



TravelSouth
All Y'all Are Welcome USA

JOURNALIST BIOS





ALABAMA FAM PARTICIPANTS


Cristina Giuliano

Will Salked

Russell Blackstock

Journalist's Full Name	Ms. Cristina Giuliano
Origin Country:	Italy
FAMs:	Alabama: A Southern Coastal Retreat
Title	Senior Editor
Publication(s) & Link	Askaneews: www.askaneews.it
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Press Agency and National Newspaper Daily 170,000 circ
Bio	<p>Cristina Giuliano is a senior editor at Askaneews specializing on the global travel and tourism industry. Drawing on a professional background in Tourism and travel service management, she provides expert analysis on international market trends, tourism resilience, and the strategic development of global destinations. Her reporting blends investigative rigor with narrative storytelling, covering a wide spectrum of the industry—from the analysis of international tourism boards and large-scale hospitality policies to the promotion of sustainable models and heritage-driven travel.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	1 month after the trip
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>The readership of Askaneews is broad and diverse, encompassing a wide spectrum of readers with different interests and travel habits</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>For the FAM trip, a key area of interest—particularly in Alabama—is the historical and cultural narrative linked to civil and human rights, which offers strong editorial depth and relevance. Food is not considered a primary focus for an Italian audience, although standout dining experiences are always of interest when they reach a truly high standard. There is also a strong personal interest in hotels with a distinctive history and identity, properties that can tell a story beyond hospitality itself.</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>In crafting a compelling destination story, the priority is given to powerful emotions and remarkable, almost cinematic stories—those that leave a lasting impression and elevate the narrative beyond a simple travel account.</i>
Links to articles	-https://askaneews.it/2026/02/05/turismo-in-alabama-il-soul-food-che-ha-fatto-la-storia/ -https://stream24.ilsole24ore.com/video/mondo/in-colorado-le-montagne-concedersi-lusso-rallentare/AHS20ftC
Instagram + Facebook	@mostevery1smadhere @agenzia_askaneews
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Cell phone/WhatsApp	+39 335.689.2459
Food allergies/restrictions	Paracetamol (acetaminophen)

Journalist's Full Name	Russell Blackstock
Origin Country:	UK (Scotland)
FAMs:	Alabama: A Southern Coastal Retreat
Title	Senior Reporter
Publication(s) & Link	Sunday Post: www.sundaypost.com
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	National Newspaper Weekly 26,000 circ
Bio	<p>I am based in Glasgow, Scotland. I cover everything from general news, entertainment and features to world affairs. I also write travel features for our weekend magazine, including coverage of recent trips to Boston, the Maldives, Tuscany and Malta. I have been in journalism for almost 40 years, working mostly in Scotland, previously for national titles The Sun and the Sunday Mail.</p> <p>I also enjoyed a decade-long stint living in Queenstown, then Auckland in New Zealand, where I was a senior journalist for the New Zealand Herald, but I returned to Scotland in 2017 to take up a position at the Sunday Post.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Late 2026
Shooting video/photos?	No
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>The Sunday Post has a readership that is predominantly over 50 years old and have high disposable incomes, so I bear that in mind when writing articles and try to highlight activities and trips that speak to that age group, including if their children or grandchildren might be joining them.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>I have been to the US many times since I was a teenager but never as far south as Mobile before, and I like to experience local architecture, music, food, nature and culture.</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>I look for an experience that the reader would find interesting and exciting, and that I feel they might like to experience too. I endeavor to put them on the spot, and in my shoes, so to speak. Also, a colorful chat with locals or guides often makes for a lively start to a travel article.</i>
Links to articles	-https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/historic-us-city-knocks-it-out-of-the-ball-park-boston/ -https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/travel-last-rays-of-summer-in-malta-a-jewel-of-the-mediterranean/
Instagram + Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/SundayPostUK/
Email Address	rblackstock@dcthompson.co.uk
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+44(0)752 1449885
Food allergies/restrictions	None, just dislike to seafood

