copy of your book, I ordered it. Obviously, I pre ordered it before it was for sale and then I received it in the mail and I got the physical copy and I was like, oh my gosh. I was like, this is the most thorough, comprehensive book that has ever been published on all of the different aspects of digital nomading, all the different considerations, the different tactics, strategies. I can't even believe this. My mother took the book and started reading it immediately when she got there, because my mother listens to The Maverick Show and she's a big Kristin Wilson fan, right? And she's like, oh my gosh, this is amazing.

So, she literally has kept my physical copy of the book. I then bought a second copy. I bought the audible copy of the book, which I have with me as I travel, because I don't take physical books with me. And so, we're going to link that up in [the show notes](#). I encourage everyone to buy it. Whether you are an aspiring nomad and you're trying to get into the lifestyle, whether you're new, you're in your first year or two, or whether, like me, you've been doing this for 10 years, you will learn things, you will be reminded of things, you will have all sorts of valuable tactics, resources, everything else in this book.

So, it is truly, Kristin, I know personally how much time and emotional labor went into this book from you because I was in touch with you while you were writing it. But it was truly worth it, and it will help an incredible number of people. And we're going to put it in [the show notes](#). And I encourage everybody to

grab a copy of this book, whether it's the physical book, the Kindle version, the audiobook, whatever you like, because you will learn things from it, and it will deliver value. It's amazing.

Kristin Wilson: Thank you so much. And I learned a lot writing the book because there were so many topics that I thought I knew about, and I did know about them, but I needed to back up my claims with actual data, facts, statistics, and also tools for the solutions. Like, there were a lot of problems that you can have in this lifestyle, and it made me find newer, more novel solutions that I wasn't aware of two years ago. So, I have also all of them. I travel with a physical copy of it. I have the Kindle version, and I have the audiobook book, too.

I wanted to write the book not just for beginners, but for people to come in. That's how dummies books are written. You can come into whatever chapter or whatever section that you want help with. So maybe you have Photoshop for Dummies, and you know certain things, but you don't know other things. You can just hop in. So, if you come in as an advanced digital nomad, but you want some new apps or you want some mental health resources or whatever it is, then you can find it in there.

Matt Bowles: Yeah. I mean, the resources alone are just incredible. I've been traveling full time with no base for 10 years, and you're just, like, spitting out resources in there that I'm like, wait, what? And I'm pausing it and I'm writing them down and looking them up on my computer and stuff. So, if you're looking for communities of color that travel the world, if you're looking for LGBTQ communities that travel the world, if you're looking for how to offset your carbon footprint and be an environmentally conscious traveler, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. All these websites, all these resources, everything you need to know, no matter how experienced you are, you will find new stuff that will be helpful and of value in this book. So definitely going to link that up. And super, super proud of you. I mean, I was excited for you because you're a friend of mine that you did this, but then I was like, wow, this is really also, like, super valuable to me, and I want to put this in the hands of as many nomads as possible.

Kristin Wilson: Thank you. And I also. I don't know if people know this, but there's bonuses that didn't make it into the book. I had this dream of, like, an encyclopedia of nomad resources. And they're like, no, there's no room for that. But it's in the bonuses. So, in the book, there's a URL where you can download 60 pages of resources that took months to organize by section. So, if you want freelancing tools for invoices or things like that, I mean, anything you can think of is in there. So definitely download that. It's like a PDF document.

Matt Bowles: All right, I also need to talk to you about [Ready to Relocate](#). Now. I have been interviewing you on this podcast for five years now. You come on pretty much every year. And one of the things that's also been really inspiring to me about you is how you have evolved your business model. So initially got you on the first interview in The Maverick Show, which was [episode three](#), was you were telling me this story about how there were all of these poker players in the United States, and then there was this massive event called Poker Black Friday, and just this gauntlet came down and said, yeah, you can't play poker in the United States anymore online. And there were all these restrictions.

