

Matt Bowles: My guest today is Rasha Mediene. She is a Palestinian American digital nomad, born in Detroit, Michigan to a Palestinian immigrant family from Gaza. She is now a content creator, author, actor, motorcycle rider and fully remote serial entrepreneur who travels the world with no base.

Rasha, welcome to the show.

Rasha Mediene: Thank you so much. Glad to be here.

Matt Bowles: I am super excited to have you here. Before we get into this, let's just start off by setting the scene and talking about where we are recording from today. Unfortunately, we are not in person. I am actually on the east coast of the United States. I am in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Asheville, North Carolina. And where are you?

Rasha Mediene: I am in Egypt in a specific city called Dahab, which means gold. And that's just so happens to be where I'm at today.

Matt Bowles: Well, as you know, Egypt has played a very significant role in my travel and digital nomad journey. I have spent about a year in Egypt, mostly based in Cairo. So, it has a very special place in my heart. And I know it does for you as well. Can you share a little bit maybe just to start off about what you love about Egypt? Why is it so special? And maybe for folks that have never been, just describe some of the highlights of Egypt that you might put people onto.

Rasha Mediene: In Egypt, I really love the community that they have, the fact that they have kept their cultural background. For example, this is the place you come to and you're basically going back in time. You're in a third-world country. You're going to see horses, donkeys, sheep, goats, just roaming around with you. And there's a beauty to that because when you go to, when I travel to other places, everything is just so modern, and that kind of stuff seems not real anymore. And then you come here and it's like, "Oh, people really live like this", or at least used to in the other countries as well, but they have transformed.

But it's a big community around that. They don't necessarily want to change. They want to keep that instilled, which I appreciate. They're also very strong advocates for Palestine. They're one of the biggest countries that have boycotted McDonald's, Starbucks, Dunkin, and all that stuff. They won't even touch it.

Pepsi cola, a lot of places stopped serving it. I've gone to restaurants that don't even have ketchup because they're boycotting Heinz. It's just a very beautiful, well-knit community. And to some people, it can look a little crazy, but there's beauty in it. And it takes some time to sit there and understand that these people are actually living more than other people around the world.

Matt Bowles: Well, I want to start off a little bit with your background. But before we even talk about your background, I'd love for you to share a little bit about your family's background, your parents' history and where they're from and talk a little bit about that.

Rasha Mediene: Yeah. So, my father was born in Lebanon. He's Palestinian, but they had to move and relocate and immigrate to Lebanon during the Nakba, during 1948 when everything changed, and they were forcibly kicked out of their homes.

So, they didn't really have a choice. So, my dad ended up being born in Lebanon. But then my mom was born and raised in Gaza, and she was there pretty much her whole life until she was in her twenties. I

mean, it's just, it plays a huge role in my life, like growing up, all I heard on the news is like wars and I didn't really understand it much.

I'm just like, "Oh yeah, then it's fine". Like you guys talk about this every day. It seems to be part of your life. When I was younger, I didn't really understand it that well, you know, but as I got older and the traveling and understanding how this country affected this country, it all started to piece together, and I was able to understand my parents' life more. Honestly, like my dad being born in Lebanon, I just thought he was born in Lebanon. I didn't understand that they had to relocate because of what happened.

Matt Bowles: Yeah. And can you talk a little bit as well now about how you understand your parents' immigrant experience to the U.S. and why they went to Detroit? And then, share a little bit about your experience growing up there.

Rasha Mediene: My parents got the opportunity to come to America because one of my uncles was here. I think he got a job here in Michigan with Ford and cars and stuff. Many middle Eastern people did. So that became like a hub where people are bringing their families in, and we happened to be one of them.

So, my parents ended up coming to America in their early thirties. And I'm sure when you look back at it, it's crazy. Like you're coming from war and all this stuff, and you don't know the language and you're going somewhere new. And the whole point was for their freedom. They didn't have freedom.

My mom couldn't travel anywhere, how an American does. The only way you can get out of Gaza is, first of all, you gotta have a ton of money and then connections and stuff like that, which luckily, they were able to do. But I always do think back at like, "what if they didn't have that?". If we didn't have money, then I would have probably been born in Gaza too. And I wouldn't have had the freedom, and I probably would have been in this war right now. I probably wouldn't even be here. I don't take my U.S. passport for granted. And that's how the whole traveling thing came about into this as well.

Matt Bowles: And can you talk about growing up in a Palestinian immigrant home in the U.S. and the role of Palestinian identity, including your trips back to Palestine as a kid and the impact that had on you.

Rasha Mediene: Being Palestinian in America is a tricky situation, especially depending on where you live. Growing up in Dearborn and around that area, it was okay, other parts of America, it's kind of like a hush-hush. I might say I'm Lebanese in some places. I just don't want problems.

But going back, luckily, I'm able to get in and it's a mission to go to Gaza. They don't really want anyone to go in there. It's kind of like I compare it to North Korea. They're occupied and they don't want anyone to know what's going on, especially now with social media and what have you.