Journalist's Full Name	Will Salked
Origin Country:	Australia
FAMs:	Alabama: A Southern Coastal Retreat
Title	Travel Photographer/Influencer
Publication(s) & Link	Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/wilkeld/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Social Media
Bio	<p>Will is a travel content creator, videographer and photographer based in Sydney. He shares visually rich travel storytelling that inspires audiences to discover destinations through culture, people, landscapes and local experiences.</p> <p>With 65K followers on Instagram and over 180K likes on TikTok, Will has built an engaged audience through high-quality photography and short-form video that highlights hotels, venues, food, natural landscapes and destination experiences.</p> <p>His storytelling captures the atmosphere and character of a destination, producing visually striking content that tourism boards and travel brands can use across social, digital and marketing channels. Will regularly partners with tourism organizations, hospitality brands and destinations to create destination-led content designed to inspire travel and showcase places through a strong visual narrative.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	
Shooting video/photos?	<i>Yes -- Can you help with permits for drone capture? Also need enough time to capture good footage and the ability prioritize certain spots to create better content.</i>
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Primarily aged 20–40. Looking for visually inspiring destinations and memorable travel experiences. They are planning international travel and are drawn to destinations with beautiful landscapes, great food scenes, unique hotels and strong local character.</i>
Most wants to experience/capture:	<i>Food & drink, coastal landscapes, outdoor adventure, historic hotels, scenic drives, local neighborhoods and unique cultural experiences. Content that highlights the best places to stay, eat and explore in a destination, combined with strong visuals and cinematic moments. For this trip, I'd love to capture a mix of coastal landscapes, great food experiences and unique local activities to create a short-form guide to Alabama's Gulf Coast -- a sunset over Mobile Bay, kayaking through Gulf State Park, or a vibrant food experience.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>Moments that feel visually immersive and aspirational. This could be a beautiful beach or coastal landscape, an iconic hotel or pool scene, a great food spot, or discovering a vibrant neighborhood or street with strong local atmosphere.</i>
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/wilkeld/
TikTok	https://www.tiktok.com/@wilkeld
Email Address	will@wscreative.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+61 403 972 314
Food allergies/restrictions	




ARKANSAS FAM PARTICIPANTS


Sabine Ilse Loeprick


Annabel Grossman


Cécile Bertin

Domhnall O'Donoghue

Journalist's Full Name	Annabel Grossman
Origin Country:	London, UK
FAMs:	Arkansas Presents: The Natural State
Title	Global Travel Editor
Publication(s) & Link	The Independent: www.independent.co.uk
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Digital 65 million UVM (globally)
Bio	<p>Annabel is Global Travel Editor at The Independent. She has lived and worked across the world, with long periods in India, Spain, Mexico and seven years in the USA based in New York. She has travelled extensively in North America, having visited around 30 states.</p> <p>Annabel has a particular interest in exploring lesser-known regions and uncovering how travel can be a positive force for the communities she visits. Annabel also loves adventure travel, including mountaineering, skiing, trail running (and anything that involves a bit of adrenaline), and is passionate about bringing this type of travel to a wider audience.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	July 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>We have a wider readership at The Independent spanning solo travellers, families, couples and groups. We know our readers are interested in lesser-known or underrated destinations – destinations away from tourist crowds and the less typical destinations.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>The outdoors, as well as history and culture. I'm very interested in Arkansas's civil rights history and also the natural beauty of the state</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>An unexpected hook, an angle with current relevance, local voices to tell the story</i>
Instagram + Facebook	The.independent & independenttravel Facebook: annabelgrossman
Email Address	annabel.grossman@independent.co.uk
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+447435002430
Food allergies/restrictions	Vegetarian (no meat, no fish)