And so, all of these poker players, in order to continue their career and their livelihood, needed to move offshore. And so, you created this company called Poker Refugees, where people need to go hear this story in [episode three](#) of The Maverick Show, because it's unbelievable, but you and I were literally on a boat in the middle of the Mediterranean, and you're telling me this story. I was like, that is the most incredible thing I've ever heard. I need to have you on the podcast. We need to talk about this. And we did, and that was

[episode three](#). And then you've evolved your relocation business over the years, and it's had many iterations and all of that. So, can you talk a little bit about maybe that evolution process and then where it has landed today and what your current business, [Ready to Relocate](#), is all about?

Kristin Wilson: Yeah, sure. So, I started Poker Refugees, I kind of started helping people relocate before that, because when I was selling real estate, I noticed that people needed help with all of these other things. So, I would end up helping them with how to open a bank account and how to enroll their kids in school and where to get groceries and how to pay their bills and all that kind of stuff. So, I was already doing that, like, on the side. So then when I found out about Black Friday, like, that's a whole story that they can listen to in the other episode. But I actually created an LLC and a business around helping people relocate, and it's still open today I still leave the website, I still get inquiries. I'm helping a poker player from the Netherlands move to Costa Rica this week and I always have people going different places.

So, I do these one-on-one relocations through my company, which is called Orbis Relocation. But I also noticed that there were people who didn't necessarily have the budget to hire me one on one to plan everything for them. But they also didn't necessarily need someone to plan the whole thing for them. They just wanted someone to ask questions to and give them tips and guidance during the process. So, I created a group coaching program that's at a lower price point that people can get my eight-step relocation process that's delivered in the form of an online course with videos and tutorials, and they get a physical book that's like a relocation plan guide. I mail it to them like I physically go and mail it, and it's customized to each person so they get that that they can keep.

But then they can also join these biweekly phone calls where I answer questions about the section that they were going through that week. So, it takes about 90 days for them to plan their relocations on their own using this template. But they also get to talk to the other people that are planning their relocations at the same time they get to ask me questions in real life. And so, there's this life component that they feel like, well, they're not doing it by themselves. It's not like just an online course where you go at your own pace with this. It's very structured for, okay, this week we're talking about this, then next week we're talking about housing and next week it's this. But then also they have that accountability in the group and if there's a question, they have that's not in the material, then they can ask me directly or they can send me a private message.

And so that's been really fun, and it's allowed me to help more people. The number of people who've gone through the program, it would take me way longer to help them one on one. So, there's basically no limit to how many people can join the program. So, it's a way to scale a very unscalable business without sacrificing the outcome or the quality of the service that I'm providing. So, I'm still doing one on one relocations, but it's a different service. It's like a premium offering versus people are more on a budget. There's like done for you, there's done with you and there's do it yourself and this one's in the middle. It's not like, google it and do it yourself. It's like we'll do it together. I'll be here for you during the process. If you have questions, I'll tell you exactly what to do, in what order, step by step.

And then people come out the other side and they're like, oh great, I'm ready. That's why I call it [Ready to Relocate](#) because like you literally become [Ready to Relocate](#) and people who have been thinking about relocating for three years or 10 years, they're ready to go in two or three months all of a sudden. So, it's awesome.

Matt Bowles: That is awesome. And we're going to link that up in [the show notes](#) as well. Anybody that is interested in learning more about [Ready to Relocate](#), you have helped well over a thousand people by now relocate to other countries and design amazing lives for themselves. And so, we are going to link that up in [the show notes](#). For people that want to get more information on that, just go to one place at [themaverickshow.com](#). Go to the show notes for this episode and there you can find that along with everything else that we've talked about on this episode.

Kristin, I want to ask you now just going a little bit more on the personal level and the personal reflection in your last 15 years of Nomad travel. One of the themes that tends to come up with long term nomads that do this for a long time is this concept of burnout. And I want to ask you if you can reflect a little bit just on your own journey about the concept of burnout when you have felt that, how you have dealt with that, and then how you have maybe altered or pivoted or adjusted your lifestyle design accordingly.