So, it's a very gated area, cameras everywhere. The last time I was there, I was around 12 or 14, something like that. And, there was literally AKs pointed at me just for questioning. Why are you guys going in? Who is in there? What's the point? How long are you staying? Where are you staying? Like they needed every single detail, probably also for the safety of us being Americans.

But overall, they want to know who's in there, why you're in there. So, it was very scary as a kid, to be honest. Because I've traveled the world, and why, when I came here, it's so difficult and scary. After they finally let us through, we had to walk through this huge one-to-two-mile black tunnel in the dark. We don't even know if we're going the right way. Like it's just 'walks straight, okay, and we were a little scared, what if

there's, you know, people with guns, we can't see anything. So, we're in defense mode, like what's happening here.

And just going through that, it's a little bit traumatizing, but that's nothing compared to probably what my parents went through, living through that all the time. So that was just a little glimpse. And it's like, whoa, couldn't imagine how they lived in this open-air jail cell.

Matt Bowles: And then as you were coming up, the September 11th attacks happened when you were very young. And so, you were coming up as a kid in the post 9/11 American era in a largely Arab, largely Muslim immigrant community. Can you share a little bit about in that context, what it was like growing up and how you were navigating your Palestinian identity and your American identity in an immigrant home, in an immigrant community.

Rasha Mediene: Actually, I remember when 9/11 happened, I was in first grade, and it broke out in class and then everyone was talking about it. Again, for me it was like, "okay, another bombing or whatever". However, to be honest, I don't feel like it impacted me like it would have other Muslims around America, just because of the community we were in.

So, we're in a community that's all Arabs. Dearborn, Michigan is 99 percent Arabs, highest population in all of America of confined Arabs. So, we're the same. So, there's nothing to hate or be mad about. However, what I did appreciate was because Dearborn and Detroit are so close to each other and there are blacks and Arabs majority.

The Black people didn't necessarily look bad at us because they already knew who we were and how we are and we're very giving and welcoming and we're being Arabs, like Arabs are Arabs. We love to give, and we love to come drink tea with us. And that's how it is. It's hookah. You want to hookah and Black people love hookah. They took that from us, you know, they're like our Arab hookah friends. So, I appreciate that they didn't let something like that affect our relationship.

Matt Bowles: Can you talk a little bit more about that? And I mean, just for people's context, you talked about Dearborn and how Arab it is. And then Detroit as a city is also one of the Blackest cities in the United States. Can you talk a little bit about your connection with black culture and hip-hop culture growing up?

Rasha Mediene: I was born and raised in Detroit until I was in sixth grade before we moved to Dearborn. And I don't know, it's something that became instilled in me. I mean, I feel like how maybe the Black people feel like they have a little Arab vibe to them.

I feel like I have this Black vibe to me, and they understood me. I feel like more. Because me being Arab and American, and I was only child for eight years. So, I was very confused coming up. Do I do this the Arabic way? Do I do this the American way? And I found myself a lot with the Black people because they just didn't care.

They were just like, yeah, live, do whatever you want to do. And I felt more comfortable there. Whereas in turn with the Arabs, it was kind of more judgmental, just Arabs, again, being Arabs. So yeah, it turned a lot to the Black folk. I do love to dance. I love hip-hop. That was just me growing up. I like Channel 955 for the people in Detroit.

Like, they know, that was my channel growing up and they didn't play anything but hip hop. So, I really loved it, and the dance community. Being middle Eastern dancing isn't really too fond of it's looked at in a dirty way, so I found myself just more with the Black people and they loved me too. So, it worked out.

Matt Bowles: Another thing that I want to ask you about is that you currently own a Ducati and you have been riding motorcycles for over a decade. Can you talk about how that started, why you gravitated towards that initially and what it means to you now, why it's become such a passion?

Rasha Mediene: I'm an adrenaline junkie. Let's start there. I like to do anything that's crazy. I've always loved roller coasters. I'm the first one I'm like, "let's jump out of the plane". Anything crazy, like, you could pretty much sign me up. So, me sitting on the back of a motorcycle, I enjoyed it. However, I didn't like that someone else was in control.

Like, if something did happen to me, I would want it to happen on my own terms. Not just because they decided to do a wheelie and I wasn't holding on and then I fell, and now I'm hurt. So, what happened was I wanted to learn and get my own for a couple of reasons. Like I said, one, I thought it was cool to be on a motorcycle. It's cool. And as a female, I love to break boundaries, so I'm like, yep, this is going to make them go crazy. I'm going to do it. But I couldn't find anyone to teach me to ride because no one wanted me to practice on their bike and potentially ruin it. So, I actually just went out. I'm a rebel, guys, so I went out and bought a Ninja 250 off the lot without knowing how to ride.

I had them deliver it to my house, and I'm just like, wow, that's a pretty bike. I don't know what to do with it. So, I like went on YouTube and found out how to get into first gear. And I remember driving to Walmart one day. I told my mom to follow me just to make sure I was okay. And I was in first gear the whole way.

And I remember people like shouting at me, like, "Switch gears! Switch gears!". And I'm like, "I don't know how", let's be thankful that I know how to move this thing at this point. But slowly but surely, like, people would give me pointers, YouTube videos, here and there, and I pretty much was self-taught. I fell a lot.