Journalist's Full Name	Cécile Bertin
Origin Country:	France
FAMs:	Arkansas Presents: The Natural State
Title	Journalist
Publication(s) & Link	Espirit Trail (magazine) + Run Fit & Fun (website): www.runfitfun.fr
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Run Fit & Fun 1.13M viewers
Bio	<p>I'm a journalist specializing in sports and travel. I work for the top two running magazines, Esprit Trail and Jogging International, in which I publish travel-focused articles.</p> <p>I also have a website, Run Fit & Fun where I publish more in-depth articles to complement my print publications, as well as an active Instagram @cecilebertinrunfitfun account for live sharing.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>My community is sporty and loves to travel. They often already have children but sometimes travel alone so they can do sports activities in peace. When you travel to run a marathon and your partner is also running, finding childcare during the race is not easy, especially abroad. This is why practical information is very important for me to put together and share out of a trip content.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I want to discover even more about the southern states that I did not know before my previous trips to the USA. About Arkansas specifically, I was dreaming of exploring its wilderness, quiet rural places and not-to-miss outdoor gems like the famous Pinnacle Mountain and for the possum pie of course!</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>I know it is not always possible but having free time to visit a museum that was not included in the itinerary, or just to have a coffee and "feel" a city or a site, is very much appreciated.</i>
Links to articles	-https://jogging-international.net/actualites/the-louisiana-marathon-le-guide-ultime-pour-participer-a-cette-course-mythique-des-etats-unis/ -https://www.swisstransfer.com/d/64bd1504-713f-4a36-969e-eb43b6649064
Instagram + Facebook	@cecilebertinrunfitfun
Email Address	cecile_bertin@yahoo.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+33620423479
Food allergies/restrictions	Bananas

Journalist's Full Name	Ms. Sabine Ilse Loeprick
Origin Country:	Germany
FAMs:	Arkansas Presents: The Natural State
Title	Freelance
Publication(s) & Link	Deutschlandfunk: www.deutschlandradio.de Norddeutscher Rundfunk & Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg: www.ndr.de
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Public radio network; 24/7 travel section or program each weekend Travel section each Sunday in Deutschlandfunk and NDR ma Audio 2025 II Deutschlandfunk 2.6 million listeners daily M-F Media-Analyse 2025 Audio I: Radiomarkt im Norden ndr.de
Bio	<p>For over 25 years Sabine Loeprick has been working as freelance news editor and anchor for Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg, mainly for Antenne Brandenburg, the market leader among radio programs in Brandenburg and Berlin.</p> <p>At the same time, she has been contributing travel features on a regular base for various radio programs in the ARD network.</p> <p>Recent works include a 30-minute program about two French cities for NDR, as well as a 24-minute-feature about the border region between Germany and Czech Republic for "Inforadio unterwegs" (RBB). She is also the author of two travel guidebooks and has been contributing articles for America Journal as well as 360 Grad Nordamerika. A passionate traveler, Kate has visited all seven continents, including completing a year-long lap of Australia with her young family.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Fall 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Will be recording short interviews /audio
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Families, couples and solo travelers who are interested in different aspects regarding their travels. Because the audience is so diverse, I am looking for a good mixture of nature experience, culture, history of the region and personalities/ characters.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>As I am mostly working for radio, I depend on gathering interesting sound material and short interviews- on a very casual level. Interview doesn't mean something "official" but just a casual talk.</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>I am hoping to be able to talk to many different interesting personalities in the region we are going to visit.</i>
Instagram & Facebook	https://www.instagram.com/slo_berlin/?hl=en
Email Address	Sabine.Loeprick@gmx.de
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+49 179 495 89 18
Food allergies/restrictions	No meat

Journalist's Full Name	Domhnall O'Donoghue
Origin Country:	Ireland
FAMs:	Arkansas Presents: The Natural State
Title	Travel Writer
Publication(s) & Link	Belfast Telegraph: www.Belfasttelegraph.co.uk
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Northern Ireland's largest daily newspaper 35k circ = readership of 150,000 14M monthly online page views
Bio	<p>Domhnall is a travel journalist and writes extensively for Irish and British media, with work regularly appearing in the <i>Belfast Telegraph</i>, <i>The Irish Times</i> and <i>The Sunday Times</i>.</p> <p>He has received many prestigious honors for his writing, including Ireland's <i>Travel Extra</i> Travel Journalist of the Year award in 2024 and 2025. Recently, he won a Travel Media Award in London for a second consecutive year and was also recognized by the British Guild of Travel Writers in their annual Members' Excellence Awards. Mercier Press published his novels <i>Colin and the Concubine</i>, <i>Crazy for You</i>, and <i>The Wonderful Life of Connie Maguire</i>. His debut novel, <i>Sister Agatha: the World's Oldest Serial Killer</i>, was republished by Bloodhound Books in 2025.</p> <p>Domhnall trained as an actor at Trinity College Dublin and appeared in TG4's award-winning series <i>Ros na Rún</i>.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Two double-page spreads (1500 words each / print and online)
Shooting video/photos?	Photography – personal use and possible inclusion in articles
Reader/viewer of their story:	The Belfast Telegraph reaches approximately 143,311 readers daily. It is Northern Ireland's best-read, award-winning daily newspaper, publishing six days a week. The paper is recognized for its news, political coverage, and strong digital presence, operating as the main evening newspaper in the region. The paper aims for a broad, modern audience interested in Northern Ireland news, politics, and local sport.
Most want to experience:	<i>I specialise in sustainable travel – emphasising communities, heritage, crafts, culture and history. I offer locals a platform to share their stories.</i>
What makes a great story?	
Links to stories	https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/life/weekend/tennessee-the-power-of-music/a/138608939.html https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/life/travel/keep-portland-weird-is-the-citys-unofficial-slogan-and-oregon-sure-likes-to-plough-its-own-furrow/a/112175555.html
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Food allergies/restrictions	None



