

## **Episode 84 Stamped: Tracy Collins - From Curious Traveller to Global Travel Planner**

Tracy Collins [00:00:00]:

10 questions, endless stories, and this time, the tables are turned. In today's episode of Stamped, I'm in the hot seat as Amanda Kendall asks me the questions from my very first passport stamp to the destinations still on my list.

Intro [00:00:13]:

Welcome to the Global Travel Planning Podcast. Your host is founder of the global travel planning website, Tracey Collins. Each week, Tracey is joined by expert guests as she takes you on a journey to destinations around the world, sharing travel inspiration, itinerary ideas, and practical tips to help you plan your next adventure. Join us as we explore everywhere, from bustling cities to remote landscapes. Uncover cultural treasures, and discover the best ways to make your travel dreams a reality.

Tracy Collins [00:00:47]:

Hi, and welcome to this week's edition of the Global Travel Planning Podcast. It is just before Christmas, though I will be upfront and saying that we are not recording this at Christmas. So if I don't mention anything about Antarctica or an epic road trip which I'm about to take on, that's because I haven't done them yet anyway. But I have my very good friend Amanda Kendall from the Thoughtful Travel Podcast here to chat to me about my episode of Stamped. And I thought, who better to do than Amanda actually to ask me these questions? She was the first person that came on and did. Did the first in the series. So, Amanda, thanks so much for agreeing to come on this week and do all the questioning of me for the stamp episode. So would you like to introduce yourself to those people who don't know who you are? Which I can't believe there can be many people listening that don't, but thank.

Amanda Kendle [00:01:36]:

You so much, Tracy. I'm very excited because I'm very curious about all your answers. I know you'll have amazing, fabulous stories to tell me. So, yes, I'm Amanda Kendall from the Thoughtful Travel Podcast. So if you want to hear some more stories about traveling thoughtfully, including some of Tracy's, come over and have a listen. But I want to hear all of Tracy's stories today. So the first question is going back to the roots of your travel lust and. And interest.

Amanda Kendle [00:02:02]:

So who lit the spark? What or who inspired you to start traveling?

Tracy Collins [00:02:07]:

There's actually two people for this. One is my grandmother. When I was about seven years of age, she bought. We were at one of these, like, little church fairs, and there was a packet of cards which had pictures of different places around the world, like landmarks around the world. And she bought it for me. And I was a bit obsessed with this pack of cards because I just loved the pictures on them and reading about the different places and the two Places I was obsessed with, one was a Golden Gate Bridge, and the other was Table Mountain. So

Table Mountain. I managed to get up 50 when I was 15, and it took me until I was nearly 50 to get to the Golden Gate Bridge, but those were the two.

Tracy Collins [00:02:42]:

So she kind of lit that spark of interest about places. But when it came to. I've always loved people. I've always. From the age of four, my mom would say. I'd walk down the street, and I'd be like, hi, my name's Tracy. What's your name? And I'd just go up to people randomly, I believe, introduced myself. Yeah, I did.

Tracy Collins [00:03:00]:

And so the person that kind of got me more interested in people outside of my own kind of scope of existence at that point was actually Gerald Dorrell. Oh, nice. Yeah. Now, I started reading his books when I was about 10, and I was absolutely obsessed with them. And I wanted to meet the fun of Buffett. I wanted to go and meet these amazing people that he'd met in Argentina, these amazing people in Africa that he'd met. I loved the stories of the animals, but it was. It was just the people and the experiences he had.

Tracy Collins [00:03:31]:

I actually met him, would you believe it? At Gatwick Airport. Yeah, Gatwick Airport. A long time ago. But I was so awestruck. I kind of was just like. I just didn't know what to say.

Amanda Kendle [00:03:42]:

Yeah, I can imagine.

Tracy Collins [00:03:44]:

But I actually managed last year after. Since the age of 10, wanting to go at Jersey Zoo. I actually made it last year, and I actually cried. Oh, I cried. Beautiful. I cried. And what was. What was very special for me is that I.

Tracy Collins [00:04:00]:

I managed to go to Gerald. Gerald Dorral is buried at the zoo. So I actually just went to pay my respects, which was just a very, very special for me. But I actually walked into that zoo and literally cried because it. It had been an ambition of me, Mine to go forever, really. But. Yeah, so that. So.

