

The Maverick Show Episode 36
Host: Matt Bowles, Guest: Jennifer Magee

Matt Bowles: Hey, everybody. It's Matt Bowles. Welcome to The Maverick Show. My guest today is Jennifer Magee. She is the founder and owner of Retail in the City, an architecture and design company based in New York City. Over the past 10 years, Jennifer has designed and planned over 10 million square feet of retail space for over 100 different clients, including widely recognized and acclaimed projects such as the Duty Free shops at JFK Airport in New York City, Saks Off Fifth department stores, Barnes and Noble bookstores, the Sharper Image, and many others that you would definitely know.

She has also designed millions of square footage of retail space outside the US in countries ranging from Russia to China to the Caribbean island of Barbados. She has built her business so that she can run it from anywhere in the world with total location independence and she has used that to travel to over 70 countries. She is also an angel investor and an advisor to startups.

Now, if you missed the first conversation with Jennifer, that is Episode 5 of The Maverick Show. I would encourage you definitely to check that one out. We went through a lot of her background story and her entrepreneurial journey. We're going to go into a whole bunch of other stuff on this episode as well. Since we initially met and recorded the first interview on the Remote Year program, we have subsequently had tons of travel adventures together around the world and it's always a pleasure to welcome Jennifer back to the show. So, good to have you back, Jennifer.

Jennifer Magee: Thank you for having me back, Matt.

Matt: I am super excited about this. We need to set the scene here to start off. We have just opened a bottle of South African Pinotage and that's very fitting because we're doing this interview live in person in Cape Town, South Africa.

Jennifer: That's right.

Matt: We've been here for about seven weeks together. You've been here longer than me, but we've overlapped here for about seven weeks. It's been amazing. Cape Town is always incredible. I lived here for about five weeks back in 2015. So, it's always good to be back. I finally got the Table Mountain hike in this time and the super highlight of my trip is that it was my birthday just last week

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and you organized an amazing trip with our friends out to the Stellenbosch wine country – one of the most beautiful wine regions in the world – and it was a completely epic day. So, thank you for organizing that.

Jennifer: You are more than welcome. I've already been out there five or six times so –

Matt: Well, I knew who to go to when I wanted a wine tour at Stellenbosch. I knew exactly who to consult.

Jennifer: That's right.

Matt: So, that was amazing. But do you want to talk a little bit about that and what Stellenbosch is like just for people who haven't been there and how the day went?

Jennifer: Well, I think I took you to the two best vineyards out in Stellenbosch – one for lunch, and the second for exclusive wine tasting – but Stellenbosch is just an absolutely beautiful wine country. I think it puts Sonoma and Napa to shame. There are over 100 different wineries out there. You can spend a few days, all day, a week, two weeks, and still not get to see them all and try them all. Obviously, South Africa is known for its Pinotage and it's a beautiful wine. That's a specific grape from this region and yeah, we got to go out, enjoy, and you bought us well probably the most premier wine in all of Stellenbosch.

Matt: That was a pretty amazing story about how that came about as well.

Jennifer: Well, we saw your negotiating skills coming to life with our friend, Agatha.

Matt: Yes, indeed. We should probably tell that story if you want to share exactly how that came about because we did end up buying – this was an amazing sales demonstration I felt. I mean I feel like we – as a bunch of entrepreneurs, we all own businesses, we're all in sales – and I feel like we were all blown away by what happened and we ended up buying the most expensive wine that was available.

Jennifer: That's right. Well, Matt kind of set the stage I believe when he

showed up to the winery and decided to do the higher end wine tasting. So, Agatha was basically there to walk us through and couldn't help but, I guess – I don't know – have a direct one-on-one with you, Matt, and convinced you to take the high road.

Matt:

Yeah because she came over and she was amazing – very unassuming – came over and basically gave us the menus for the wine tasting. It's basically two choices and she goes, "This is our iconic tasting. This is the high-end tasting and this is the less expensive tasting." I basically look at her and I said, "Agatha, first of all, it's my birthday, and second of all we didn't come all the way to Stellenbosch to mess around. We're going to do the iconic tasting" sort of as a joke and she just looked at me. She goes, "Okay." So, she walks away in preparation for our tasting and then – without saying a word – she comes back and she puts a bottle in front of me on the table. This is a bottle that's in a case, right?

She just puts it there and she goes. "I heard that you didn't come to Stellenbosch to mess around. So, I thought you'd like to see the premiere wine that we have at this vineyard. It's right there. I'll just leave it there for you to take a look at" and walks away. It was one of the most beautiful sales moves that I have seen. She was humorous, she was slightly sarcastic, but she was also responding to me and playing on that and all of us were there sitting around and everybody loved it when she did that, of course. So, then I asked her how much it was and she told me.

And then I checked it on Vivino app to see what it was and the vineyard price was actually almost half price or at least a third cheaper than the store price, which would then, of course, be three times that in the restaurant. I was then able to have sort of an ongoing negotiation with her as we were doing the tastings and, eventually, I was able to negotiate about a 20 percent discount off that bottle.

So, I felt that – based on her sales skills and also the fact that I really did want to try the best wine in Stellenbosch and it was my birthday and I wanted to have all of us have that experience together – so we ended up getting it and it was amazing. She put it in this super elaborate decanter and it was a whole kind of show and it was a super special day. So, that was an awesome part of it.

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- Jennifer: That's right and the rest of the vineyard tours went out the door.
- Matt: Amazing. I mean it was hard to top that, although the dinner was crazy. You took me to an incredible restaurant. We went to an incredible restaurant with our friends and it was about a six-course preset chef tasting menu and the chef actually came out and hung out with us. He was Italian, but had moved and lived and really developed a lot of his culinary skills in Sao Paulo, Brazil, which was incredible because – for those who don't know – Sao Paulo is one of the top culinary cities in the world – as is Cape Town – which is where he is now you know outside Cape Town in Stellenbosch, but this is as well.
- So, he's gone from Italy to Sao Paulo to Cape Town and he did this amazing sort of fusion of Italian and Brazilian and other cuisines, which was just insane. So, the whole day in terms of food and wine, one of the best days of all time, for sure.
- Jennifer: Hands down, yes.
- Matt: Yeah, no doubt. I mean we're in Cape Town now. We've been here for seven weeks or so. But since the last interview, we had had such a number of incredible adventures together. We were on Remote Year at the time and shortly after the last interview – I feel like it was probably only a month or so after the last interview – you became a Remote Year legend.
- Jennifer: You remember this?
- Matt: You became a Remote Year legend and I feel like we need to publicly share the story of how you became a Remote Year legend. This happened in Lisbon, Portugal where we were for a month and I'm going to let you tell the story. As I recall, you just went out to get a cup of coffee.
- Jennifer: It was something simple like that, yeah. I did. It was a Saturday – I do remember that – and I just wanted to take some time in the morning and have my morning cup of coffee and sit outside. The weather was kind of nice to take in the scene and figure out what I was going to do for the day and what I wanted to see and where I wanted to go. I mean before I knew it, I was chasing two robbers down through the streets of Portugal.
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One of them had basically come up from behind me, grabbed my phone right out of my hand and took off and – in a split second – I leaped over the table, left everything – my purse, all the rest of my money – behind and took off after them. There were two of them. I rounded the first corner chasing them – because this is what you do – and they were standing about halfway down the block. They were standing. The reason is nobody usually chases them and they looked up at me and they kind of looked at each other.

