

Matt Bowles: Happy New Year everybody. I want to wish you an amazing 2026 and thank you so much for listening to the podcast. It really means the world to me. Producing this podcast is an enormous undertaking. It's an incredibly time and resource intensive project and I produce it for you. So, your feedback is what fuels me and keeps me going. And being a podcaster, has its weird dynamic because there's not an easy direct feedback mechanism. So sometimes it feels like a very one-sided relationship where you're able to listen to me every week and get to know me that way. And I'd like to have that be more reciprocal and get to know you as well. So, first of all I want to give you a way to contact me directly, which is just to follow [@maverickshowpod](#) on Instagram and DM me there. I check all the DMs there myself and I respond personally. And I love getting feedback from you about the show in the DMs. When you hit me up and you tell me what you liked about an episode, that really fuels me. So please feel free to do that.

And over the last year I did some one-on-one video calls with podcast listeners and even some in person meetups and they were absolutely amazing. You guys are incredible and I want to meet more of you. So, I am prioritizing that for 2026 because first of all I'd love to get your feedback on the podcast, what you like, anything that can be improved, what you'd like to see more of for 2026. Because I make this show for you, so I'd love to know how it's landing with you and what I can do to make it even better. But I also want to get to know you and hear your travel experiences and aspirations and reflections on the world. I'm happy to answer any questions you have on about travel or remote entrepreneurship or the digital nomad lifestyle or podcasting or anything else. Or we can just share travel stories and talk about hip-hop or afro beats or whatever you want. So, to schedule your free 30-minute video call with me, just DM me on Instagram [@maverickshowpod](#) let me know you heard this episode and that you'd like to schedule the call and we will get it on the calendar.

And for those of you that may be newer to the podcast and don't know what my business is that I've been running remotely for the last 19 years that has enabled me to travel the world. I own a real estate brokerage in the U.S. called [Maverick Investor Group](#) and our niche specialty is helping you buy turnkey rental properties in the best U.S. real estate markets from anywhere. So, these are single family homes, sometimes two-to-four-unit properties that come fully renovated with tenants and local property management already in place. So, you don't have to be the landlord or the rehabber or live near the property, but you get all the benefits of owning the deeded real estate. And this is how many digital nomads fund their lifestyle. They buy cash flowing rental properties through [Maverick](#) and they let that passive rental income cover their living expenses as they travel the world. So, if you are interested in learning more about that that I put together a free video training for you on how to buy turnkey rental properties in the best U.S. markets from anywhere and you can check that out. The free video training is waiting for you right now at [themaverickshow.com/turnkey](#) and I'll link that up in the show notes as well. But if you want to type it in right now it's [themaverickshow.com/turnkey](#) and you can watch the video there for free.

So, today I am actually recording this from Montpelier, Vermont where my sister lives. I just flew back to the U.S. for the holidays after spending the last five weeks in Rio de Janeiro, one of my favorite cities in the world, which was amazing. The very first time I went to Rio was 10 years ago and I stayed in the Santa Teresa neighborhood and I just stayed in Santa Teresa again for a month on this trip and I can report that it is still my favorite neighborhood in Rio. If you have never been to Santa Teresa is off the beach and less touristy and I love it first of all because it is elevated so you get amazing views of the whole city but it's also the bohemian community. It is overflowing with music and art and it's a little bit grittier, which I like. There's graffiti and street art everywhere. It's like an open-air museum and it feels amazing to walk around each day and just soak all of that in.

But one of the main reasons that I went to Rio this time was to attend the Black Travel Summit, which was epic. Over 400 people pulled up this year, including at least a dozen Maverick Show guests. The team that organizes the event is amazing, many of whom I've interviewed, including the founder [Anita Moreau](#), as well as [Martinique Lewis](#), [Romie Robertson](#). I will link those episodes up in the show notes if you have not heard them. And then [Ashley Company](#) was the host whose Maverick Show interview is also fantastic. So, I'll link that one up as well if you haven't heard it. And it was super fun because at the awards gala, Chew from [episode 362](#) and [363](#) won *The Travel Content Creator of the Year* award. And then [Nicole Philipp](#) from [episode 329](#) and [330](#) won *The Social Media Video of the Year* award. And I was sitting next to her at the same table when she won. And it was just a really super special night.