But every time I fell, I was like, well, now I know not to make that mistake again. Now I know what happens with that. And then I ended up getting a Ninja 750. Got in a couple of accidents with that. Cause that's a lot faster, but again, I learned from them. And then finally, when I felt comfortable, I went out, right. When I was living in California, I went and bought a Ducati. It was the best decision ever. I felt so comfortable there since I was, you know, I practiced, I worked my way up, so it was awesome.

Matt Bowles: Well, I want to ask you about L. A. I lived in L.A. for about seven years. It was actually the last base that I had before I became a full-time digital nomad and started traveling the world.

One of the TikTok videos of yours that I saw was at a motorcycle rally for Palestine in L.A. It was like this unbelievable TikTok. Can you explain that context, what was going on and what that was like?

Rasha Mediene: Yeah. So, this is again, I love to be unique, and I love to stand out and the motorcycle usually does it.

So actually, that wasn't necessarily a rally for bikes. We made it a rally for bikes. Everyone was walking. It was a regular protest. And then I was like, I think it would be so cool to have my bike here. And I wasn't the only one. Once I brought out my bike, that's when the commotion started. Oh, well, let's get our bikes, and let's get our bikes.

And then it became this whole thing. And now we're just like revving. I went and bought the Palestine stickers and put them all over my bike. And it was like, the whole thing. And especially, again, me being from Gaza and having that support, it's just lovely. And I love that I was able to combine two things.

That meant a lot to me, and I put it out there and people respected it. So yeah, that was amazing. And I'm hoping when I go back to L.A., we can do something again like that.

Matt Bowles: Well, I also know that you have incorporated your motorcycle riding into your travels. And I have seen some incredible videos of you riding all over the world from Qatar to a whole number of other countries. You just were riding in Egypt recently when we were chatting the other night. So, can you share a little bit about how you incorporate your motorcycle riding as you travel around the world and why that's important to you?

Rasha Mediene: So, I actually travel with my helmet, my helmet that has the ponytail on it. First of all, I wear a size extra small helmet, which is crazy. Like it's so hard to find that size. So, I already know that if I ever did want to ride outside of America, I would have a hard time with the helmet. So, I'm just like, let me keep my helmet. It's my signature look. So, I travel with that and then.

It's crazy, but I just ask people, like I see them on their bike and I'm like, "Hey, I ride, can I ride your bike? Like I'm not from here. I think it would be cool to do a video" and nine times out of ten, they tell me, "Yeah", which is kind of crazy to me because I would say no if it was me. I would not allow you to ride my bike in Qatar.

This guy had a BMW 1000, and he literally just let me ride it in a blink of an eye like, "What?", but I find it fun because it also shows how the people are. People around the world are not maybe as stingy as we might think, or, you know, people are cool and it's beautiful to see how I can just make it happen.

I think that's kind of the funniest part to me is, oh, look, they let me ride their bike and they let me ride their bike and they let me ride their bike. So, yeah, it's just, it's that thrill to just be like, I took this person's bike, and I rode in Qatar, and I rode in Turkey, and I rode in Egypt. And then even when they tell me I wouldn't let anyone else ride this bike. I'm like, well, I don't know what it is, but I'll take it.

Matt Bowles: Well, I also want to ask you about your entrepreneurial journey and how you got to this place where you are traveling around the world and living your best life. Can you maybe just start all the way back in terms of what some of the traditional expectations were or pressures were on you to pursue particular career paths? And then, what your experience was deviating into the serial entrepreneur space that you now occupy? Maybe just take us on that journey a little bit.

Rasha Mediene: Yeah. So, growing up again, being Arab, Middle Eastern, we're supposed to be doctors, lawyers, or engineers, and I wasn't going to be a doctor. Didn't really care to learn the law.

Engineering seemed to be the most me. I did like to take things apart and put them back together. So, I was like, okay, I'll be engineer, I guess, even though I wanted to be a dancer, like let's be a dancer, actress. Like that was always my thing. It seemed like it wasn't going to work. So, I went, and I got an Electrical Engineering degree, and I got a Business Management degree and then I got a job doing engineering soldering.

I really do love soldering. It's really fun for me. The thing that clicked for me was one day I was sitting there at work. I was probably the youngest, I think I was like 19 or 20 engineering. Crazy. And all I could think of was how can I move up? I know my job really well. I'm really good at this. What's the next step?

Where can I go from here? And that's when I realized the company I worked for was a family-owned business. They had a son that was a little bit older than me. He's always going to just take the spot that I would ever want to take. Like, how high up am I going to go here? I'm not going to become the CEO.

Maybe under the CEO, I'm going to have a cap on how much I can physically make. Because I'm always going to be under someone. And that's when I kind of like clicked to me. I don't think this makes sense. I work so hard and I'm just going to always be under someone. No matter where I go. Unless it's my own thing.