I'm running at this point towards them. And they had this look. I felt they shared this look like, "Oh, you mean we actually have to run?" and they started taking off. So, anyway – long story short – I chased them into the streets. There was a Good Samaritan from the café who gave some chase as well but went the shorter route and cut us off at the next intersection. One of them got away, but we caught the younger one, marched him back to the café, and called the cops. The police came, took a statement, all of that stuff. They wanted to take me back in the cop car. I said, "Okay."

So, we're in the cop car. They have to take me down to the police station and have me file a report and all of this but, of course, the one that got away was the one that had my phone. So, at this point I'm disappointed after all of that and we're going back in the police car and then something comes over their walkie-talkies or whatever that system is and they just start laughing – burst out laughing. I was like, "Okay, this is kind of weird, whatever, sharing a joke." The one guy turns back to me and he's like, "Well, guess what?"

I said, "Well, I don't know. What?" He's like, "Well, we caught the guy. We caught the robber." I said, "You're kidding?" He said, "And guess what else?" I said, "What?" "We have your phone." I just lost it. I just lost it. So, we had a really good laugh. They had my phone for me when I got to the police station and I think the lesson here is if you're a robber do not wear a lime green sweater. It made him very easy to identify in the local town square. And yeah, they went out looking for him, found him, the phone was in his pocket, I got the whole thing back.

Matt: Well, the other lesson is don't rob somebody from New York City.

Jennifer: That's right.

Matt: You posted that. You posted the story on your Facebook page and all of your Facebook fans were like, “New York City! What, what, what. That’s how we do!” You rob somebody from New York, they’re going to chase you, they’re going to catch you, and they’re going to get their phone back.”

Jennifer: We don’t like having our phones taken. We really don’t.

Matt: So amazing. Remote Year was completely an incredible series of adventures. I mean one of the other things that we did – which was one of the highlights of my year that you and I did together – was our side trip to Bolivia.

Jennifer: Amazing.

Matt: I feel like, in part, it was amazing because I really didn’t know what to expect exactly and it’s just one of those countries which – especially if you’re coming from the United States I feel – there’s just so little information about it. It’s not a high profile tourist destination and I had never really talked to anybody who had been there or had known it and I just didn’t know what to expect. We went for about eight nights with a group and I mean it was just like my mind was blown. Do you want to share a little bit about what we did in Bolivia and what your perception of it was?

Jennifer: Well, Bolivia was just fascinating I think because we actually went to some of the cities as well. So, we chose to go to La Paz – which is one of the highest altitude cities in the world – if not the highest. It is mind-blowing. I mean it is built in the mountains, on the mountains. You actually land at the airport higher up than you do coming down into the actual city. So, you actually take a cab down into the city from the airport, which is just kind of bizarre, and all the different neighborhoods are connected by cable car. Altitude gets you. It is a tough city to get used to.

Walking around, you walk up one street and you’re out of breath. So, it was super fascinating and then we went to Cochabamba – which is flat as a pancake – and had this phenomenal street art scene. We went around on bicycles. We had an architect that gave us a phenomenal tour and we just saw so much that day, but everything about that city was the complete opposite of La Paz. And then, of course, we did the Bolivian Salt Flats, which just is stunning and it’s like another planet. The landscape just changes.

You go out into this wilderness basically away from all people out on your own.

You're almost camping at night, but we stayed in these pseudo-hotels that were built out of salt. I don't know it was just incredible. I really thought that we had gone to another world and the landscape just changed so dramatically from one day to the next. I mean you don't hear about Bolivia at all back in the US. Most of the people we met were Europeans and there is a visa fee for Americans who come in. So, I think that's a bit of a deterrent for some, but it is worth the effort by all means. It's just a beautiful, beautiful country.

Matt: Yeah. I think it is my highest recommendation in South America for people to do is to go to Bolivia, take a minimum of a week, and do all the stuff that we did which – in addition to those – the other day in Bolivia that was amazingly special for me and one of my best days I think of the whole year was when our group did a mountain bike trip down the world's most dangerous road. But for me, there was a lot of trepidation I think leading up to it for me because it has all of this lore.

It's called the world's most dangerous road and it's one car length wide road that has 1,000-foot drop-off and no guardrail – so, fair. So, there was a bit of trepidation because I'm not like a serious, experienced, regular mountain biker, but I had heard that this experience – like a 60 kilometer downhill ride, it takes the whole day – was truly a real legitimate bucket list once in a lifetime experience. So, I really wanted to do it and I was just so blown away. It was such an emotionally moving day just in terms of, for me, the whole experience and everything that we saw. It was just I mean I still think about that day.

Jennifer: It was incredible, yeah. The views and just the whole process of them taking us up to the top and then us working our way down and yeah, it was incredible and it is the most dangerous road because it does have the most deaths. Once upon a time, when it was used as a way to basically cross the mountains, cars would pass by each other and a lot of times they would end up pushing each other off. And so it was just considered – I mean it was, in fact – that deadly.

Matt: It was, but now they've created a bypass road for cars. So, mostly

cars don't drive on it anymore. It's mostly just for mountain bikers and that kind of stuff and, of course, they have guided trips. You would go down with a professional guide. And by the way, when you go down and you go with a professional guide, the mountain bikes they give you are like \$5,000.00 Kona suspension mountain bikes. I've never been anywhere near a bike – let alone ridden a bike – that was of that caliber. It was quite extraordinary. But they're super professional guides and they take you.

It's very safe. They take groups down every day. They've been doing it for 10 years – the company we were with – seven days a week. I mean they're super professional and it's quite safe as long as you go with a guide and take the precautions. But it was just extraordinary. The scenery was insane. You start in the top where it's cold and you have all your gloves and hat and winter gear on and then – as you descend – it gets warmer and – by the time you're at the bottom – you're in shorts and you're in a rainforest.

Jennifer: That's so true.

Matt: And you saw the most beautiful scenery you'll ever see on your way.

Jennifer: That's right. You have to peel the layers off, I tell you.

Matt: So, so, so amazing. So, I mean that was really a big highlight for me. We did a whole bunch of stuff in South America. We went skiing in Bariloche in the Lake District and we had all kinds of amazing adventures. But what was cool for me too about Remote Year was the post-Remote Year experience also. You're with the same group, right? So, this is a professional work travel program where we had 40 plus people travel the world together for a year and Remote Year, the company, takes care of accommodations and airfare and co-working space and everything.