And we all got to hang out together in Rio. Nicole and I actually spent the day together in the iconic Black neighborhood of Madureira, which is the beating heart of Black Carioca culture, music, history, spirituality and political resistance. And then as soon as we got back, we sat down in person and recorded an episode all about her experience immersing in Black Rio, going to quilombos and favelas, and what she learned from it all. It's a super interesting and powerful conversation and that is episode number [365](#). I will link it up in the show notes if you have not heard that one yet.

But overall, Black Travel Summit was a super dope crowd. Really substantive talks and super fun event overall. If you want to pull up to the next one in 2026, Black Travel Summit is happening October 15th to 18th in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. And you can get an early bird discount if you buy your ticket before January 9th. And in addition to the discounted pricing, grabbing your ticket by January 9th will also enter you to win a free hotel stay. And that winner will be announced on January 16th. And I will tell you that Maverick Show listeners have very good luck with these Black Travel Summit giveaways. One of the Maverick Show listeners shout out to Ken, who pulled up to Black Travel Summit in 2020, ended up winning the giveaway, which was a free cruise. So, grab your ticket early and maybe we can keep the Maverick Show listener luck streak going. You can get your ticket for Black Travel Summit 2026 at themaverickshow.com/BTS and be sure to use the code, **Maverick** when you register.

Now, another person who attended the Black Travel Summit that I also interviewed in person in Rio is [Courtney Orgias](#). She and her husband [Justin](#) are raising their two kids as they travel the world as a full-time digital nomad family. Justin was on the podcast too in 2024 back on episode 290 and this year Courtney and Justin are hosting the inaugural Village Abroad Retreat for digital nomad families or families that are interested in considering the digital nomad lifestyle. It's going down June 13th to 27th, 2026 in Grenada. You'll stay in family cottages and have weekly family excursions, but you can also work and relax while the kids enjoy a culturally immersive and active summer camp. You get adults only excursions, workshops and resources on moving abroad, local community impact activities and an opportunity to meet and build community with other like-minded digital nomad families. Courtney and Justin are two of my very favorite people. I just had an amazing time hanging out with their whole family in Rio. So, if you are interested in learning more about the Village Abroad and signing up for that, I will put the link in the show notes.

Another event happening this year is the *Extraordinary Travel Festival* put on by [Rick Gazarian](#) who I interviewed back on episodes of [306](#) and [307](#). This is the world's largest gathering of the most avid, accomplished and adventurous travelers, most of whom have either already been to every country in the world or are actively pursuing that goal. Now. This event only happens once every two years and I was a keynote speaker at the last one in 2024 and it was at that event where I met Maverick Show guests like [Yooshita](#), [Phil Marcus](#), [Jimena Serfaty](#) and a bunch of other Maverick Show guests pulled up to the event last year as well. And you can attend the next *Extraordinary Travel Fest* which is going down in Bangkok,

Thailand on October 22nd to 25th, 2026. And you can get a special discount when you buy your ticket by using the code, **Maverick**. So, you can get all the information at just go to extraordinarytravelfest.com and then lock in your discount when you use the code, **Maverick**.

Now one of my very favorite memories from 2025 is that I did my first in person Maverick Show guest meetup and we did it around the WITS Travel Creator Summit in New York city where about 15 Maverick Show guests all came to the meetup and got to meet each other and hang out and we did it at this incredible lounge overlooking New York City and it was a super incredibly special evening. Now if you're not familiar with WITS (Women In Travel Summit) put on by the wonderful community, which is an amazing women's travel community run by two time Maverick Show guest [Beth Santos](#). If you've not heard her episodes yet, I will definitely link them up in the show notes because she is amazing. I'd also recommend her book *Wander Woman* if you haven't read that yet, but over 600 people attended the WITS Summit in New York City, incredible creators.