Tracy Collins [00:04:17]:

So somebody close to me inspired me, but also just somebody through his writing and just his. He. Yeah, he was an amazing person. He did a lot for conservation as well, so.

Amanda Kendle [00:04:29]:

Yeah, exactly.

Tracy Collins [00:04:29]:

Yeah.

Amanda Kendle [00:04:30]:

Oh, your story gave me little goosebumps, Tracy. It's beautiful. I love that. It's so interesting to find out how people. Yeah. Got their interest in travels. It's always a different story. Yeah, it's a great question.

Tracy Collins [00:04:43]:  
Yeah, absolutely. Thank you.

Amanda Kendle [00:04:45]:  
All right, next one is the first step. So what is the first country you ever visited, and what do you remember about it?

Tracy Collins [00:04:52]:  
Well, the first place we actually went as a family was Spain when I was about 4 and we went to Mallorca. And to be honest, I remember nothing. Of course I've got photos of that trip, but that's, I can't remember very much when I was thinking about the first overseas trip that I really remembered. It was a drive in trip that we took over to France and we stayed in Ejit, in a small village in the center of France. And I made friends with the local kids and they had scooters. So I just bombed around for two weeks on the back of this girl's scooter and had it. We just swam in the rivers. I went around to her house and at that point her house had the animals, farm animals below and then you went up steps to where they lived above it.

Tracy Collins [00:05:40]:  
I'd never experienced anything like that. It was just something so different. And I think that's at that point I probably was about 12, I think, and I did French at school but was never very good at it. I had a French teacher who was not very encouraging and who was, oh, you're never going to be very good at French. And I always, you know, when I became a teacher, I, I, you learn lessons from people who don't do things that you don't want, you don't want, you don't wanna. Exactly. So I, I kind of, I was determined I was going to learn French. So I went over, had this time in France, got by for these two weeks but it kind of never went away that, that first trip and that, that experience.

Tracy Collins [00:06:23]:  
So I actually moved when I finished university. That's where I moved to France to learn French. And I lived in France for a year and a bit and became fluent in French. But, and I always want to go back to that French teacher and go, I can speak French better than you can.

Amanda Kendle [00:06:37]:  
I was just going to say exactly that. You're probably better than him.

Tracy Collins [00:06:39]:  
Yeah, yeah, exactly. So, yeah, so that was, it was just a great trip because it was one of those when you just immersed with all the local kids and we were running around, it was warm weather and swimming in the river and I don't think my mom saw me for like two weeks, honestly. And it was just liberating because they had all these scooters and we were just going everywhere, the back of scooters. It was fun.

Amanda Kendle [00:07:01]:

Oh, it sounds delightful. And this is what we miss out on in Australia when we go somewhere for a couple of weeks on those kind of like summer trips. You know, we're still usually just in Australia so we don't get to have that, you know, interesting cultural differences and languages as well. So.

Tracy Collins [00:07:16]:  
Yeah, yeah, that's true.

Amanda Kendle [00:07:18]:  
But it was clearly influential for you. Okay, so that was your first, you know, kind of memorable trip abroad. What about the first trip that felt like a real adventure?

Tracy Collins [00:07:29]:  
I had to think about this one. It's funny because I set these questions and I have to think about myself and I think honestly, the first one that felt like an adventure was the first time I flew back from. So we moved to South Africa in the 1980s. So difficult time to live in South Africa and I don't talk about that very often, but I went to school in South Africa and. But my dad still lived in the UK so to go back to the UK to visit my dad, I went on my own. So it was my first ever long haul flight and I think I was probably 15 or 16. I remember getting my own, like the passport and having it renewed and my own passport and, and flying to meet my dad at Heathrow and that just felt like. I don't know.

Tracy Collins [00:08:12]:  
Yeah, it was the first ever time I'd done it. I'd obviously done flights with my parents, but not on my own. So that just felt like. I felt like a grown up, but I was also. I also liked flying at that point. I hate flying now, but at that point I did enjoy flying. But I remember arriving at Heathrow and going through passport, go picking up my luggage and go through and actually meeting my dad, who didn't recognize me. It was so funny because he hadn't seen me for a couple of years because I'd been in South Africa.