So, these are working professionals traveling the world and seeing the world and living as a community and working and so forth. We did that for a year and then – at the end – it was really sad. It was a very emotional departure for me to leave the group and not be with the same people that I was with every day for the last year. But the post-Remote Year experience that they've developed has been quite, quite, quite incredible. Can you talk a little bit about what they call the Citizen Program? When you finish the Remote Year

program, as an alumnus, they call you a Citizen of the Remote Nation. What that experience has been like for you?

Jennifer:

Yeah. I mean it's a real perk of the Remote Year program because, yeah, as a Citizen, you basically have access to any of the cities in which they are based and you can sign up for a month to stay with them – especially if they have an active group in town. So, you can do the full experience, you can do part of an experience, you can just sign up for some of the tours that they're offering that month. It gives you a lot more flexibility once you become a Citizen. So, it's been great. You get to still feel like you're part of it, but you've got a little bit more control at that point of your own schedule.

So, I ended up here down in Cape Town because Remote Year brings programs through here. And so I was like, "Cape Town. Great, I'm going to go because Remote Year is there." I met a lot of other Citizens that were here and did a lot of activities and a lot of people from our program have come down who I've been able to see. So, it's a great hub and Remote Year is also piloting a lot of new programs and a lot of new destinations. So, they're keeping the options fresh and they're kind of experimenting. I mean that's why you have the travel bug in the first place is to go to new places and try new things.

Matt:

Yeah and they're doing these Citizen Houses as well, which we – you and I both – participated in the one in Bansko, Bulgaria in a ski chalet during the ski season that they hosted there. These are just sort of meetups for people who have finished the program who probably don't even know each other – from all different programs can just come together as alumni and do cool stuff in cool places, which is great. And then there's just the informal part of it, which is just that we're part of this massive alumni network and we're all connected on Slack and any city in the world that we go to we can just say, "Hey, anybody want to go here?"

I'm literally getting Remote Year Citizens to come and meet me in West Africa this summer. I was like, "Hey, does anybody want to go to Accra in Ghana?" "Oh, yeah, I'll come down." So, I mean it's really amazing. Any place that you want to travel or things that you want to do, there are Remote Year Citizens. And then, of course, we meet up with our friends and do epic stuff as well. Last summer, for example, we went – you and me and some of our other friends – to France and we went through the French wine

country for about a month, which was amazing.

Jennifer: We did. It was terrible.

Matt: I feel like we should talk about this too because we started off the France trip by going to the 30th Anniversary of Dîner en Blanc – which a lot of people have not even heard of. So, for people who have never heard of it, can you describe what it is and then what that experience was like because that was really quite epic?

Jennifer: It was crazy. I didn't know what to expect. I had never been as well and I can't even tell you where we found out about it. Basically, it's like a pop-up picnic and you're not even told where to go. You just have to come in all white – dressed in all white from head to toe nicely, not in shorts and a t-shirt white, but almost cocktail dresses and like you're going to a proper formal dinner party – and you're supposed to bring a picnic. Ideally, you would bring wine and you literally show up and they sort of assign you to these –

Basically, you had a program leader and an hour before you find out where to go. Then there's a mad scramble to set up tables and chairs and get your picnic ready. I don't know how many people descended. Twenty thousand or something showed up for the one in Paris. And then you have to take everything down and disappear and leave the place as you found it. So, it's just an extraordinary exercise in planning. I just don't know even how they pulled this stuff off.

Matt: It was insane and they started it 30 years ago in Paris. It's now proliferated around and they do it in cities all over the world once a year and it's just it's insane, right? It's like a flash mob, popup, but everybody is wearing elegant white and they're having a gourmet, outdoor, dinner party, right? So, it's wine and champagne only – no beer or hard liquor allowed – and then the picnic baskets. We had a picnic basket that was prepared by a Michelin star chef.

This is our picnic basket and then we had a bottle of Châteauneuf-du-Pape and a bottle of burgundy and this was our dinner. We're dressed in elegant white gear and so are the thousands of other people that have just popped up on this lawn to have an outdoor dinner party and then – four hours later – everything's broken down as if nobody had been there. I mean it

was absolutely amazing.

Jennifer: Yeah. As I said, I don't know how it even manifests. It's just crazy.

Matt: It was crazy. So, we did that and then we went to a wine festival in Bordeaux, which they have only once every two years, which was also I thought completely insane. I assumed that if it was a wine festival in Bordeaux – which is probably the world's most famous wine region and they only do it once every two years – that it would be pretty crazy. But it was really beyond my expectations. For example, "Oh, yeah, there's a fireworks display tonight." So, I go–

Jennifer: Every night, actually.

Matt: Yeah, every night. Now I have seen some pretty epic fireworks displays I feel in my time. I mean I've been to Washington, DC on July 4th and you see whatever this kind of really what you think is a pretty epic fireworks display. I've seen nothing like this fireworks display. I mean I Googled it. I was like, "What is going on here? What is the deal?"

It's set to music and exponentially more elaborate than anything I'd ever seen and it was done and put on by the company that is the preeminent fireworks company in the world that did the fireworks display at the London Olympics and that caliber of stuff. So, it was like that and then they had all of the tall ships that were in the harbor and the fireworks were going on in the background and everybody was drinking wine down at the waterfront. It was just mind-blowing, I thought.

Jennifer: Oh, it was beautifully choreographed. I mean just the music took it to a whole different level. I don't think I've ever been to a fireworks show with music like that. I mean it was just stunning. I wish we had gone every night because they did it over multiple nights.

Matt: Yeah. It was crazy and then we went to the premier wine tasting event, which was where they had about 100 grand cru wineries descend on Bordeaux from different appellations and brought two vintages each. So, there were literally 200 wines that you could taste, which some people they give you – I mean this is like a serious wine tasting, right, which is hilarious – because we roll in.

I don't know how they let the riffraff in, right?

But we roll in and we're just like, "Oh, there's a whole bunch of great wine. Cool. Let's try this. Let's try that." But there are people there they have notebooks and they're taking notes on each of the 200 wines and they're sipping it and they're spitting it in the spit buckets.

Jennifer: I was going to say, those spit buckets actually got used.

Matt: We were like, "We've never seen anyone use a spit bucket. Why would you do that?" Well, when you taste 200 different bottles of wine and you're taking notes on each one, you have to remember what it tastes like and what the difference is. I guess that's why you use it. But it was kind of hilarious because there was all of these super professional wine buyers and stuff like that that were sampling all the different wines from all these different Bordeaux area appellations and then we just roll in and we just go to the different ones and try all the different wines. Yeah, we were like, "I'll take that one."

Jennifer: "Oh, that looks good. Try that, maybe?"

Matt: It was so amazing. So, the Bordeaux was amazing and then we went to Burgundy, which was really very different from Bordeaux. We drove the Route des Grands Crus, which is the really famous stretch of the most famous wine vineyards there in Côte de Beaune and Côte de Nuits. I thought that was just insane. \

I mean you're talking about an area of the world where you – first of all – you're talking about completely medieval villages which are thousands of year old wine cellars in which you're doing these tastings. They were really tiny towns where there's maybe like 400 residents but 40 wineries, you know? It's literally the birthplace of the pinot noir grape, right – literally, the origin of that – and it was just crazy. I mean I thought Burgundy was one of the most beautiful wine regions I'd ever seen.