So that's when it's like, okay, I need to work really hard to be able to get to the point where I can have my own thing. In that, I would take any job that I could. I'd work three jobs and go to school. I didn't mind, because I just had a bigger picture. I had a bigger goal in my head. People would be like, come out, come out. I'm like, I don't want to go out. Like I have this goal and if I spend my money going out, it's going to mess up what I'm looking to do.

Over time, I got experience doing so many different things, like, I couldn't even go through the list. I tried to write down a list of jobs I had. It's insane. Because I would literally have three jobs at a time, and if I quit one, I would put another one in. I worked at like a coffee shop, a shoe store, and McDonald's. Whoever wants to give me money, I will learn the task. Let's go. But I didn't have a goal to always be making more than I used to. That was always something I'm like, I'm not going to go back to seven an hour. I'm now making 10. That's my minimum, whatever it takes. I'm not going backward.

And then with time, I found myself at T-Mobile, which I always had T-Mobile, and I love T-Mobile. I love phones and stuff, right. And I found myself working there and I really enjoyed it. I understood it so well and loved the company. I would buy pink Converse to match my outfits. It was crazy. I was about to paint my bike at the time I did have a bike. So, I was like, let me paint it pink and white and look like that. You remember that T-Mobile biker girl?

Matt Bowles: Yes. Hahahaha

Rasha Mediene: I'm her. She is me. We are one. That was like a thing. But what happened was I actually became the number one sale in America for a long time.

I use social media a lot to promote. There's this going on. There's this you guys want to come see me. I was a different kind of T-Mobile employee because I read all the promotion details. And then I would be like, well, if that means that, then like they could technically do that and add a line and get this for free.

I was obsessed with the loopholes and how to give the most to the customer. And people, I think, really realize that and it's like, yeah, Rasha's the T Mobile girl. Like, I literally had that name. Oh, you want a phone? Go to Rasha. And I had people drive over an hour to come to me because they knew I wasn't going to play with them.

So, after time, I was like, well, I'm so good at my job. I will come on time. I do overtime. Whatever is asked of me. And honestly, that was the first time in my life that I felt comfortable with money. Because I was

making commissions and obviously my commissions were good, being the top sales and that gave me freedom to travel.

And that was when I kind of understood, like, see, money's giving you freedom. You're able to go and do whatever you want with this now. So again, with time, I wanted to become a manager. Mind you at this point, I'm like 21, 22. Everyone was like, there's no way this girl's too young to be a manager, but I had all the skills.

No matter I tried, I went to different T-Mobile stores. I worked at different ones, franchise, not franchise corporate. Nobody was willing to give me this manager position. So, I was just fed up. I'm trying so hard and its people, it's just because of my age. That's discrimination in itself. So, I ended up finding my way to New York.

Someone in New York said, "I can get you into a manager position here". I was like, "OK, well, I'll go to New York". I don't really care where I am. I just want to be respected and do what I love. I'll flourish when someone gives me the opportunity. So, I went there and honestly, within one month. They saw it and they gave me my own store.

And they're like, you can run the store, however you want. We trust you. And mind you, I didn't really know how to, but I was like, I'm going to take this on just like I do anything else. And I'm going to figure it out. And it was great. And then one day someone came and told us our permits weren't paid, which had nothing to do with me.

So, we had to close down the store and all the employees that I hired had to go somewhere else, which kind of sucked because I felt like their mother. I tried to find them jobs at other T-Mobile stores. It just, it kind of sucks. It was like my dream came true and then it just went out of nowhere for something that wasn't my fault.

And then I was like, great. Now what? The thing that I didn't appreciate was now I am a manager. I have the title. So now it's like, I can easily go anywhere and be a manager. So, I went on LinkedIn, and I found this guy who was a top manager at T-Mobile at a franchise. And I messaged him, and I was like, "Hey, I'm a manager here in New York. And one, two, three happened". And I'm just trying to go somewhere where I could just be a manager, like having a hard time here. So, he reached out and we spoke, and he told me I have opportunities in Houston. But since you don't care where you're going, I do have other states if you're interested. And I was like, sure, let's hear them.

And he listed off a bunch of states and I was like, eh, no, no, no. Until he said California. And when he said California, I was like, "Stop right there! I'll go to California". And he was like, "Well, it's, it's up in San Francisco. It's an hour away" I was like, "I don't care. Take me to California. That sounds great".

That was always a dream of mine in a way. I thought, oh, I'll go live there when I'm married and I'm rich. I'll go live in Beverly Hills. I hadn't even been there before, but that's where the rich and famous are. So obviously that's where I'd want to be. So, when he said that, I was like, "Oh yeah, done deal". Within three days I was driving cross country. Yeah. I was just like, let's do this. And that's kind of how I got to California.

Matt Bowles: Well, you did eventually make your way down to Los Angeles. And I'm curious, just sort of drawing on what you talked about in terms of your early passion for music, dancing, acting, and the arts and how that eventually came to fruition in L.A. You got an acting degree at UCLA. You found yourself

managing a Nigerian music artist and you really kind of got into that scene. Can you share a little bit about your L.A. experience and how that unfolded?