Tracy Collins [00:08:40]:  
It was my stepmom that went, there's Tracy. So. So it's probably not what you'd expect in terms of an adventure, but for me it was because it just felt like I was doing this like, big, grown up, a long haul flight on my own.

Amanda Kendle [00:08:52]:  
Yeah, no, I can get that. It gave you that feel like. I think often those adventures give you that feeling like I can do anything kind of, you know, that sets you up for future travels and life.

Tracy Collins [00:09:02]:  
Yeah, I think it took away any fear of like, you know, you can do this, you can do it, it doesn't matter. And yeah, and I've always had that kind of nothing is going to intimidate me, I'll get up and just try it attitude. There's things that I'm scared of doing, like, you know, parachuters jumping or bungee jumping, but those sort of things. But I think when it comes to, you know, the adventure side of Just, just, just do it. If you want to go and do something, like book it, go and do it. Don't wait. Just do it.

Amanda Kendle [00:09:30]:

Yeah. Such good advice. Completely agree. But I can see that that adventure would have kind of set you up for feeling that at that, you know, like, it's a really impressionable age when you're a teenager. So to feel then, oh, I'm like, I can do this. I'm powerful enough. I'm, you know, I can do it. That would be.

Amanda Kendle [00:09:46]:

Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:09:46]:

Impactful. Yeah. It takes a mystique away as well, doesn't it? Because sometimes there's a bit of mystique about, oh, it's really hard to do this how, like, oh, I, I haven't. And, and I say that when we, we help people plan the chips, it's like, it's, it's their fear of the unknown because they're not quite sure. And especially if they haven't flown a lot themselves anyway, it can be. Feel like a, you know, you don't know what you don't know kind of question mark about it. But actually, you know, generally you can always ask people. That's another thing I've always learned you can always ask people for if you're not sure.

Tracy Collins [00:10:16]:

People will always help.

Amanda Kendle [00:10:18]:

Yeah. Yep, exactly. It's daunting, but once you've done it, then you're good.

Tracy Collins [00:10:22]:

Yeah.

Amanda Kendle [00:10:22]:

Very cool. Okay, next question is about the wow moment. So can you tell us about place or experience that completely blew you away?

Tracy Collins [00:10:31]:

Yeah, this is actually quite a recent one. So. I'm quite well known for not liking hiking. I really don't. I got, you know what? I turned, I turned 55 a few years ago and I just went, you know what, I'm not gonna fib about things I don't like anymore. So I don't like any sport whatsoever. No sport. And it's okay.

Tracy Collins [00:10:54]:

I say that now. And people like, well, you don't like tennis. And I'm like, no, don't like tennis. I don't like. I don't like football. I don't like any sport. Nothing. No interest at all.

Tracy Collins [00:11:02]:

Right. So that was the first kind of big one. And the second one was like, I just don't like hiking. Right. And so we're in New Zealand. So what do you have to do in New Zealand, really? You should go for a hike. So my daughter had stayed with me in Christchurch and she had taken a day trip down to do the Hookah Valley Trail. Right, right.

Tracy Collins [00:11:23]:

And she came back and showed me the photos and I Was like, I have to do this. I have to do this. It's a hike, but I have to do it right. I loved it. I.

Amanda Kendle [00:11:33]:

That's so good.

Tracy Collins [00:11:34]:

Absolutely. Look, I have. There's. I've been. I've seen so many beautiful places in the world, but walking on that boardwalk on that trail was just. They surrounded by the mountains. The scenery in New Zealand is something else. It is, but it was kind of.

Tracy Collins [00:11:54]:

I don't know, like a. Just. Just a. I don't know. I don't know how to describe it. It was kind of like an uplifting moment and magical moment and something really, really special. There wasn't a lot of people on the trail because we did it very early in the morning first up straight on. It was winter, so there was snow and just on the peaks.

Tracy Collins [00:12:18]:

Not. Not kind of where we're walking. Beautiful. And. And it's an easy track. Let me just say. It's also not. It's flat.

Tracy Collins [00:12:25]:

So I didn't have any like massive uphill and downhill to moan about. So that also helped. We had. You have to cross all these bridges. I believe it's actually closed at the moment because I think they're doing something with the bridges. But you have to cross bridges and they're. They're quite the swing. So if you're not my favorite.

