

REFLECTING ON MY 2020 COVID-19 ROAD TRIP

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I am an avid traveler by nature and the excitement that I look forward to in life is my next adventure that takes me by train, plane, boat or automobile to some place internationally that allows me to experience a new culture. Like many others across the world, Covid-19 put a damper on the plans that I, my spouse and friends had planned in the coming years. The borders closed quickly and my number one bucket list birthday trip to Australia and New Zealand was immediately put on indefinite hold. To say I was disappointed would-be to put it mildly however, I understood the severity of what the world was facing. So, I moved on to working from home and dreaming of a day that I would be able to be on an airplane again. I did not anticipate that time would never end as I expected a few months at most, though the month ranged into months and now moving to years.

My husband noticed that my restlessness was real, and I was constantly “shopping” online for vacations in between working and watching many shows on the various streaming services. As we moved through summer of 2020, I made a comment in passing about how I wished he would be ok with road trips as we would be able to travel but safely. To my surprise, he agreed and let me get to planning. For the first time ever, I planned a road trip and during a pandemic, and it was the most excitement I had in a very long time. As I reflect back on this amazing trip, we drove from Seattle, WA to Jackson Hole, WY to see Yellowstone, the Grand Tetons then from there to California to see the Redwoods. I can honestly say, for a road trip in a pandemic with restrictions, it was absolutely amazing and wished it had been longer.

There were unplanned pitstops along the way, forest fires that caused us to reroute and we were cooped up in a car for hours on end after spending hours on end together in our home due to Covid-19. We drove through 7 states in a week, and I wouldn't have changed a thing. As I reflect back on this spur of the moment Covid-19 road trip, I often think of the peace that I experienced with my family as we took a cable car through the Redwood Forest surrounded by fog. It makes me realize that the simplest experiences are often the greatest when you spend them with those you love. I will appreciate that travelling can be near or far and that you do not have to go far to make memories, you just have to be present. Covid-19 taught me that appreciation and for that I am grateful in the midst of a world in turmoil.