Jennifer: Absolutely stunning, yeah, and we tried some phenomenal wines there – so much so that I bought a case – which is pretty rare for me to do. So, yeah, I mean they were just extraordinary. Really, we fell in love with a lot of the wines there and we have very similar palates I think when it comes to wine. So, we were usually pretty

in sync with what we liked.

Matt: Yeah, it was amazing. It was just totally crazy, France. That was the first time I had really gone to the wine regions in France and it was totally amazing. And then we went out to Corsica – the Island of Corsica – which is off the coast of France in the Mediterranean Sea. And that was a very interesting experience – especially the day that we decided to rent a car and drive around the rest of the island to see what that was all about – because basically if you’re in Corsica, the only way you can see the different parts of the island is if you rent a car.

You have to do that to be mobile outside of the major city where you’re staying. So, we were like, “You know what? Let’s rent a car.” It was me and you and our friend Erica. We were like, “Let’s rent a car for the day and do it.” So, we did it and that was a day that I think I’ll never forget.

Jennifer: Yeah. Well, you know, you learn that Google Maps is not always correct in what it tells you as far as you know –

Matt: Do you want to share?

Jennifer: You have to question it a little bit each time.

Matt: We rented a car on your credit card, but I was on there as a driver. So, you’re like, “Okay.” I was driving and you were navigating.

Jennifer: Correct. It was a stick. I can’t drive stick.

Matt: It was a stick shift and so I was driving. I was like, “Okay, I’ll drive. I can drive a stick shift. You navigate and tell me where to go.” We made a little bit of a wrong turn – which was probably my fault – because we probably talking. I was like, “Oh, I think I should have turned left there, but I accidentally went straight. Do you want me to stop and reverse and turn around and go back on that road?”

Jennifer: I consulted the Google and the Google map said, “Well, this road continues around and it loops back into the main road that you want so – instead of trying to do a U-turn right here with cars on both sides – let’s just go straight. It’s only maybe a mile at the most. Not even half a mile is what it’s showing.” But as we came

around the corner and kept going and kept going, that road got smaller and smaller and narrower and the concrete disappeared and the dirt showed up and the potholes showed up and the branches showed up.

Matt:

It basically got down to a one-lane thing which – if we were to continue to go straight – we were on a dirt road and there were branches on either side and there was going to be no possible way to turn the car around if we went further. I was like, “Last chance. Should we definitely do it?” You were like, “Yeah. It says the main road is right around the corner. I think if we just go a little bit further, we’ll be there. No problem.” That’s what the map said.

So, we go a little bit further and we turn around the right side and – all of a sudden – we are on the edge of a ravine and – all of a sudden – the road just goes straight down at about I would say definitely over a 45-degree angle. So, we are – all of a sudden – descending straight down an insanely steep – barely one lane, less than one lane – road with no rail on the left-hand side on a ravine that you fall off. So, I am going as far to the right-hand side as I can, rubbing against all of the branches, trying not to have us fall off the ravine.

We’re going down one of the steepest roads I have ever driven on and – all of a sudden at the bottom – I see this reservoir of water, which it’s totally unclear how deep it is and we are going at such a steep pace that we basically have two options. Either we slow down and try to go through it very slowly which – if it’s deep is definitely going to get us stuck in the water – or we punch it and try to plow through the water which – if it’s super shallow and it’s that steep – could plow us right into the ground. So, I basically take a straw poll from the car and I’m like, “Do we go slowly or do we just accelerate and punch it to try to get through this water?” You guys were like, “Punch it, man.”

So, I just floored it. We went straight down, crashed into the water. It goes spurting up left and right. It was the right decision though because it was fricking deep and we would have gotten stuck. Finally, get through the water, did not fall off the ravine, get back out on the flat road and finally make our way out on the highway. But that was one of the craziest driving experiences that I have had in recent times, for sure.

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- Jennifer: Yeah. And it might be good to mention that it was just a little old Fiat.
- Matt: Yeah, it was a little Fiat. This was not an off-roading vehicle of any kind.
- Jennifer: Well, we survived, yeah. We took the car back. They didn't charge us for any scratches that were there on the side of the car.
- Matt: Miraculously. Miraculously. I do not know how we got away with that, but apparently, it all worked out. So, it was a story that we have to tell on a podcast is what that is.
- Jennifer: That's right. These are the adventures that you have while traveling.
- Matt: These are the adventures. And then the culmination of that trip though was really, really awesome because – after France – we went over to Barcelona. One of my top memories with you particularly – and you and I do lots of epic stuff together and it's really cool and we do all this really super cool travel stuff but – one of my experiences that was particularly special because it was with you and you're an architect is when we went to Barcelona and we went to the Sagrada Família together because I was getting the audio tour of things and I was, of course, amazed by what I was seeing.
- But then, I had your private, personal architectural insights which made me just appreciate it at a much greater level. So, maybe we can just start with just – for people who don't even know what the Sagrada Família is when I say that in Barcelona or maybe have never been to Barcelona – can you just describe and explain what it is, whose project it is, and why it is so architecturally extraordinary?
- Jennifer: Well, it's a cathedral that just will blow your mind. It was originally designed by Gaudi – who's obviously a famous Spanish architect – some 200 years ago now. It was such a big undertaking to build this almost fantastical cathedral that they're still building it to this day. It is still a work in progress. And Gaudi was just so imaginative. I mean this thing is like a sandcastle. It is just the way it was conceived is so complex, it broke all kinds of tradition with what a cathedral should be and how it should be built. I mean his

arches systems and buttresses and just everything about it is extraordinary. We kind of take it for granted.

I mean you walk in and you feel like you're in this 3-D magical world that he's created. It's just an extraordinary legacy that he left. So, when we walked through it, I mean the natural light that comes pouring through the stained glass windows. I mean he conceived that exactly how that would be and designed those panels. I mean he designed down to the infinite little detail that you see. Of course, I mean it's still being built way after his death.

So, he's never been able to realize this masterpiece, but it's extraordinary. Yeah, I mean we had a blast walking through there and exploring before they kicked us out finally, but an absolute gem of a place. Of course, there are so many masterpieces by Gaudi in Barcelona that it's worth going and doing a whole tour – just an architectural tour – of his work in Barcelona.

Matt: For sure, it is. The Sagrada Família was like I mean that was his real, true, preeminent piece and it was mind-blowing to me just to see it. I mean anybody who walks inside this cathedral, this is so far different from any other cathedral that's ever been conceptualized or built on the planet of Earth. It's just it's so different that it's insane what you'll see there. But what you were explaining to me though was just it was just the next level architectural insanity of how difficult it was to actually build this.

So, it's like the pillars that are holding up the inside of the cathedral are in the shape of trees of a forest and I mean it's just like this stuff. You were explaining to me as we were looking at this how insanely complex and architecturally difficult this would be. I think you said to me like, "If someone tried to do this today in 2019 with all of the advanced architectural software and technology and everything that we have, it would still be an insanely extraordinary masterpiece. When Gaudi did it, he did it in his head."