Tracy Collins [00:12:43]:

Yeah. If you're not keen on heights. But I think. And then at the end of it, you get to this glacier lake and you just. Honestly, it's just incredible. Every single step of that trail is embolden. It's just. What's it embezzled on my.

Tracy Collins [00:13:03]:

Not embezzled. Embedded. That's it. Can't think. Need more. More tea, I think. Amanda. Embe.

Tracy Collins [00:13:10]:

Oops. That's a bit weird. It's embedded on my mind and I. Do it again in a heartbeat. Do it again in a heartbeat.

Amanda Kendle [00:13:18]:

Amazing.

Tracy Collins [00:13:19]:

So that was my wow.

Amanda Kendle [00:13:20]:

Yeah. I think. I mean as you remember from my wows are places like that too. And it's very hard to describe that feeling. But whenever I see the photos from those like just incredible landscapes where I've had the good fortune to be, I just am like. I just feel it all again. It's just that beauty is amazing. Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:13:40]:

I think if I feel stressed, the best thing for me to do is to look at a picture of that walk, that boardwalk and the mountain and yeah. It just. It just is very instantly calming and instantly I'm kind of back in that place. So that's what I really love it.

Amanda Kendle [00:13:56]:

Okay. So that was an amazing place. What about places that you don't feel the need to return to? A place you've been? I think, okay, you know, I'm done with that.

Tracy Collins [00:14:05]:

I don't get this film very often, actually. And the place that I'm gonna mention, I do go back to over and over again. So it's a bit of it. But I'm not a massive fan of Paris. Right. I just. I just. I'm.

Tracy Collins [00:14:19]:

I just can't really get the magic of Paris. I go and I do enjoy it when I'm there. So I'm not gonna lie and say I go and hate every second that I'm in Paris, because I don't. I do enjoy it, but for me, it's not. If I never went to Paris again for the rest of my life, I wouldn't cry. So sorry. Paris, you know, it's not Don't Cry for Me Argentina. It's doing Cry for Me Paris.

Tracy Collins [00:14:41]:

Because I. I just. No.

Amanda Kendle [00:14:44]:

Is that because you've seen, like, you spent time in many parts of France and there's other parts you prefer or.

Tracy Collins [00:14:50]:

I think that's what it is because I lived in France and I lived in the French Alps, and Paris is very different. Again, it's a capital city, so it just. Yeah, I prefer rural France. It just feels more of a authentic French experience, which, of course is Paris. It's a capital city. So, you know, you've got all the. The main tourist attractions. Everybody wants to see the Eiffel Tower and gotten on march and everything like that.

Tracy Collins [00:15:15]:

But yeah, I just. Yeah, it's just. For me, it's. It's. I prefer. If I was going to France, I would be skipping Paris and. And going to other areas of France for sure. Look, say if you're listening and you want to go to Paris, I don't want to put you off.

Tracy Collins [00:15:29]:

Go experience it. Because again, this is something else to say. We all have to different things that we like and enjoy. And there's a reason millions of people go to Paris every year. So this is just based on. On. On my experience. It's Doug's favorite.

Tracy Collins [00:15:43]:  
So there you go. He.

Amanda Kendle [00:15:47]:  
So you do have to start going back sometimes. Yeah. And also if you're going. Yeah. Other parts of France, then often you will end up. Yeah. Spending time in Paris. So.

Amanda Kendle [00:15:55]:  
Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:15:55]:  
Yeah, that's fair. I've done it by train. I mean, when my mom lived in Switzerland, so I used to catch the train because I always prefer to take the train than fly, which you can do from the uk, I'd cat train and then obviously you have to cross Paris to then change trains to go to Switzerland. So I did that quite a few times. But I was happy just to cross by train and get out again. Yeah, so. Right, but, yeah, no, that's fair.

Amanda Kendle [00:16:18]:  
But every. And as you said, everyone has their different likes and dislikes and that's what makes the world an interesting place. So.

Tracy Collins [00:16:24]:  
Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

Amanda Kendle [00:16:25]:  
Okay. The opposite, though. A home away from home. Is there somewhere you keep going back to and you keep wanting to go back to more?