GEORGIA FAM PARTICIPANTS


Maija Astikaninen

Astrid Steinbrecher-Raitmayr


Rogéria Vianna


Randy Sharman

Pallavi Mehra


Journalist's Full Name	Maija Astikainen
Origin Country:	Helsinki, Finland
FAMs:	Georgia Gems
Title	Journalist & Photographer
Publication(s) & Link	Mondo: www.mondo.fi
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Printed magazine (10x/year @ 70k readers) + weekly online (100-500k readers)
Bio	<p>Maija is a culture writer and photographer with over a decade of experience across magazines and book projects. She has spent most of her career documenting travel and lifestyle stories and writing about destinations, nature, and everyday life around the world.</p> <p>Maija is a longtime contributor to Mondo magazine and has worked on several travel guides as well as the acclaimed book <i>Sauna – The Power of Deep Heat</i>. She has written nature features for Finnish publications, and her work has appeared in international magazines including <i>Konfekt</i>, <i>Les Echos Week-End</i>, and <i>Wallpaper</i>. Her background in photography gives her a sharp eye for detail and atmosphere, which carries through in her writing.</p> <p>Maija is particularly interested in sauna culture, cold water swimming, hot springs, hiking, and kayaking, and regularly travels in pursuit of these subjects, both on assignment and in her own time.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Second half of 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Finnish travellers, interested in international destinations. Majority of readers are women between the ages of 30-70 years. (The online version of the article will be free to read to any Finnish people interested in travel in the US & GA.)</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I want to walk around different neighborhoods and really feel the atmosphere of the place. Meeting local residents, creatives, and entrepreneurs for interviews is very important to me. I'm interested in good restaurants, museums, cultural sites, and hidden gems that show the true character of the destination, not just the main tourist attractions. As a professional photographer, I also look for strong visual details and enough time to capture the spirit of the place through photos.</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>For me, a great destination story is based on personal experience, real conversations with locals, and strong visual storytelling. I look for authentic moments and local recommendations that help me create engaging text and powerful images, going beyond the typical tourist perspective.</i>
Links to articles	-https://www.apu.fi/artikkelit/madeiran-lomaloydot-mondo-selvitti-saaren-parhaat-elamykset -https://www.apu.fi/artikkelit/goteborg-yllattaa-hikoilukirkko-ja-lahivesien-ostereita-matka