Jennifer: In his head and drew it on flat pieces of paper. And the thing is about it it's just so three dimensional. I mean they couldn't even draw sections through it at the time. There was just no way to communicate what it is that he wanted to create. He's almost like a sculptor. The whole thing feels like it was sculpted by hand by this individual and you're inside his sculpture and you're just like,

“This is insane. It’s crazy.”

A beautiful piece though. Yeah, you have to spend a couple of hours there when you go and go on a bright, sunny day so that you really get the full effect of the light. But yeah, the whole thing was designed like the columns are like trees like you said and it creates a canopy on the ceiling and every little thing was thought about. So, it’s extraordinary.

Matt: Yeah, totally, totally amazing. Well, let’s use that as sort of an architectural transition. One of the other really cool things that happened since the last interview, you got invited by the American Institute of Architects to be a Women in Architecture Panel in New York City. Another one of the things that other architects were very interested in on that panel is how in the world you built your business and run your business and operate as an architect and an owner of an architecture company while you’re traveling the world to all of these epic locations. But I would love for you to talk about the experience on that panel and what it was like.

Jennifer: Well, I’m so considered a novelty, for sure. It was a great experience. I had to cut our travel short that summer in order to go back to New York to be on this panel, but I felt like it was worth doing. I was on a great panel with some other extraordinary women. All of us had our own practices. That was sort of the similarity and the thing that tied us together. But we all presented basically how we ran our businesses, what kinds of projects we did, and really I just spoke about working remotely and how to do it and – as an architect – how to set up your practice that way.

Yeah, I got asked tons of questions about “What kind of communications software do you use for this? How do you project manage your team remotely? How do you work in different time zones? How do you deal with not being onsite? Surely, you have to show up and see what’s happening. How do you find out? How do you get your information otherwise, all of these kinds of things?” So, I mean in my industry, it’s still pretty rare, I think, for an architectural firm or a design firm to set up in the way that I have. So, it was a great opportunity to share some ideas with others and have some conversations about how that could be done and hopefully, I can do more of those kinds of speaking engagements.

Matt: What were some of the answers do you think that people were

looking for and what were some of the concepts that you shared that would be valuable to let's say architectural entrepreneurs that are looking to do this?

Jennifer:

Well, I think we just forget how much the value of the internet really. I mean Google Earth is a huge asset for us. I can go to most properties and look at it from an exterior – but also an interior – point of view. Remember, I do a lot of retail and so a lot of retail stores have been mapped – the interior has been mapped – and I can pull up the interior of that store as well as the exterior. So, it's just you know I can see it. I can go into it. I can turn around in it. It's like being there. In fact, it's probably better than being there because I can reference it over and over again.

I'm trained to think spatially. So, for me, just doing Google Earth and seeing it on a computer, I feel like I'm there. I can translate that. Other people cannot, but I find that very easy to do. Then tools like I think I had mentioned when I was with you last time, Box.com has been just our go-to collaboration platform. So, I shared a lot about how I set up a project on that and how I manage, that it's not something that was ever designed for architects. It's designed for people in all different industries, but I've found that its system is great.

You see previews. It's image-based. You can leave comments for your team. I mean you can invite clients to it. I mean I use it also similar to Dropbox and upload things and let clients come in, download files directly. Yeah, and then with the video conferencing software that's out there – whether it's GoToMeeting or join.me or Google Hangouts – I mean there's so many. I mean we can set up a call. You can see everybody's face. You can talk about the issues and teams are spread out these days.

So, clients don't have time to meet you in person a lot of the times because we do work across the US. It's not just in New York. So, if they were going to meet with us, the expense of flying us out there, putting us up, entertaining us for two to three days, walking us through things I mean people are busy you know? To be honest, it takes an hour or two hours maybe once every two weeks to touch base. It saves a lot of time. So, if you can convince a client that's the way to go, it's ideal.

Matt:

Yeah. I think a lot of those lessons are very applicable to other

industries as well. A lot of people it's really just about thinking creatively and strategically about how to build a remote infrastructure even if your business – like an architectural design company – is not in a space that is traditionally virtual, right? Maverick Investor Group is a real estate brokerage, right? People are like, “How in the world would you build and run a real estate brokerage without being there on the ground? That's crazy. How is that possible?”

People ask you the same question, “How can you possibly run an architecture company without being there?” So, I think there are a lot of other industries for entrepreneurs that are in spaces and building businesses in areas that are not traditionally virtual. There are so many answers if you just reverse engineer your business plan and think strategically about it and ask yourself the question – not if, not can I do it but – how can I do it? And then – all of a sudden there are a lot of answers – which is what people were able to ask you on the panel and you were able to tell them.

Jennifer: That's right. That's right. I have crossed paths with a few others that have been doing it remotely, but sort of within the larger sort of design and building industry. So, I've come across an urban designer, I've come across a landscape designer doing things remotely, a cost estimator on the construction side, people in the supply business that are doing sales. So, there are still a lot of opportunities. Sometimes you just have to find the right niche.

Matt: Right, yeah, 100 percent. But I think that a lot of the concepts that you're talking about are so relevant because we at Maverick Investor Group – we help our clients buy residential investment property as an investment and we don't have to be, ourselves, on the ground either where the property is or in person to meet with the client. So, we can build those client relationships over Skype and we have great relationships with our clients and then we're also able to help the clients – if they want to – they can even take a trip out to see the property, but we at Maverick don't have to be there, right?

There are teams on the ground and there are people who are doing that there. So, it's all about how you – as a business – build your infrastructure so that you can take care of everything that needs to be taken care of, but you personally don't have to have a geographic restriction in your life.

Jennifer: Absolutely. It's about preference as well. I mean we like to be the frontend designers. We like to work with the client up front. We like to come up with the concept. We like to take it through what's called design development phase and then we partner with local architects and engineers and MEP firms and whoever we might need to do that on the ground. I mean there are plenty of firms that are local.

Matt: Right, right, for sure, for sure. So, also the other thing I really want to talk to you about that we didn't get into at all on the last episode – and you and I have been talking about a lot since then – is your angel investing that you're doing. I want to get into that a little bit and maybe can you just start by talking about what is angel investing? What is an angel investor? And what are those opportunities like just to set the context?

Jennifer: Sure. So, an angel investor I mean typically is an investor that comes in to fund a startup somewhere between the friends and family round but before the VCs come in. So, an angel investor is typically an individual usually with either high net worth or with a certain income every year that is looking to make returns on their investment by backing different startups. So, that's really it. I mean it's a very simple term. It's kind of the word I think an angel came in as kind of a lifesaver. When you've run out of money, you've run out of your family and friends and they're tired of you asking for money, I mean it's the person that comes in and saves you from that.

Matt: Right.

Jennifer: More or less.

Matt: Right. And just to give people context, how much would an angel investment normally be or what would be the range that an angel investor would normally put into a startup at that super early stage?