Tracy Collins [00:16:34]:  
Well, this is going to be different based on where I was living. So when I was living in Europe, Malta was our go to and I, yeah, I love Malta. So Malta was the first destination out of the UK that I took my daughter to. So I was a. I was a single parent with a single mom for nine years and obviously I wanted to travel with her. I waited until. Actually, I think she might have been a little bit younger because I did take her to South Africa and Botswana when she was maybe that same year, actually took her when she was about five for a first long haul trip. But her first trip in Europe and the first trip that we took together outside of the UK was to Malta and she.

Tracy Collins [00:17:13]:  
We had a fantastic time. So I'm not the sort of person that goes and books in a hotel and sits by the pool for a week. Like, I just don't. So. Poor Dominique, she. She saw every part of Malta, every part of Gozo. Every single day we were out, we caught the local buses, we explored everywhere and then we'd come back at the end of the day and she'd go and have a swim and chill out after that. But.

Tracy Collins [00:17:36]:

And then we'd actually. What was really nice as well in Malta is from about sort of 7 o' clock at night, when it was cooler, we'd go out, walk down. We stayed in Marsa Scola, which is in the very southern part of, of the Maltese island. And all the kids would come out at night to play on the swings in the park because it was cool. So. So it was fantastic for her. So she's very sociable. Don't know where she gets that from.

Amanda Kendle [00:18:00]:  
Crazy.

Tracy Collins [00:18:01]:  
And she would. So she'd just have a ball. We'd go out all day, go and see stuff. She'd come back, have a swim, we'd go and have dinner and then we'd go to the park and she'd just play with the kids. So it was a fantastic holiday. So. And then after that I met Doug and Then Doug and I and Dominique went back a couple of times, and then another couple of times, Doug and I actually went back ourselves. And we actually had planned to retire to Malta, but Brexit happened.

Tracy Collins [00:18:28]:  
Brexit happened.

Amanda Kendle [00:18:29]:  
Oh, gosh. Oh, I'm so sorry. That's awful.

Tracy Collins [00:18:33]:  
Yeah, so that kind of paid. That went down the pan. But we also at that point had thought, let's. Let's go to Australia, as you do. Yes. So. So that kind of changed our direction and our plans. But I've not been back to Malta for quite a few years and it's somewhere that we do want to go.

Tracy Collins [00:18:52]:  
I keep wanting to go back because I've been there quite a few times and I. I just like it. I just really like the people. I like the islands and I feel at home there. The other place, this is gonna sound really bizarre, but the other place I have to mention, is the uk, now that I don't live in the uk. Yeah. The place I keep going back to is the uk.

Amanda Kendle [00:19:10]:  
It really is a home away from home now. Yeah, that's so true.

Tracy Collins [00:19:13]:  
Yeah.

Amanda Kendle [00:19:14]:  
Yep.

Tracy Collins [00:19:14]:  
Yes. So back in the UK every year. So that I just thought was funny. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Amanda Kendle [00:19:21]:

Oh, that's lovely. I've never been to Malta, so now you're really intriguing me. Not because I didn't want to, I just haven't, you know, I haven't had the opportunity yet, but.

Tracy Collins [00:19:30]:

Oh, well, Highly recommend it. Highly recommend it.

Amanda Kendle [00:19:32]:

I know who to come to for some tips. Okay, now the next question is about an under the radar place. So can you share somewhere that's a bit lesser known that you think people should go and see?

Tracy Collins [00:19:46]:

Yeah, this is actually a really easy one for me and it's where I'm from in the uk, which is the county of Northumberland. So everybody, when they come to the uk, everybody wants to go to London. They want to go to York, they want to go to Bath, they want to go to Edinburgh, they want to go to Cotswolds. The Lake District comes up occasionally. The Peak District comes up. But Northumberland seems to just miss everybody, everybody's radar. They, you know, London to Edinburgh, it's like, there's York in between, but nothing else. And I'm like, if you're going to go from York to Edinburgh and if you're driving particularly, you've missed an hour, you can stop.

Tracy Collins [00:20:23]:

Beautiful, beautiful county. So we have Hadrian's Wall. We have the most castles than any county in England.

Amanda Kendle [00:20:31]:

Oh, didn't know that.

Tracy Collins [00:20:32]:

Yep.

