

# Family Travel and WanderLust Women

## *Let Us Do the Planning*

By Jessica Myers-Schecter, San Carlos resident of 8 years

This is the summer of travel for many San Carlos residents, as Kelly Gregg Rubingh, of Family Travel and WanderLust Women, can attest. Kelly is a travel agent here in town and says that she had 15 different groups reach out between mid-February and mid-May about planning summer trips to Europe; many of them taking teenage children for the first time. The summer surge is a wonderful thing for Kelly: her business lagged, as many San Carlos small businesses did, during the pandemic.

Kelly has been in San Carlos for twenty years. Being able to once again serve the San Carlos community doing something she loves has renewed Kelly's commitment to the town.

Kelly initially worked in nonprofit theater. When the ticketing company she was working for started to wane in the wake of online ticketing options, she elected to go through a travel careers program at Foothill College and quickly began to work as a travel agent with first one then two young toddlers in tow. "I naively thought you could work and have a baby all in the same place," she laughs. "I quickly figured out that you still need childcare even if you work from home." Of course, this dynamic is something we all know very well by now.

As she grew her business, her role as a mother in the community grew too; she was active in the mother's club, the PTA, San Carlos Children's Theater, her son's sports teams, Boy Scouts, and their church. All her early clients came from those micro-communities. Her business centered on family travel because it was a natural extension of the kinds of people she happened to know in San Carlos.



Kelly at Antelope Canyon and Machu Picchu

Convincing local families of the benefits of working with an agent wasn't a hard sell. It's time-consuming to unearth tips and tricks of family travel: which hotels are kid-friendly; which beaches are best for toddlers and which for older kids; which resorts offer children's programs, etc

She also ends up doing a lot of inter-generational travel for local families. Often juggling the needs and limitations of older grandparents and young kids can be tricky. Kelly streamlines this entire process for families. She maps out flights, hotels, and activities based on your needs/desires and travel dates. She pre-books activities as needed. She'll recommend whether it's best to book transfers from hotel to hotel or to rent a car in specific locations at certain times.

"We're all strapped for time these days," continues Kelly says, "The main advantage of working with me is simply time: you could certainly plan all this yourself, but if you can pay someone else to do it, you're freed up to do your own job." Her fees are typically a

modest \$250, though if someone is planning a multi-stop, intricate trip, she may charge a bit more. Once the planning and booking are complete, she sends you a complete itinerary via a downloadable app so that you have all your confirmations, vouchers, and information all in one place on your phone.

Her business has evolved a bit lately: as her own kids and the demographics of the families she works with have gotten older, she's focused more and more on Europe than solely on, say, family resorts in Hawaii. Many are taking teenagers to Europe for the first time. Soft adventure trips – like excursions centered on hiking, biking and kayaking are more common. And more solo travel for Empty Nester women or those who just need a break from their day-to-day life. She started a new venture called Wanderlust Women after she herself hiked Machu Picchu in September 2021. Wanderlust Women's first trip, a soft adventure trip for 16 to Iceland this coming October, sold out in two weeks. She's still figuring out where the female travel group will go in 2023, so if you're interested, reach out to make sure you get on her mailing list.

"It has been such a privilege to plan people's vacations," she says. And in return, San Carlos residents have remained supportive. You can learn more about Kelly and her travel agency at <https://family.travel/> or by following her Instagram account at <https://www.instagram.com/familytravelarewethereyet/>. ■

*Jessica, a realtor with Compass in Menlo Park, has lived in San Carlos for nine years. Her children Miles and Freya attend Terra Linda Middle School. She loves gardening, exercising, and makes truly divine homemade ice cream. Jessica believes in the power of community and that we really are stronger together.*




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