Jennifer: Honestly, it completely varies. I mean it can be as low as \$5,000.00 all the way up to I mean a quarter of a million, half a million. It just depends on that investor's net worth and what they're willing to do and if it's a full time or a part-time job for them. I mean this is something I've dabbled with on the side. It's not my fulltime job. I have a business to run myself, but there are

fulltime angel investors that that's all they do. They meet with different startups and founders and that's it. They literally are just constantly doing that and investing their money and then getting those returns and reinvesting a lot. So, that's a different ballgame.

Matt: Yeah, for sure. So, let me ask you this just as a baseline question because you are an entrepreneur and you founded and built and bootstrapped your own business. You did not seek outside investment money from angels or venture capitalists or anyone else, but you do invest yourself in other startups that are seeking angel investment money. So, I guess the first question I want to ask you is what types of businesses or when should a business or how should a startup founder and entrepreneur think about whether they should bootstrap their business or whether they should seek investment money from like an angel?

Jennifer: I mean it's a hard question because businesses can fit into so many different categories. My very first startup – which I think I had mentioned on the last podcast which failed – was one that we went to seek funding for. You know I went through the fundraising process – friends and family, we got seed money before we failed – so I kind of understood how that worked and our goal was to scale it. The current business that I run today is a service business. You'll never get funding beyond friends and family for that because it's not really scalable. It fits into a different category.

So, yeah, you have to evaluate what the company is. If it has big, exponential potential, angel investors are just typically the first ones you go to before moving onto VC level or institutional funding. You can go after an angel and then call it quits after that if you get your business to profitability and perhaps you can't scale it much more than that, but you can pitch angels with an idea. I mean if you think it's a good idea – you've flushed it out – some angels will put money into that and then others they want to see traction.

So, you're going to have to find your own way to get to a point where you build a product that you can actually sell and show that you have customers and – until you get to that point – those angels are not going to invest. So, it varies widely across the spectrum. That's about all I can say.

Matt: Okay, yeah. So, when you personally are evaluating an investment opportunity for deciding whether or not you're going to invest your

money in a startup and be an angel investor in this company or not, what are you looking for personally? What are your evaluative criteria that would greenlight for you to say, “Yup, I’m definitely investing in this company.”?

Jennifer:

Well, one, obviously I have to like the idea, but a lot of that has to do with, “Do I see value in the idea? Do I see that there’s a market for the idea? Would I use the product? Does it make sense to me? Do I understand the product?” If I don’t understand it, I’m not going to invest in it and it has to relate to interests of mine. So, a lot of the companies I invest in usually are somehow either tied to real estate or buildings, architecture, design, or they’re related to retail or they might be related – I’m big into sustainability, so they might be green concepts.

So, they’re somehow related to my personal interests. I don’t invest in things that are outside of that. It just doesn’t make sense. I don’t have any expertise in those kinds of fields outside of that. And then it has to be a phenomenal team or person if it’s a single founder. So, I have to feel confident that that team and that founder are going to do everything they can to make this company work and then I have to see that it has the potential to scale. It’s not just a one-off or that they can only sell in a particular market. It’s something that has the potential to catch on and really grow and expand. So, yeah, that’s my main criteria.

When you’re at the early stage of investment, I mean you can pour over numbers all you like, but I mean it’s too early. A lot of it’s you’re going on your gut as to whether you think the company has potential or not and if you’re willing to invest. That’s really all you have to go on. The numbers don’t mean a lot. They’re just forecasts. So, yeah, and so that’s really it and I’m not an active investor in that this is not my fulltime job. So, most of the time, I do referral only. Somebody has to refer a founding company to me or a startup to me for me to take a look and a lot of times the referrals I get it’s because it’s an interest of mine.

Matt:

Right, that makes sense. Now can you talk about – and this was interesting because you mentioned this to me the other day and I thought it was very interesting – you said that startups and startup founders might not necessarily take angel money from every investor. They’re actually looking for certain characteristics of an investor to accept their money and there might be investors that

they wouldn't necessarily want that particular person involved with their company. Can you talk about what makes a good angel investor from the perspective of a founder?

Jennifer:

Yes. Obviously, I run a business. My wealth is generated from basically my business. So, I understand what that means to run a business and to generate your own income to play with. So, some people inherit money that are in the angel game and didn't really ever work for it. And the number of angels I've ever interacted with, I often am like, "Oh, wow. I wouldn't want them on my team. My goodness, they seem to be out of touch with reality a bit. Okay."

So, yeah, I mean founders have to be a little bit careful because there is a sense with some angels that they're just doing it for – I mean they just have so much money that they're just out there kind of throwing it around and it's a bit of an ego trip. They have more questions for the founders and they bug them a lot and they want answers a lot. They're just not adding value themselves. They're not helping the founder succeed. They're just kind of bothering them a lot. So, anyway, founders do have to be a little bit if you've also got an angel that really has a strong idea about where the company wants to go – and that's not in alignment with where the founder wants to take it – I mean that's a red flag.

You don't want to be fighting with somebody that invested in your company. You want them 100 percent behind you. That's just a waste of a lot of time and effort. I mean once you take their money, you take their money they're in it, you know? And so you're going to have to deal with them for the long haul. So, yeah, it's a risk too if an entrepreneur takes on somebody that's not the right fit. So, we always talk about that it's important to find the right fit.

I mean I know a company that walked away from a very big deal recently and it was a very hard decision, but they decided not to go with a particular investor and left 300K on the table in order to do that. That's a big, hard thing to walk away from when you're a founder and you need the money and you just – but if you realize that investor is not the right fit, they'll be a liability down the road.

Matt:

And when you're reciprocally when you're looking at founders, can you talk about what you're looking for in terms of – and also in terms of solo founders versus founding teams and – what you

like to see there?

Jennifer: Yes. I mean it does vary a little bit, but I mean I just try to find mature people that potentially have some very interesting work experience behind them, have done some pretty significant things – even if it's not starting a company before. I few of the founders I've backed are scrappy. Sometimes I like them scrappy because they're just willing to fight for it and go for it. They're willing to take risks and not sit back and sort of, "Oh, well. Oh, well. That didn't work."

And then with solo founders, sometimes I prefer solo founders if it's the right person because you can always get a strong team behind that founder but – if you have two founders that are eventually not going to get along – you've got a bigger problem on your hands than a single founder. So, single founder, the biggest risk there is that they run into burnout because they have nobody else that they can turn to and bounce things off of and all of that good stuff, but they have a vision. A solo founder really often is very clear about where they need to go. So, there's some benefit to that too. Yeah, I would say over 50 percent of the companies I've backed so far are solo founders.

Matt: And can you talk a little bit about the advisory part because I know that a number of the companies you've backed, you're not officially anyways an advisor whereas some of the companies you are. Can you talk a little bit about the role of an advisor when you're coming on as an investor advisor in particular?

Jennifer: Yeah. I mean you have to assume that you gave them money because they know what they're doing and they know where they're going to go and that they're going to hire the right people and all of this. So, you're not coming in there to fix a company. You're not coming in to change direction for them and tell them that they need to go somewhere else. You're really there to help guide them when they need guidance.