Kristin Wilson: Yes, burnout has been a recurring theme throughout my life, at least my adult life. My first experience with burnout was when I was 21 years old in grad school and it resulted in me having a grand mal seizure and losing my driver's license, losing my surfing career because I couldn't go in the water for six months. And it was just a very scary time in my life. And so that was a big wake up call for me to just take it easy, you know, do less things, like just chill out more. And after I did that, actually my grades went up. So, I started sleeping more, studying less, cutting back on caffeine and late nights and stuff. And I actually felt better. My health improved, my grades improved, I think, because of all the different interests and passions that I have. I have tended to pursue many things at the same time.

And so, I've pushed myself to the edge of burnout a few times in my nomadic or expat life. And one of them was when I was trying to self-publish my book, was like trying to be consistent with writing the book. So, I think it was the second day or the third day I made a post in my Facebook group that said, like, hey guys, I'm self-publishing this book. It's not out yet. I'm going to post my accountability spreadsheet here in the group because I really wanted this information to get out to people. But I found it very hard to write the book while I was traveling. And so, I would like to write it for a couple months and then I would leave it for three months and I would come back to it, whatever. So, I made this plan. I post it and then like on day two or day three, I pass out in the bathroom at my parents' house in the morning, just wake up on the floor, like call 911 and like what happened to me?

And I really think it was another form of burnout, was trying to wake up early to work on my book and just was pushing it too far. My body said no, that's happened a few times. And when I was traveling and even recently when I was just in Portugal, I can start to feel when I'm getting close to that point again. In Amsterdam, I went to Amsterdam dance event, which is a music conference and festival. So not only was I going to see artists at night and my friends were there from out of town in locals in town, but I was also going to networking events, I was going to conferences during the day, I was working, I was creating YouTube videos, I was doing relocations. Like I was doing way too much. And then the next week I was with a press pass at Web Summit and working in the media team there.

So, I was like, you know, just not sleeping enough because I was doing that. And then also working and also getting the podcast out and all the other stuff. And then I was speaking at the Nomad Island fest and then DJing. So, it was like too much. And I didn't burn out, but I was feeling okay moving into 2023. I don't want to be changing locations once a week or even once a month. Like I want to be at a place for at least two or three months at a time. And then here I am in January. I've changed places four times in one month. So, it

can easily happen when you're excited about what you're doing and you're taking on a lot of stuff and when you're traveling.

So, I think that everybody needs to just feel out where their limits are and what they consist of. Do you get burnt out when you live in a certain time zone, when you take on X amount of work hours over what you normally do? Do you get burnt out when you travel with more than two other people? Do you get burnt out when you go to conferences and you're working at the same time? I think Nomad Cruise and half the crew were working and half of them weren't working. And I was kind of in the middle. I was like, not on vacation, but I wasn't working full time. So, it's like being able to separate work time from play time, which is super hard. And now everybody knows who's working from home, especially if you have kids and other things.

And so, it's just being aware of where your boundaries are and just being honest with yourself when you need a break. And maybe that's even tracking, like, how often are you taking a day off? Not like, oh, it's Saturday, so I'm not technically at work, But I answered 60 emails, and I ran errands, and I did laundry. You know, like, when did you actually take time off and just recover and relax? So, it's a multifaceted thing and it also has to do with what you're putting in your body too. So, one of the big things that I changed when I started writing my book last year was I quit drinking. And I didn't have a drinking problem or anything like that. I just knew that I wasn't going to be the best writer if I was hungover during that process. So, I decided to just quit for 30 days and see what would happen.

And then it was three months and then it was six months, and now it's been like a year. When I went to Portugal, the locals were giving me the local poncha, which is their homemade alcohol, to taste. So, I've had tasted stuff and whatever, not a big deal. But I've just found that by cutting that out of my life, I work better, I sleep better, I feel like I am more imbalanced. And so, there's all these different options. There's like different levers that you can pull when you are feeling burnt out. And it could be slowing down with travel, it could be sleeping more, it could be changing your diet, cutting back on alcohol, cutting back on people, you know, cutting back on priorities or things that you feel like you have to be doing so there's not like one direct answer, but hopefully that's helpful to share, like how I've ebbed and flowed in that regard.