And I recently spoke about one of the keynote sessions from that conference in my interview with [Dr. Anu Taranath](#) who was on that keynote panel which was focused on the role of the travel creator in a world on fire and centered the genocide in Palestine. So, I highly recommend listening to my interview with Anu as well as her book which is called *Beyond Guilt Trips, Mindful Travel in an Unequal World*. That is the number one book that I recommend for travelers and digital nomads. So, we will link both of those up in the show notes. But I have been to WITS two years in a row now. It is always bringing together an amazing community of people every year. So, if you would like to attend the *WITS Travel Creator Summit* this year, it's going down May 29th to 31st, 2026 in Chattanooga, Tennessee and you can get all the details and grab your tickets at witsummit.com and we will link that up in the show notes as well.

Now, for those of you that heard my recent interview with [Matt Gray](#) on episode #360, you know he is co-hosting the Nomad Week in Cape Town, South Africa later this month on January 25th to 31st, 2026. This event brings together digital nomads, entrepreneurs, remote workers and travelers for an amazing week in Cape Town which is a city that I love where I have spent about six months. But one thing I really appreciate about this particular event is that it prioritizes enabling you to immerse in the local culture, support local businesses, learn about sustainable travel and bridge the gap between digital nomads and local communities. So, you can get all the info and grab your ticket at nomadweek.co and use the code, **Maverick** for a \$50 discount. As it turns out, [Matt Gray](#) is also the founder of the Pangea app which is the number one social app for travelers which I use myself because it was built specifically for digital nomads. It enables you to add your upcoming destinations so you can instantly find other people going to the same place, get recommendations from fellow nomads and meet like-minded people to share, co working days or explore together or simply never feel stranded in a city.

So fun historical context here. I interviewed [Sharon Rosenberg](#) in person in Dakar, Senegal back in December 2022, which was an amazing interview. I will link it up in the show notes if you haven't heard that one. And Sharon founded a very similar app called *Overlap*, which we talk about in the interview. Then literally the following month, in January 2023, I met [Matt Gray](#) in Cape Town and learned that he had founded the Pangea app, which was very similar in concept to *Overlap*. And so just at the very end of 2025, these two apps merged, Pangea acquired *Overlap*, and Sharon and Matt are now working together at Pangea, which is now the number one app in the space. And it's completely free so you can download it from the App Store for both Apple and Android. And when you do that, feel free to shoot me a friend request on [Pangea](#) and we can connect on the app.

Now, in terms of stuff that really matters in the world as we move into 2026, it's going to be so important for us to show up for Palestine this year. As the genocide continues, our international solidarity is more important than ever. If you are new to this issue and you'd like a primer on Palestine either for yourself or to share with others, my dear friend [Yulia Denisyuk](#) interviewed me on her [podcast](#); Going Places, and I went through the history, the current political situation, and most importantly, I listed out a number of specific ways that you can help support and contribute today for from wherever you are. I also published that interview as a Maverick show episode, which is Maverick Show [episode #353](#), and I will link that up in the show notes. So please check that out if you haven't heard it yet and if you want to re listen to it or you want to share it with someone else, that would be amazing.

Also, if you're in a position to donate a little bit of money to help displaced Palestinian families that are facing serious hardship this winter, I'd recommend the nonprofit ANERA (American Near East Refugee Aid), where your support will have an immediate, tangible impact. Just \$50 can feed 50 people in Gaza with a hot meal through their community kitchens. \$90 can provide a winterization kit for a displaced or vulnerable family of five in the west bank, including winter clothes, socks and hats. \$200 can provide a winterization voucher for a family of five in the west bank, allowing them to purchase blankets, mattresses and other winter needs. So please go to [anera.org](#) and donate whatever you can because every dollar helps.

And speaking of [Yulia Denisyuk](#) who interviewed me about Palestine, I also interviewed her back on [episodes #282](#) and [#283](#) of The Maverick Show which was an incredible interview. If you have not heard it, I will link it up in the show notes. But this year she is running an amazing trip to Jordan on June 5th to the 14th, 2026 which will give you a uniquely immersive experience. The trip combines the iconic highlights like Petra, Wadi Rum and the Dead Sea. You will see all of that but you will also spend time with Bedouin families, with Palestinian refugees, with women's cooperatives and community run farms. So, you'll gain insight into Jordanian life while sleeping under desert stars, sharing meals with locals and supporting sustainable community-based tourism. So, to see the full itinerary and lock in your spot for the Jordan trip with Yulia Denisyuk, just go to [goingplacesmedia.com/Jordan](#) and you can use the code, **Maverick** for a special discount and that link will be in the show notes as well.