And so as an advisor, you're really just – you can be a sounding board for them if they need somebody to bounce some ideas off of, but a lot of times a resource if they want a connection to somebody, they need to make a particular hire and they need a recommendation for that. Or like I said, I back a lot of companies in the space that I work in. So, therefore, I can be a good resource

for them for certain things. I'm working with one of the startups to design their first gym space in New York and now we're doing one in DC and we're going to do two more this year.

So, in some cases, I'm working with them very directly to help and guide them and they've never done any kind of buildout before. So, I'm helping coach them, advise them, and actually design their actual spaces. So, I'm a resource in a different way in that case as well.

Matt: As you have been an angel investor now for all these different types of companies – including in different industries and spaces – and you've got a view into the inner workings of these different startups. Some of them have been more successful than others, some of them have been less successful, some of them have run into more problems, some of them have been able to navigate their way out of them and so forth.

As you've been doing this, you've been getting such an insight into them – not just to your own company and your own entrepreneurial experience but – all of these other different types of companies. What have been some of the observations that you've had and some of the lessons that you've taken away from these experiences just in terms of like what are some of the business challenges that founders and startups run up against and what has been the ways that maybe some of them have effectively navigated them and others ones have succumbed to them?

Jennifer: I think the biggest challenge for most founders is just the fundraising process itself and the biggest mistake that founders make is not taking enough money when they're doing a round. So, what happens is they close a round, they start spending that money, and they realize they need to start raising for the next round. You have to have enough runway to feel comfortable so that you can focus on the business before you have to go out again and start raising money.

So, yeah, a lot of founders try to kind of shortchange that or maybe they're always just worried you know, "I don't need that much money, right? I don't need that much. Why would I take more?" But the problem with that is you have to think big. You have to make sure you take enough money that's going to basically double what you think you need. And yeah, you're going to have to give

away more of the company for that, but it's going to buy you time and it's going to buy you less headache and it'll give you more time to focus on what you need to be doing versus chasing money.

So, that's a really big one that all founders struggle with I think to different degrees and some founders are just really not cut out for the fundraising process because it can be a fulltime job. So, you have to have a founder who's willing to do it or – at least if it's a two founder team – one of them that has to become their fulltime job.

Matt: And then in addition to the fundraising piece, are there business trajectories that some of these companies take that are able to make them more successful in a quicker period of time than other companies? Are you noticing any – and maybe it's thematically or maybe just specifically or individually – challenges that are holding some companies back whereas others are able to move forward? I mean other than financing, are there other business lessons that you've taken from this?

Jennifer: Sure. I mean some definitely spend money where they shouldn't. Some get very caught up with the branding. "Oh, I want to hire a cool branding firm that'll do cool graphics and make me look good." That's often not a good use of the money until later. Throw something together. It's going to change. Until you get to a certain point, that's just kind of an exercise in futility. You just don't want to spend 100K on a crazy branding package in your very early days. The other thing that I've seen they spend money badly on tech.

So, either that might be because they're not a tech company to start with, but tech is a component of any startup. You have to have that and maybe they choose to do stuff to custom. So, they start pouring too much money into hiring these developers that oversell them what they really need. They don't have somebody in-house or they don't have basically a CTO that oversees that. There's a lot they go sideways with the tech piece of the business, whatever that may be. So, that's a real challenge too because they can start over many times and if they are mainly an online business, they have to get that right because they'll lose customers. They won't be able to compete.

So, a lot of it comes down to hiring the right talent and getting

access to the right talent and –in order to get the right talent – you have to be able to pay them. So, that goes back to the whole fundraising thing. You have to have money in order to do that, etc., etc. So, this is sort of the challenges that yeah they often run into.

Matt: What tips do you have or suggestions do you have based on your observations and experiences in terms of mitigating the phenomena of founder burnout? I feel like entrepreneurs – I feel like all of us – run this crazy burnout risk where it's just a grueling slog and a lot of times it's just really, really for a long period of time. You alluded to founder burnout potential earlier. So, I just wonder if you have any insights or thoughts on being self-aware and preemptively having mitigation strategies for your own burnout. Do you have thoughts about that?

Jennifer: Thoughts on your own burnout. It happens more with solo founders for sure because they are carrying the full weight of the company on their shoulders. In that case, we try to encourage them to get a team behind them as fast as possible – and usually a right-hand person – because that right-hand person doesn't really need a label like CTO or whatever they are. It's just somebody that supports the person in the key role and trusts them enough so that they can start to pass some of those responsibilities off. Those responsibilities may get passed off again, but it's just like the founder needs to have a way to get rid of that stuff.

Otherwise, it just circles back and they get snowed under with the pressure of having to manage everything. And then, obviously, I mean the stronger the core team is, the better they do because then the founder can focus on what they need to be doing and they get the right people to take that responsibility off of them. I mean for every company it's different who they need, but yeah and honestly the best founders are the ones that walk away at the end of the day and check out and go off and do different things and have a life. They take the company farther faster, to be honest.

Matt: That's really good advice. Awesome. All right. Jennifer – at this point – are you ready for the lightning round?

Jennifer: Do I have a choice? I'm ready. I'm ready.

Matt: She's ready. Let's do it.

- Announcer 1: The lightning round.
- Matt: Okay. You've been to over 70 countries now, which is more than me. What is one travel hack that you can share that you use when you're traveling?
- Jennifer: I book everything last minute. I only book one-way flights. I try to build a lot of flexibility in my travel. I don't know if that's what you would call a hack or not. It's a style of travel, I will say that. You know I don't like to over plan my travel because I don't know if I'm going to like or dislike a place when I get there. So, if I've committed to going somewhere for eight weeks and I get there and – within the first two weeks – I'm like, "Well, it was great, but I'm kind of ready to move on."
- Then that kind of throws a lot of things off. So, I find there are so many amazing last minute travel deals that it's almost easier to plan and leave things a little bit to the last minute because Airbnb starts dropping their prices a lot of times. If you're not going at a prime season to a certain location, you know, you can get some amazing apartments.
- I mean here in Cape Town, we're here off season. The apartments are like almost half the price. I mean the place I'm staying next month offered 35 percent off the apartment for the month. Great. I'll take that, you know? So, I don't know, I just feel like there are some real advantages in doing that. So, that's my – I don't know that it's a travel hack as much as a sense of style.
- Matt: So, style. I feel like it is. I feel like you do get a lot of last minute travel deals and – if you're willing to book last minute – a lot of times there are opportunities where if something hasn't sold then they're willing to give you a deal on everything from Airbnb apartment rentals to flights to all sort of other things. So, there are definitely last minute deals available if you're willing to travel that way.
- Jennifer: Yeah and you can negotiate with an Airbnb host. You reach out to them in advance and say, "I'm looking at your property for these dates. Can you do me a better deal?" Sometimes they will, absolutely.
- Matt: Yeah, especially if you're staying long term like you and you're
-

saying, “Hey, I’ll book it for a month. What kind of deal can you give me?” Awesome. Next question. What is one tip that you have for staying fit while traveling? You are someone who definitely is into fitness and a lot of people ask this you know like, “I’m traveling around a lot. How do you stay fit while you’re traveling?”