Matt Bowles: What have you found and what will you implement moving forward in terms of the balance between stability for you, right? Meaning your productivity, your self-care, your priorities that you want to maintain consistently going through life and also all of the new experiences that you want to have while traveling, meeting new people, doing new things, seeing new stuff, having all these new things. How will you move forward as you travel balance these things? What is sort of lifestyle design after 15 years of these experiences and these lessons, how will you do this for you personally moving forward?

Kristin Wilson: What I've done this year is I've been even more specific with my life buckets and my goal planning. I don't know if it's possible to do all of the things all of the time. It's like, can you be running billion-dollar companies and not stressed out and running 10 miles a day? And I don't know, maybe there's people that do that. It's just finding what you can actually do. And for me, I've prioritized things so that I only focus. I'm only leaving room for the things that are important for me. And if there's a question of, should I do this thing or should I sleep eight hours, I'm going to go sleep for eight hours and like, okay, can't go to that social engagement or can't do that thing.

And I've noticed I'm saying no a lot more. I'm saying no to dates, I'm saying no to masterminds, I'm saying no to speaking at events, whether they're virtual or in person. I'm saying no to collaborations, I'm saying no to most stuff. And I've even lost money because I like putting deposits on trips that I'm now not going on.

Like there was a retreat that I was going to go on in Scotland in June and I just decided I don't want anything on my calendar. I want to be able to just be more spontaneous with what I'm going to do trips.

So, I just got back from that trip. So, it's basically working out five days a week. That's just how it is. Wherever I am, I'm going to make sure I get my workout in five days a week. And it's a workout and 15 minutes of stretching. I meditate every day. I've meditated for thousands and thousands of days. I don't even know how many now, but years of meditation. So there's these things that are just non-negotiable in my life and family is one. Like obviously friends, but I'm kind of in a phase where I have so many friends that I want to meet new people, I want to go to events and stuff like that. But I also want to focus on cultivating the friendships that I have as well. And a slow travel. I have even Tshirts that say slow travel. Like I'm a hashtag slow travel person.

Everyone who knows me knows that I'm a big proponent of it. I definitely think that there's a time and place where you can go on a cruise or go on a tour where you're like in a different city every day and just like having fun but just have a time and place for each thing. So, moving into this year, I know what my priorities are. I'm focusing on those. I'm not adding any new projects and I'm focusing on my health, like what I'm eating, my working out sleep. And I think with that you're good. Like if you focus on your inputs, then the output will be sanity, peace of mind, good health and be able to have fun. And then also have your calendar clear enough so that if you get invited to a wedding in Italy, you can go.

Matt Bowles: All right, Kristin, last question. You have traveled to a lot of places in the last 15 years. You have spent a lot of time; you've had a lot of amazing experiences. The last three podcast episodes. I want everybody to listen to them because you've, you've told some incredible travel stories, you've met amazing people, you've had incredible experiences. Fifteen years into this lifestyle, why are you continually inspired to keep traveling? What does travel mean today to you?

Kristin Wilson: It's a good question. I've thought about this a lot and especially during the pandemic where there were times that I was very grateful that I wasn't traveling. There were times that I really leaned into having my own furniture and signing a long-term lease and having a routine and a new group of friends that all lived around me. But I mean, I don't think I'll ever lose my wanderlust for exploring the world. From what I've reflected on and what I've talked about with other long-term travelers, I think that there are phases of life or even seasons of the year where you can be in different places.

So, we're seeing people that are bicoastal between New York and California. That's been a thing as long as there have been cross country flights. But now we're seeing people who spend like the winters in Mexico or Costa Rica, maybe they spend the summers in Europe. So maybe they have two places like a winter home and a summer home. That's also a traditional thing that we've seen snowbirds do retirees. But now with the location, independent lifestyle, maybe you can have three or four home bases. Or maybe there's a time where like I spent two and a half years in Miami. So maybe you get apply for the digital nomad visa in Spain and you live there for three years and that's like a phase of your life where you're living in Spain and then you just kind of evolve from there.