Rasha Mediene: Yeah. So, I worked my way down to L.A. I went there a couple times and then I realized L.A. is not a place where you work. L.A. is a place where you need to have your own. That's just the vibe there. So, I had to figure it out and the first thing I did, which a lot of people might want to do if they're in the position and can, is I went on Craigslist on the free section and I would find free stuff and basically take the pictures and repost them with a price point.

And if something would sell or ready to sell, I'd go pick it up for free and then kind of just go deliver it. So that was technically my first business to start, that was in LA. I was just finding different kinds of opportunities. Honestly, my acting was involved in that, by the way, my acting was involved in the selling because when I go pick something up, I'd be like, "Oh yeah, I just moved to LA and help". Thank you. You're giving me this for free and it's really going to help me out. And then I'd go sell it and I'd be like, yeah, I'm moving from L.A., and I don't have space for this. And I'm just trying to get rid of my stuff. So, it was fun to practice my acting skills in that way.

But yeah, so then I found my way into, like, I worked with other entrepreneurs and just trying different things and it just opened my mind to, okay, this is how you need to have a business. You need to have a website. You need to have a branding. You need to have social media. The email, you know, the email is not just my name at Gmail. It needs to be info@rashamediene.com. That was all learning, you know, from the people around me. And I'm a fast learner. So, I'm like, okay, I can make a website now.

All right. So now I can just be a website developer, or I can do this, or I can just be a branding person. Like my mind just goes off the walls with opportunities I can possibly do with something. That's part of why I ended up, I was like, well, I like music in LA. I did find myself a lot in different kinds of music fields.

For example, right now I'm wearing a shirt from Kanye's listening party, which is just his friends and family were able to go to that. And somehow, I find myself there. It just made sense. I was thinking, how can I monetize the fact that I'm able to go to these places and meet with these people and network with French Montana's manager for example I have this connection, but what can I do with it?

So, I don't sing and rap and stuff, unfortunately, if I did that would have been a different story. But I do know rappers and singers and I do know producers, the people in studios, and stuff like engine music engineers, I'm the missing link. Let me put them together. So, I was like, I think if I was an artist manager, I think that would work well in my favor.

Being a female in a male-dominated industry, understanding business, and just being around it, and I had respect from them, and they were willing to hear me out. Like, okay, you think this guy sounds good? All right, let's hear him. So, I just connected that dot. And I think that was, again, another thing that opened my mind of, like, what I was able to do.

And then one day I did come across, I honestly don't remember how this came up, the UCLA acting program. And I was like, I've always wanted to be an actress. Like, do I really still have it in me after all these years? I'm just going to go ahead and apply. And they literally said, we're only going to take 16 people from around the world.

Well, I mean, if they take me, that in itself says a lot. So sure enough, I applied and filled out the paperwork, did the video, and I got the email saying that I was accepted. To me, I'm an actress just because of that. I don't care if I ever film anything, if I ever do anything in my life, I am an actress because UCLA picked me, okay, do you understand?

So, I actually just graduated from that last year. I might be dabbling in that world a little bit more, especially traveling and finding people that are interested in that stuff.

Matt Bowles: Let's talk about your path to location independence, because I know that when you were in L.A., you had all sorts of business ventures going on. You had a brick-and-mortar store. You were doing in person swim lesson business. You had all sorts of different stuff that was going on that was very geographically restrictive that required your physical presence there. And I'm curious how the desire to create a location independent path so that you could be fully remote and travel the world. How did that come about? And then how did you ultimately achieve that?

Rasha Mediene: Again, like I said, I dabbled in everything. I tried everything. And I saw myself making good money. So, for me, I felt like I succeeded. I ran businesses, I had the workflow going, and everything was automated. I did everything by myself, you know.

But the issue became just that, like you said, I had to be stuck in this one place. I'm the one that has to teach swimming. I'm the one with the talent for that. So, if I'm not there, I can't really rely on someone else to also be there. So, I always knew that. And when I had the brick-and-mortar, it was cool because I was there.

If so, someone didn't come to work, that's fine. I'll go in there. But now if I'm swimming or something, I kind of would balance that. I was teaching swimming and then I had the brick and mortar, which was, I would sell exotic snacks from around the world. So, it did have to do with travel. And I was like, I want to find a way to do this in the travel world.

I want to be able to actually figure out this [Instagram](#) stuff and this influencer stuff that I feel I do naturally. Cause when I travel, it's always, where'd you find this place? Or, you know, I realized people did enjoy my travel stuff. And I told you guys earlier, I always want to make more money or at least challenge myself in a different way.

So, for me, the businesses in America, I'm like, that's easy. I can do business in America. I can make money in America. I can always go back to America and make money if I want to. But now I want to figure out how to make money while I travel the same amount of money. So, we're not there yet. I'm not making the same amount of money yet, but hopefully slowly but surely, I can get there.

Matt Bowles: Let's talk a little bit about what you are doing. Can you share a little bit about the [Roam with Rasha](#) brand, what you are up to and what the vision is for what you're building?

Rasha Mediene: Yeah, so [Roam with Rasha](#), kind of my idea with it is you're roaming with me, and I want my fans or followers to be the roamers.