Jennifer:

Well, pretty much the same way I stay fit while living in New York, which is you walk or you bike everywhere. So, I’m a city dweller, city living. I mean most locations that I pick to travel to are cities. And so, to me, staying fit is a lot about just integrating it into your daily routine. It’s not necessarily about, “Oh, my God, I have to go find a gym. I need to join a gym. I have to go to the gym” this kind of stuff. So – instead of taking an Uber – walk. If it’s a 20-minute walk, so take a 20-minute walk. That’s what I do when I’m in New York.

I hate the subways really and so if I don’t have to go on the subway and cabs are way too expensive and I don’t want to sit in traffic, well you can walk or you can bike. And I think it’s as simple as that. I mean, as they say, 10 minutes of walking or exercise every day helps. It’s just the little things and those kinds of things add up. The other thing is, of course, you know if I want more I’ll seek out dance classes in the different cities that I’m in. That’s pretty easy to do a Google search for that. I love going to the local dance classes. It’s just amazing.

You get so many different types of instructors and just a local flavor of where you are – a local sense of that. And then if I’m really in a pinch, I mean Zumba videos on YouTube work as a backup. I mean you can always find stuff online and – if I’m in a pinch or something and I just am on the go – I can set up my iPad and you just stand in front of it and there you go. You have an exercise routine. So, yeah, you just have to. But I think, in general, you just have to integrate it just more casually into everything that you do.

Matt:

Agreed 100 percent. Awesome. Okay. Knowing everything that you know now and all of the experiences you’ve had up to this point in your life – if you were able to go back in time and give one piece of advice to your 18-year-old self – what advice would you give to 18-year-old Jennifer?

Jennifer: “You’re just going to have to learn more patience.” I mean things just don’t happen quickly and I was always just man I didn’t want to wait for anything. Things just had to happen right away no matter what, you know? I was just a fast thinker, a fast doer, this and that. So, I would get frustrated a lot with things and give up I think too early on things a lot of times and walk away from things because I just didn’t have the patience. So, I mean I think as you get older and wiser, you learn that you just you have to give things breathing room sometimes, let things sort of soak, come back to them, and yeah, patience. It’s still a challenge.

Matt: I think patience is a really good piece of advice for all young people, for sure, if they want to try to establish and accomplish epic things. It’s a very extended, long term process and patience is absolutely required. So, that’s a good piece of advice. All right. So, on the last episode, I asked you your top bucket list travel destinations and I think you’ve knocked them all out at this point. You were talking about the Galapagos Islands – which you and I actually did together.

Jennifer: That’s right.

Matt: It was insanely epic.

Jennifer: Well, we did it on a boat.

Matt: We did.

Jennifer: You know how I feel about boats?

Matt: I do. You feel very favorably about boats, about all things boats. And you’ve subsequently done a number of epic sailing trips to the Greek Islands and all sorts of other legendary things that – for many people – would be bucket list items and you’ve already done those things. And so my next lightning round question to you – and the final lightning round question – is what are currently – after everything that you’ve already done – your now today, in 2019, top three bucket list travel destinations where you have never been or things that you’ve never done before?

Jennifer: Now, I feel like if I give these the next time you talk to me, I will have had to have done them.

Matt: Of course. Of course, you will have done them. I know you're going to go do them in the next six to 12 months. That's a given. I'm just saying what are they at the current moment?

Jennifer: So, we spent together – with Remote Year – six months in South America and I mean we really worked our way down from Colombia all the way to Argentina – which was absolutely phenomenal. But one of the places that we did not go was Brazil and, of course, Brazil has been on my list for a very long time and I keep thinking I'm going to get there. You've been there, you've invited me, different people I know have gone but– for some reason – the timing's been off and all of this.

So, Brazil is just still up on my list and it still hasn't happened yet, but we're going to get there. So, yeah, and you're over here nodding because you were just there coming off of the Nomad Cruise and I know it's one of your favorite countries.

Matt: One of my favorite countries in the world. Be still my heart, Brazil. Yes, that's an amazing pick.

Jennifer: Thank you. I knew you'd like that one, but I'm excited about it as well. The second is – I don't know why – but Nepal has been in my head for a little bit now and has been kind of gaining maybe a little bit more traction. I've not wanted to climb Everest, but I have been curious about going to Everest Base Camp a little bit just to get a feel. I mean there's a lot of craziness that goes with climbing Everest and so – I don't know – I was just kind of curious what these crazy climbers are like and what they do.

But I've just heard the mountains, in general, are beautiful and that whole region is just supposed to be – the landscape is just supposed to be stunning. So, I have no aspirations to be on the highest peak in the world, but yeah, that country still appeals to me, for sure. And then wow, there are just so many great places – maybe New Zealand. I haven't made it to New Zealand yet. I've been over to Australia, spent a lot of time in Australia, and never quite got the chance to pop over to New Zealand. I've also heard it's just stunning. So, see if I get to any of those this next year.

Matt: I'm very likely going to go to New Zealand in October and you and I have some mutual friends in New Zealand as well. So, you know, if that fits into the itinerary that's a possibility because I

haven't been there either. I haven't been to Nepal either. So, those two are also very high on my list. So, maybe we'll knock them out this year.

Jennifer: Maybe. We'll see.

Matt: It's possible. It's possible.

Jennifer: I mean I only do things last minute. So, I can't really tell you until about two weeks before.

Matt: Exactly. Right, I know. See I know. I'm like, "Oh yeah, I'll go to New Zealand in October." You'll be like, "I'll tell you at the end of September if I'm going to go to New Zealand in October. I'll let you know. I'll think about it and keep you posted." Awesome. All right. Jennifer, at this point, I want you to let people know how they can get in touch with you or how they can follow you on social media. How do you want people to be able to connect with you and figure out what you're up to?

Jennifer: Well, I post a lot of travel pics, obviously, on Instagram. So, my handle is just my name Jennifer Magee – easy to find – and otherwise if it's kind of business-related, how I got into angel investing and more details about that or running a company, that would just be my work email really, Jennifer@RetailintheCity.com.

Matt: www.Retailinthecity.com, which also is a website you should check out because it's a really awesome website and an awesome business. And so even if you're not looking to be a customer of the business, just as an entrepreneur you should really check out Retail in the City and just see what they've done and how they've done it because it's pretty fricking epic. I think there are a lot of things that different entrepreneurs can take from what you've done in their own industries and that kind of stuff.

So, we will link all of this stuff up in the show notes so you can connect with Jennifer and get all of her recommendations and direct links to everything at TheMaverickShow.com. Jennifer, as always, it was so amazing. Thank you for being on the show again.

Jennifer: Well, thank you, Matt and we'll see you somewhere else in the world.

- Matt: All right. Good night, everybody.
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