Amanda Kendle [00:20:33]:

Nice.

Tracy Collins [00:20:33]:

We have the holy island of Lindisfarne. We have a beautiful coastline. We have Bambura Castle, we have Alnwick Castle, Harry Potter. A lot of Harry Potter was done there. We have the best bookshop in Europe, the best secondhand bookshop in Europe in barter books. And Alnwick, which I would say to everybody, you should go, it's amazing. And we also have inland. You have Hadrian's Wall, we have Vindolanda, we have Housesteads, all the remains of the Roman settlement in the northern part of England.

Tracy Collins [00:21:07]:

So you have history, you have coastline, you have culture, you have the friendliest people, obviously.

Amanda Kendle [00:21:13]:

Clearly, yes, you're advertising your county well, beautiful beaches.

Tracy Collins [00:21:19]:

Honestly, it is. It. It. It's a shame that people don't stop off there more. So I'm a huge advocate for Northumberland.

Amanda Kendle [00:21:27]:

All right, my next UK trip, I promise to do this.

Tracy Collins [00:21:30]:

Please do. Please, please do. I have never. And also, it takes people away from those kind of. Everybody goes to Cotswolds, everybody goes to Lake District. Well, it's like, you know what? Just. Just head a little bit further north and east and you're there.

Amanda Kendle [00:21:43]:

Yeah, that sounds perfect. Okay, I'm sold. I'm going. All right, now, what about a place where you felt like a local, you felt more that you belonged there than just a tourist?

Tracy Collins [00:21:56]:

100 France. So I finished university in 1988, end of 1988, I did a Bachelor of arts degree in psychology and history. I've got a double major in psychology and history. There you go. But I'd done enough. I'd had enough study. I was like, you know what? I'm going to go travel. And I had a friend who'd been an au pair the year before in Switzerland, and I was very interested in her experience.

Tracy Collins [00:22:21]:

And I thought, you know what? I'm going to do this. So that's what I did. I moved to France as an au pair. I actually had two interviews. One was for the south of France, near Nice and Antibes, and the other one was at a ski resort in the French Alps. So I had the decision, do I go beach? Do I go mountain? And I went mountain.

Amanda Kendle [00:22:39]:

Your life could have changed.

Tracy Collins [00:22:42]:

So I went. I went and lived in the French Alps for over a year. I lived with the family I just love. I just loved the family I worked for. The girls were, at that point, 4 and 8. Obviously they're now in the 40s. They've both got kids of their own. And I just loved it because I was totally immersed with the family.

Tracy Collins [00:23:01]:

Now, what Jack did, and this is what the advantage I had over all the other au pairs. He was so keen that I did not teach the girls bad French. Right. So that was his thing. So I had done. In my last year of uni, I took an additional course of foundation French because I'd forgotten my French. It had been a long time since I'd done it. So I did a year of foundational French, but I had a dictionary.

Tracy Collins [00:23:26]:

For the first month, I was going around with a dictionary, and Jack went, look, I'm going to correct every mistake that you make. So I'm like, right, okay. And I thought, oh, this is going to be tough. This is going to be hard. Within six months, I was thinking in French. I was fluent in French.

Amanda Kendle [00:23:42]:

Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:23:43]:

Because I didn't have that many opportunities that there were other au pairs that I'd meet up with. And so we'd obviously would speak English, but they were from all over the world. And I'm still friends with Suzanne, who's from Denmark. We'd met up a few. We've been over and seen each other a few times. And her daughter was actually over in Australia recently. And we met up, which was lovely. So.

Tracy Collins [00:24:03]:

So obviously, English was kind of the common language because we had opairs from all over the world. But for 90 of the time, in fact, probably more than that, 95 of the time, I spoke purely French. The girls didn't speak any English, so I had to speak to them in French. It was the best gift that anybody could have given me. And I. I thank Jack every time I speak to him. He actually, incidentally, about two years ago on Facebook, I just got this. He actually called me on Facebook and he was moving house.

Tracy Collins [00:24:33]:

It sold the family home. And he'd come across all these photos and he was like, I have to share these with you. And it was just. And it was out of the blue. It's on my Facebook, but we don't communicate that often. Yeah. And it was like. It just.