So, I don't know if for me, if there's ever any end to traveling. I think of it more as seasons where after two and a half years of living in one city, there were so many things that had built up over that time that I wanted to do that. I decided to take, take all my stuff, put it in storage and be a nomad this year because I don't want to worry about paying rent in a place that I'm not living in. I just want to be free to go wherever. And that freedom has opened up the opportunity to go to Portugal for a few months, to go to Ireland next week

to take a music production class in the U.K. if I want to. Like there's like six month and one-year programs I've been looking at and maybe set up a home base there where I can still travel and make videos but just have a bit of a home base somewhere or even applying for a digital nomad visa somewhere and then setting up shop in a country for a few years.

So, I don't know exactly what I'll do next, but I like that idea. And I know a lot of people that are much older than me, 20 years, 30 years older, and they just have this rhythm where they kind of travel back and forth between homes throughout the year and they go on side trips if they want, if they get bored. But I know at any time if I want to move back to the US permanently, I could do that. Or if I want to move someplace permanently, I could do that. I'm always listening to my intuition, and I encourage people to do that too. You know, if you feel like you want to settle down, then do that.

But then I've also seen people who had the whole thing, the dog, the kids, the white picket fence, and then they felt like that chapter was closed and they sold their house and moved to Portugal or Something so you might have the perfect house that you designed and built all for yourself, but you might feel like that call for adventure is stronger. And sometimes you might feel burnt out with travel and feel like you want to just have your own coffee maker and your own pillows and your own stuff and just be in one place for a while or forever.

Matt Bowles: Yeah, I mean, I think that's the beauty of location independence, right? If you have a location independent lifestyle, you get to choose and then you can modify and then you can change and then you can just have the agility and the flexibility to design your lifestyle as you choose. And as that ideal lifestyle may change from one year to another year, and you can adjust your lifestyle as your priorities change. So, I think that's a super important perspective.

Kristin, I want you to let people know how they can, first of all, buy the [Digital Nomads for Dummies](#) book. How they can listen to the [Badass Digital Nomads](#) podcast, how they can watch the Traveling with Kristin YouTube videos, how they can learn more about [Ready to Relocate](#). How do you want people to come into your world?

Kristin Wilson: Well, for the [book](#), they can just look online. It's in all the bookstores. It's on Amazon. You can actually go to your local bookstore, even if it's an independent bookstore, and ask for it and they can order it directly from the store. So even if you go to Barnes and Noble and they don't have it in stock, that actually helps when people are in their bookstores asking for it and then they put that order in with the publisher and it will come within a couple of days. But you can also order it directly from the publisher online, Wiley, just by Google searching or on [Amazon](#) or any of the big stores. And as far as coming in to, you know, my ecosystem, if you want my help with a relocation, as Matt said, we'll leave a link to the application form in his show notes, but you can also send an email through my website, which is [travelingwithkristin.com](#). And if you're interested in my podcast, it's Badass Digital Nomads. It's on all the platforms. It's also linked to [my website](#) and [my YouTube](#) channel is called *Traveling with Kristin*. So, wherever you feel interested to start your journey on my channel, you can sort by playlists and different videos and kind of click on topics that you're interested in. Or you can search a country like *Traveling with Kristin Spain* in YouTube, if you're interested in that. And you can find videos about a certain country or a certain topic, yes.

Matt Bowles: Absolutely essential digital nomad content. I put everybody that I talk to onto your stuff. I'm a big fan of the podcast, the [YouTube](#) channel, [the book](#), the blog, everything else that you do. Kristin so we

are going to link all of that up in [the show notes](#). Folks can just go to one place at themaverickshow.com go to the show notes for this episode. There you will find all of the links. How to find, follow Kristin Check out her amazing content and everything else that we talked about in this episode.

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

Kristin Wilson: Thanks Matt. It's so good to be back. And shout out to all the Maverick show listeners, some of whom I'm sure I know in real life or we're already connected online. So good to talk to everyone. Yeah. Hope to catch you again next year.

Matt Bowles: All right, good night everybody.