You guys are the roamers and you're roaming with me. I'm working on a community to allow people that are actually interested in travel. I want to provide all the tips and tricks that I have because there are many, which I think would be very helpful. beneficial to people who are just starting out. I'm a solo female traveler, which is crazy.

Being middle Eastern, we don't do anything alone, let alone travel. So, people are very like, how do you do it? And that's what I want to share. OK, I use this website or oh, look, this came up out. I want to share it with the people who are genuinely interested in it because I can share stuff on [Instagram](#) and it's like, OK, like nobody cares.

So, I want the ones that specifically are interested to help them out, to give them what they need. I want to be a source of if you are traveling on your own, you can reach out to me, "Hey, Rasha, do you think this would be okay if I did this or is this area maybe not safe", whatever the question may be. I just want to be that person that's like, yeah, one, two, three, four.

Matt Bowles: Well, as you know, I am a big fan of your content for many reasons, one of which I just mentioned to you the other day, which is that you drop so much amazing and eclectic music tracks behind your videos. So, it'll be Arabic music. Then it'll be hip-hop music. Then it'll be Afro beats. And as I was going down, I was like, okay, and then you'll drop a French language, Afro beat sign.

I texted you, I was like, how do you know this song? So, you were just hitting all of the chords that went straight to my heart with a lot of your content, but it's really good video. People will be able to tell when they watch your content that you are an actor, and you have stage presence and all that.

A lot of it is very funny. A lot of it is very interesting in terms of the way that you're taking people into interesting places and talking about things and doing interesting things. So, I am a big fan of your content. I'm wondering though, you mentioned these travel hacks. Can you share maybe a couple of them now, just as an example of any tips, advice, or hacks that you might give people who perceive travel to be prohibitively expensive.

Rasha Mediene: I want to challenge those people to literally write down how much they spend every weekend. And then it'll give me how much you spend in one month and I guarantee you, you can travel with that amount. So, one of the biggest things I do, I've said this in many videos, you've probably seen it. 'Travel for the deal and not the destination'.

You can't just be like, I want to go to Hawaii. Hawaii is expensive. Okay, it's always going to be expensive. So maybe not right now, Hawaii is not it for you. So, what I do is I go on Google Flights, and I will put my starting location in the search bar, and I keep the, the destination open. And then Google has the option where you can kind of pick if you want it in this month, in the next week, in the next six months, whenever you're looking.

And it'll literally show you the pricing of around the world from your location. And I promise you, you'll be surprised by these prices. And I'm doing it one way. I'm not even doing round trips. So, with the one way, it's ridiculous. I've seen stuff from L.A. to London for 2.50. That's cheaper than going to Miami.

People just don't know that. They just have this assumption that travel is just so expensive. And it's really not, especially if you're going to Egypt. Come on, you're coming to Egypt. Maybe the flight is going to be a bit expensive. But once you get here, things are so cheap that doesn't even matter.

You're literally not going to spend anything here. It's hard to spend money here. Believe it or not. So, there's that. That's one of my biggest travel hacks is travel for the deal. You don't know what deal is out there. You might find something like, oh wait, Jamaica's that much? Well, let's go to Jamaica then.

The fact that a lot of people are stuck in one spot kind of makes it more difficult, of course. Another thing I like to do is I like to tell people just hop the pond. Let's say you don't want to go to London, but the cheapest flight from L.A. is to London. And at least you can be on that side of the world.

Now, once you're in London, things are totally different. You can easily book a flight from London to anywhere for like 20 bucks in the European areas. Or you can take a bus all around Europe. Now you're finding yourself in Spain and Portugal. Now Morocco is right there. If you have some time on your hands, this is probably the best way to go about it.

Keep moving. And you don't know where that spot's going to end up taking you. And besides that, there's little things that people are worried about. Maybe the luggage and seats and the price of those things make tickets a little bit higher. I do want to challenge them to take these things into consideration.

One, there's literally full-blown carry-on bags that you can take off the wheels and now fit as a personal item. So, you just have to do some research on that. And then as far as the seats, I never pick a seat. I didn't pick a seat. I'm always the last one on the flight. And I know which seats are available at that point.

So more than likely, I'll just sit at one that I think is comfortable and take my chances. Sometimes they might say something. Sometimes they don't. Like I said, I feel like people just make traveling too hard. Just go. Just go, there's hostels, there's ways around it. You'll figure it out. You might even find people in the culture that'll help you out, like, why are you paying for a hotel? Come and stay with us. Just go guys, go. See the world.

Matt Bowles: Rasha, when you think back at this point to all of the travel that you have done over the years, what impact do you think all of that travel has had on you as a person?