Tracy Collins [00:24:46]:

Yeah. Which was. It was just so amazing. And I've been back. I have visited since I left. But, you know, it wasn't just the language. It was learning about the culture. Because obviously French family.

Tracy Collins [00:24:59]:

The kids went to school. I took them to school. Joelle, the mom, was the best cook ever on the world, honestly. So she taught me to cook. Now, I'm not a big fan of cooking, but I learned a lot, so much from her. And also not just about preparing the food, but their complete respect for food itself. So if we had a dinner party, she would spend two or three days preparing everything, all the Courses would be really planned out, and it was a real celebration of food. She took me to the local markets by Lake Geneva.

Tracy Collins [00:25:32]:

So I lived just. Just above. And, yeah, if you know where the water comes from. And it was incredible. I used to open the shutters in the morning, and there was the Swiss Alps in the background. It was fabulous. But I also learned, like, basically, like, our next door were farmers, that the kids didn't go to school at that point. This is the 80s.

Tracy Collins [00:25:51]:

The kids, they went for a little bit of school, but they didn't. But they. Because they would just run around doing stuff on the farm. And it was, you know, I would go and get the rabbits from the farm. So it was. It, you know, I kind of learned about that. That relationship with food, where it comes from. It doesn't come from a supermarket, you know, and it was.

Tracy Collins [00:26:07]:

So I saw things. I guess I probably. I don't know if I should say this, but, like, you know, the. When killing the chickens or bringing the rabbit sound like that sort of stuff was just a way of life because of where I was living. And. And I think that gave me. Yeah, just extra respect for the food as well.

Amanda Kendle [00:26:24]:

Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:26:25]:

We used to get the milk delivered just put on the. On the window ledge. It wasn't. Wasn't pasteurized or anything. Just came from next door.

Amanda Kendle [00:26:31]:

Just fresh. Yeah.

Tracy Collins [00:26:32]:

Yeah. So, yeah, I. I think that. And just. Just getting to know the families that. That were there is such a. I feel so privileged that I had that opportunity because obviously, with Brexit, it's harder to do that now. Taught it to go and do that.

Tracy Collins [00:26:48]:

So I was there. No issue. Worked there, lived there, you know, fell in love with a Frenchman, actually. But my first love of my life met when I was in France. So, yeah, it was a wonderful, wonderful experience. I loved it. Learned to ski properly because Jack was a ski instructor, so I also had to learn to ski.

Amanda Kendle [00:27:07]:

Perfect. Yes. I think there's nothing more local than that kind of experience. And. Yeah. What an amazing chance to have. To have had. Yeah.

Amanda Kendle [00:27:16]:

I'm a bit jealous. Very cool. All right. My penultimate question is, where else are you thinking of going? What is something or a place that's really high on your list that you really feel drawn to but haven't yet got there? And is there any reason why not?

Tracy Collins [00:27:35]:

Well, there's lots of places, but the one place that just seems to. I never seem to get to is Iceland.

Amanda Kendle [00:27:42]:

Yes, you have to go to Iceland, Tracy.

Tracy Collins [00:27:46]:

I just. You know, I nearly went January this year, but. Because we're house sitting, Doug would have to have stayed and. And he was like, I really want to go to Iceland. So I was like, okay, I won't go. I kind of regret that because I wish I gone. There's a few reasons I haven't gone. Main reason that is it's extremely expensive.

Amanda Kendle [00:28:04]:

Yes, that's a sensible reason. Yeah, it is.

Tracy Collins [00:28:08]:

And it's also become. Oh, I just think it's become over touristed.

Amanda Kendle [00:28:14]:

Yeah, I'm glad I went quite a while ago. I'm not sure that it's the same anymore in some parts anyway.

Tracy Collins [00:28:20]:

So I guess those are. That. That's my. That's what's held me back or from going. And I've looked at it and looked at it and I said if I went back to Europe, the next time I went back to Europe, I would go. And I really, really want to. I see the pictures and it's so beautiful. And I love that kind of, you know, Scandinavian, Nordic landscapes.

Tracy Collins [00:28:40]:

I just love that. Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark. So going to Iceland kind of would just. But just kind of, I don't know, fulfill that. That kind of Nordic. I don't know if I should call it a Nordic country. I guess it isn't. But you know that, I mean, that kind of.