Another amazing trip happening this year is an opportunity for you to visit Pakistan with the *Hybrid Tours*. This trip is led by Pakistani human rights activist [Hira Aftab](#), who I interviewed on [episodes #317](#) and [#318](#) of The Maverick Show. And like all of the Hybrid tours it will take you beyond the headlines for a truly immersive experience. You will spend time in the vibrant cities, eating the amazing food, seeing the incredible natural landscape, but you will also learn about the impact of colonization and meet local activists to learn about today's struggles. This will be a super special trip and they're actually running it twice in 2026, once in May and once in September for so you can join whichever one works best for your schedule. You can get all of the details at [thehybridtours.com](#) and use the code, **Maverick** for a special discount which we will also put that link in the show notes.

Also, if you are not yet subscribed to my [Monday Minute Email Newsletter](#), I want to strongly encourage you to do that. It's completely free. And every Monday I send one super short email that you can literally read in 60 seconds, featuring three things I hand select with a global cultural and political lens that I genuinely think are worth your time. They could be my favorite neighborhood in a city where I love to stay, or a musical artist that I discovered on my travels that most people don't know about that I love, or an amazing film about what is actually going on in a particular part of the world. Or it could be upcoming trips and events that I'm attending where we can meet up, or even the latest travel gear and apps and gadgets that I'm using. After more than a decade of full-time nomading and hundreds of long form conversations

with other world travelers, I am condensing the most interesting things that I've learned into this newsletter that you can read in 60 seconds a week. And it's also a great way to keep in touch because I write and send every newsletter myself. So, you can just hit reply to the email and I will see that personally. So, if you are not yet subscribed, just go to themaverickshow.com/newsletter and you can opt in for it there and also see the archive of past issues and we will link that up in the show notes as well.

And if you are enjoying the podcast, it is very time and resource intensive to produce and so one way that you can support the show that would mean a lot to me is simply to buy me a coffee. You can go to buymeacoffee.com/themaverickshow and you can make a onetime contribution or you can make a recurring contribution which really helps us out. And I just want to thank everybody who has already done that because your support and contributions go entirely to covering the overhead costs of producing the show and that is what enables us to continue dropping new episodes for you every single week. So, I will link that up in the show notes as well. But to support the show once again, just go to buymeacoffee.com/themavericshow and thank you in advance for that.

Now, another New Year's resolution of mine is that I am trying to grow the podcast audience in 2026 and get the show to more people. One way that you can help with that is simply by telling other people about the show and sharing the episodes that you like on social media. So, follow The Maverick Show on Instagram at *maverickshowpod* and then when you really like an episode, just share it on Instagram and recommend it to other people. That really helps out a lot. Another thing you can do that would be greatly appreciated is to leave a rating and review of the podcast. Now if you listen on [Spotify](https://www.spotify.com), they only allow star reviews and that literally takes three seconds. So, if you're listening right now on [Spotify](https://www.spotify.com), next to the button where you subscribe to the show, right next to the follow button you will see three dots. Just click those three dots, click "rate this podcast" and then click the Star rating. That's it literally takes three seconds. If you could do it right now if you're on Spotify, I would appreciate it very much if you listen on another platform like Apple or Audible or Amazon Music, those platforms let you write a written review of the podcast, which is super helpful for new listeners that are flipping through podcasts and deciding whether or not to click in. And it would mean a lot to me if you could leave a written review of the show on any of those platforms that allow it. I've actually created a single review page that has links and instructions for how to leave a review on all of these platforms. So, you can just go to themaverickshow.com/reviews and from there you can leave a review on any platform. And super special thanks if you are able to drop that review on multiple platforms because it really helps out a lot.

So, with that, just a final reminder to schedule your free video call with me so we can connect this month. Follow [@maverickshowpod](https://www.instagram.com/maverickshowpod) on Instagram and shoot me a DM that you heard this episode and would like to schedule the call and we will get it on the calendar. I am super excited to meet many, many more of you this month and connect on a deeper level. As always, everything discussed in this episode will have direct links in the show notes. Just go to themaverickshow.com and go to the show notes for this episode. And once again, thank you for listening and supporting the show. Happy New Year and good night, everybody.