Rasha Mediene: It has made me this well-rounded person. I mean, look at, you're talking to me about music, right? How do I know all these kinds of music? Well, I'm traveling, I'm seeing, you go here, I'm hearing music in this specific city that I haven't heard of in the rest of the Arabic world, just because I came here, my mind is now exposed to other things, and the more you travel, I just feel like the more you become empathetic, you can understand people better, right? You can understand why they do certain things. It just opens your mind. Now, when I go back to America, oh, I'll give you a great example:

In America, when I wear heels, okay, of course I get tired of wearing heels. I'm the type that will just take off my heels and walk barefoot. Because I'd rather be comfortable than be in pain. And people are like, "Eww, you're going to walk barefoot on the floor? That's so nasty". Whatever. And then you come to Egypt. And there's nobody even wearing shoes and they're walking around and they're just fine and there's nothing wrong with them and their feet are dirty. That's fine. It's normal. It allows me to look at life differently because I'm not confined by what it's supposed to be. It can be anything. The world is the way you make it. And the more you see, the more you understand that.

Matt Bowles: Well, I know that one of the things that you've been doing in Egypt since you've been there is spending time with your family members and relatives. And I want to allow you to share a little bit about your family's experience, including your family in Gaza since the genocide began.

Rasha Mediene: Yeah. So, luckily a good amount of my family was able to get out. So, I do still have family right now in Gaza. A good amount were able to come out and it's just, I don't know how to explain this to

you guys. You're so thankful that they're still here and it's so lucky. And then you look and it's like, well, there's still all these other people in there that we can't really do anything about.

And that's what kind of sucks. Just like hearing my cousin's experience. She was like, the first thing we wanted to do was go buy meat, we haven't had meat in so long. And they came in Ramadan. I can't imagine doing Ramadan being in a war. You already don't have food. You don't have anything. And then on top of it, you're fasting.

Power to them, man. Like they're a different breed. Honestly, them coming here, they're literally sitting there and you can see it. You can see it in their face and their body. They're traumatized that they're in a quiet place. What is this? There are no bombs every five minutes. This is not just from October. Like I told you since I was younger, they're used to having bombs go off all the time.

So, when you come to a quiet place, you're like, is this real or is this just fake? And at any moment now, we're probably going to get bombed again. I don't think that's ever going to leave them. You know, it's been what, six, seven months that they've been in there with that. How do you erase that?

You know, they would tell me stories. I'm like, we saw this and that, and I literally had to tell them to stop. Like, can you stop? You guys are out. Let's just be grateful that you're out because I already know how bad it is. Well, I don't really physically know, but I've seen videos, and I can only imagine, and I'm glad you guys are here. Let's try to move past this as much as we can. It's difficult as that's going to be.

Matt Bowles: And have you been able to communicate with the relatives that are still in Gaza now, and if so, do you want to share what they're saying and what they're experiencing?

Rasha Mediene: I do. I have one of my cousins, I told him to send me his location just so if anything did happen to him, at least we have his last location. But it's exactly what you guys see. I mean, they're like, "if you can help us in any way, like if you know anyone, if you know a lawyer, we're willing to pay whatever it takes to get out of here." And that's one side. That's my cousins that are my age.

Then you have my aunts and uncles that are like, "We're not leaving. You can't pay us to leave. This is our land. We're born and raised here. They're going to have to kill us on our land." And it really sucks because that's my aunt and uncle and my cousin that I'm close with. She's not in there. When we get phone calls, I'm like, I hope to God it's not her parents because she is not going to know what to do and it sucks because you want your parents to get out and they don't they don't want to. They're holding strong and you can't be mad at them either for that. You think about it and it's like, I just don't want her to have to go through that, but there's nothing we can do.

Matt Bowles: For people that are listening and would like to stand in solidarity with the Palestinians and would like to do what they can do to try to contribute to help to stop the genocide. What would you like to ask people to do?

Rasha Mediene: I mean, right now the encampments are going on and I am so proud of everyone doing those. I think something like that is really going to be what makes a difference. And that along with just continuously sharing, don't let it die. That's what they want. They literally have told me, to just keep sharing it. We don't want to be forgotten.

They also don't want it to go down in history the wrong way, which is, it's very likely, you know, America's going to try to cover it up and make it look like it was another way than it was. So, the more you share, the

more you get out there, like if you guys can go to the encampments, there's going to be Palestinians there. Try to find them, speak to them, hear from them, and understand the story a little bit better. And just being in those areas, being in those encampments, those marches, I mean, look at how long we've been doing marches for since October and they're still doing them. I'm impressed. I'm so impressed. I really thought by now, it is what it is, I'm not even going to lie to you. This is crazy. We're finally making a change, it feels like. So just don't stop. We're getting so close. We've never had this happen before. Not like this. So, get out there. Stand your ground. Just like the Palestinians are doing. People are getting locked up. They don't care. Gaza doesn't care. We shouldn't either. What they're doing is wrong.

And especially being an American, people don't understand how much it affects them. This is your tax money. This is your hard-earned money. You're not getting free health care. You're not getting anything. No free education. But guess what? Israel has that. As an American, you would be better off living in Israel, you'd have better benefits from your own tax money than you do in America. I don't think people realize that. So why is our money not being put in our country but instead being given to this other country that's killing people? Make that make sense. And it's your hard-earned money, so fight for it. That's all I can say.

Matt Bowles: We will link up some resources in [the show notes](#) for folks that want to support some of the student encampments that are happening not only around the U.S., but now happening around the world in Australia, France and Italy and all sorts of other places they are proliferating.