Amanda Kendle [00:28:55]:

I know exactly what you mean.

Tracy Collins [00:28:56]:

Yeah.

Amanda Kendle [00:28:57]:

Yes, yes.

Tracy Collins [00:28:57]:

So.

Amanda Kendle [00:28:58]:

And also the beautiful landscape of a very cold place.

Tracy Collins [00:29:01]:

Yes. And they also have amazing. I don't know if you watch a lot of the TV programs they make from Iceland, but oh my goodness, they do the best dramas ever.

Amanda Kendle [00:29:10]:

I've read a lot of books by Icelandic authors because they have like more. More authors per capita than any other country. So I can only imagine that their TV is also good. So.

Tracy Collins [00:29:20]:

Yeah, the tv, like the murder mystery stuff is brilliant. And then. Yeah. So I've enjoyed a lot of their programs and actually I should read some of the books. So that's a. That's a good prompt for me, actually. I shall get some suggestions off you for that, Amanda, before I go.

Amanda Kendle [00:29:34]:

Yes, yes, exactly. Oh, fabulous. Okay. Last thing is a travel tip. So a tip that you always share. You've probably shared many, but one more.

Tracy Collins [00:29:47]:

Okay, this is a really. This might be a little bit left field, I don't know, but.

Amanda Kendle [00:29:51]:

Oh, I love those the best.

Tracy Collins [00:29:53]:

I. I just have. I have problems with my feet. Right. So as I've got older, I have even more problems with my feet now. When I was in island a few years ago, I had like Plantis fascitis, I think it's called, and I. It ruined My trip. Right.

Tracy Collins [00:30:06]:

So I. My thing that I say to anybody is because you're gonna do a lot of walking, it doesn't matter where you're gonna, you know, you know you're gonna go. You're just gonna walk a lot. So just make sure. Forget the high heels. Just go for a comfortable pair of shoes and make sure that you break them in before you go because there is nothing worse than distracting you or ruining your trip then having massive blisters on your feet and Aspakers. I know. So that is.

Tracy Collins [00:30:35]:

I know it's a bit of a weird one, but I think that's a.

Amanda Kendle [00:30:37]:

Very excellent tip, actually.

Tracy Collins [00:30:39]:

Yes.

Amanda Kendle [00:30:42]:

It'S very true.

Tracy Collins [00:30:43]:

Well, I sat last night and thinking, I was like, there's so many different tips. And I said, you know what? The one thing I always think about is what I'm gonna put on my feet.

Amanda Kendle [00:30:50]:

So, yes, 100. And I do not care by then about the fashion on my feet. I care only about the comfort. Because, yeah, when you're traveling, you will inevitably walk a lot more than you usually do in everyday kind of working life. So, yeah, very sensible advice. Fabulous. Well, thanks, Tracy. I have enjoyed asking you all these cool questions.

Tracy Collins [00:31:12]:

Well, I'll say thank you, Amanda, for coming on and asking me all of these questions. It's been fun to answer them because I'm usually on the other side of the mic interrogating other people and asking them these questions. I will put some photos and some links on the global Travel Planning podcast. It'll be [globaltravelplanning.com forward/episode 84](http://globaltravelplanning.com/forward/episode%2084). Had to double check what episode it was then. But Amanda, thank you so much also for coming on. I'll put a link to your podcast and to your website and to your Facebook group as well. Everybody go and join Amanda's Facebook group.

Tracy Collins [00:31:46]:

If you'd like to come and do an episode of Stamped with Me, let me know. Get in touch via Speak pipe. I want to talk to you guys. I want to know what. What inspired you to travel, what you've done with where the places that have left a mark for you in your life. But I guess that just leaves us to stay until next week. Amanda, happy Global Travel Planning. Thank you.

Amanda Kendle [00:32:08]:

Thank you.

Tracy Collins [00:32:08]:

Bye Bye. Thank you for joining us on this episode of the Global Travel Planning podcast. For more details and links to everything we discussed today, check out the show [notes@globaltravelplanning.com](mailto:notes@globaltravelplanning.com) Remember, if you enjoyed the show, please consider leaving us a review on your favorite podcast app because your feedback helps us reach more travel enthusiasts just like you. Anyway, that leaves me to say, as always, happy global travel planning.