And so, we will put a link to some ways that you can do that as well as some other resources for ways you can support Palestine. We're going to put that in [the show notes](#). Just go to themaverickshow.com and go to the show notes for this episode. We're also going to link up everything we've discussed in this episode.

And Rasha, I also want to let you talk a little bit about some of the ways that people can come into your world, ways that they can contact you. Before we wrap this up and move into the lightning round. If you also want to talk about your book and how people can buy that and what they can expect from it, and just share a little bit about what you've got going on and how people can find more of you.

Rasha Mediene: Yeah, so if any of this was interesting to you guys, then you might really be interested in [my book](#). I will share more in-depth about my life and how I got to where I am. Just the struggles I went through. And I speak to you as if you're my friend. So, it's very easy to read. It's on Amazon, it's called [What's Wrong Habibti](#).

But yeah, so to find me, I'm on [Instagram](#) mainly, that's kind of my main hub. So, it's R-O-A-M, we're roaming, we're not in Rome.

Matt Bowles: Awesome. All right, Rasha, at this point, are you ready to move into the lightning round?

Rasha Mediene: Yes, I'm ready.

Matt Bowles: Let's do it.

Okay, Rasha, if you could have dinner with any one person who is currently alive today that you've never met, just you and that person for an evening of dinner and conversation, who would you choose?

Rasha Mediene: Angelina Jolie. I would choose her because I feel like we have a lot of things in common. Obviously from the acting to the way she acts, right? She's riding bikes, she's shooting guns, she's being

undercover, all that fun stuff that once I do become on screen, that is my go-to. That is who I would like to be like the next Angelina Jolie, the Arab version.

On top of that, she is very into the community. She gives back a lot and she help a lot, which is kind of the point, right? You have a voice. I feel like she uses it in a very amazing way. And that's my goal as well. Her adopting children. I want to adopt kids from Gaza. Why not give them a better life? I have an American citizenship, make them American. I literally changed their life. So, I just feel like we have those things in common. And I would literally just like to talk to her and see what she would tell me, see what advice she'd give me. Obviously, she's older than me, so I would like to hear from her. So where you at, Angelina?

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

Rasha Mediene: I would tell her don't give up because you're going to get everything that you want. It's just going to be very hard.

Matt Bowles: All right. Of all the places you have now traveled, what are three of your favorite destinations you would most recommend other people should definitely check out?

Rasha Mediene: Everyone knows I love London. So, London has to be on here. Historical, beautiful, advanced place. I love that place.

I'd have to say Portugal. Portugal is the Hawaii of Europe, if you don't know, so if you can't afford to go to Hawaii, maybe Portugal will be your next best bet. It's stunning. It was cheap. Great seafood. Like, the vibes are impeccable. The people are amazing. And then the third one, can I say Palestine? Is that an option?

Matt Bowles: You may, absolutely, 100 percent say Palestine. Yes.

Rasha Mediene: It's not just because I'm Palestinian. It's the background of it. All the religions have touched, Jesus being born there, Islam being there. Like it's a very big culture pot. It's not at all what people think. My mom went to school with Jews and Christians. You know, be aware. So yeah, those would probably be my top three.

Matt Bowles: All right. What are your top three bucket list destinations? These are places you have not yet been that are highest on your list you would most love to see.

Rasha Mediene: Australia, Japan and Morocco. I still don't understand how I haven't been to Morocco. But yeah, those are my top three.

Matt Bowles: Those are all really good picks. I've been to all three, so feel free to hit me up for some tips when you are ready to plan those trips. All right, Rasha, we are going to close this out with a really important question.

I am going to ask you to name your top five hip hop emcees of all time. But before you name your five, can you share a little bit about what hip hop music and culture means to you? And why you love hip hop?

Rasha Mediene: I love hip hop because I feel like most of the songs I hear with hip hop. I mean, not now. Maybe now it's gotten too sexual.

But back in the day, it was more about the hustle, the grind. making things happen, like [50 Cent: Get Rich or Die Tryin'](#). Like, that's a fact we all want to get rich and we're probably going to die trying. So, it helped me with the tough times of my life hearing them. And it's like, yep, see, they went through that struggle too. And they did what they had to do to get to where they had to get. And this is just me going through that right now.

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

Rasha Mediene: Eminem is my top. Lil Wayne, Nicki Minaj, Missy Elliott, and Yeezy.

Matt Bowles: Amazing. Alright, Rasha, I want you to let folks know one more time how they can find you, follow you on social media, come into your world. We are going to link everything you say up in [the show notes](#) as well. So, tell folks how they can find you.

Rasha Mediene: My [Instagram](#) is *roam.with.rasha* or you can just go to roamwithrasha.com and from there you can easily find everything you need.

Matt Bowles: All right. It's all going to be in one place. Just go to themaverickshow.com and go to the show notes for this episode. There you're going to find direct links to everything we have discussed in this episode. All the ways you can find and follow Rasha, as well as how you can support Palestine. Rasha, this was amazing. Thank you so much for coming to the show.

Rasha Mediene: Thank you for having me.

Matt Bowles: All right. Good night, everybody.