	-https://www.apu.fi/artikkelit/kaipaanko-leppoisaa-lomaa-idyllisia-merimaisemia-seka-meksikon-kulttuuria-ja-makuja-ratkaisu-on-ihana-holboxin-saari
Instagram + Facebook	@mondolehti & @maijaastikainen facebook.com/mondolehti
Email Address	contact@maijaastikainen.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+358503590677
Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Ms. Rogéria Vianna
Origin Country:	Brazil (but lives in New York)
FAMs:	Georgia Gems
Title	Journalist
Publication(s) & Link	Viagem e Turismo: https://viagemeturismo.abril.com.br/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online magazine Daily 943,000
Bio	<p>Rogéria is a New York–based travel journalist and TV producer. Former producer for Globo Internacional, she is the creator of @vemprany, a travel platform highlighting the best of New York City. She writes the <i>Vem pra Nova York</i> column for <i>Viagem e Turismo</i> magazine and works as a U.S. correspondent for Brazilian media outlets.</p> <p>Viagem e Turismo is a traditional Brazilian travel outlet that has been published for 30 years, both as a website and a digital magazine. It launched in 1995 and was the first Brazilian publication dedicated exclusively to tourism, with a circ of 123,000. In 2018, the magazine's print edition was discontinued.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	TBD
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Brazilian travelers who are interested in learning about new destinations or are actively seeking information to plan their next trips. They look for accessible and reliable insights to help them understand a place before visiting.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I understand that the press trip is designed to address the group's general interests by showcasing the main highlights/attractions of each city, which serves as a strong starting point for the story. Even when covering multiple destinations, I believe it is important to identify a narrative thread that connects them, allowing each city to function as a chapter within a broader story.</i>
What makes a great story?	<p><i>-Gaining an understanding of each destination's identity and context—why the place matters in terms of history, culture, music, social movements, gastronomy, and local atmosphere—is essential so the reader can grasp the city's essence.</i></p> <p><i>-Experiencing authentic, real-life activities is key. While exclusive experiences for the group are valuable, it is also important to include activities that readers themselves could access during a regular visit.</i></p>
Links to articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://viagemeturismo.abril.com.br/mundo/roteiro-de-tres-dias-em-charleston-na-carolina-do-sul/ - https://viagemeturismo.abril.com.br/mundo/casa-mal-assombrada-nos-estados-unidos-virou-hotel-e-nos-nos-hospedamos/ - https://viagemeturismo.abril.com.br/mundo/nova-orleans-roteiro-a-pe-pelo-french-quarter/
Instagram + Facebook	@viagemeturismo @vemprany https://www.facebook.com/viagemeturismo
Email Address	rogeriavianna@gmail.com
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Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Astrid Steinbrecher-Raitmayr
Origin Country:	Vienna, Austria
FAMs:	Georgia Gems
Title	Contributor
Publication(s) & Link	FrontRowSociety: www.frontrowsociety.net
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online luxury magazine 12M UVM
Bio	<p>Astrid has spent more than three decades in the media industry, creating high-quality journalism across travel, lifestyle, sustainability, culture, and business. She began her career in 1992 at Austria's NEWS magazine, where she developed a storytelling style defined by clarity, curiosity, and a strong sense for relevant angles.</p> <p>Since 2015, Astrid has been running her own media agency, producing content for leading print and digital publications in Austria and Germany. She contributes to FrontRowSociety, a German-language luxury and lifestyle magazine featuring visually rich destination reports, exclusive hotel and restaurant reviews, culinary experiences, and automotive content with a strong reach across the DACH market.</p> <p>She also writes for fair now!, the Sustainable Finance & Lifestyle Magazine, covering ESG trends, responsible investing, and sustainability paired with travel, wellness, and modern living. Further outlets include Kneipp Bewegt (holistic health and mindful lifestyle) and Reiselust (OE24), Austria's weekly travel magazine.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>FrontRowSociety is a German-language luxury & lifestyle magazine with a high media reach. The educated and affluent readership comes from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Our editorial team travels globally, reporting on extraordinary destinations, exclusive hotels, outstanding restaurants, as well as culinary experiences, and automotive and motorsport. This results in visually rich reports for online and print, offering readers authentic stories.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I am looking forward to unique, authentic experiences – meeting inspiring people with strong personal stories, discovering local cuisine, special hotels, nature and culture. I'm particularly interested in the human stories behind a destination, like Sallie Ann Robinson, as they give a place its true character. Sustainability/responsible travel, local producers/artisans, hidden gems/off-the-beaten-path places, wellness/slow travel, storytelling potential for readers...</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>A great destination story is always built on three elements: people, authenticity and atmosphere. I look for inspiring personalities with strong, genuine stories, places with a clear sense of identity and experiences that create an emotional connection. It's not just about where you go, but about what you feel and who you meet along the way. Of course, beautiful hotels and outstanding restaurants are essential elements, as well as cultural highlights, iconic sights and experiences in</i>

	<i>nature. All of these aspects contribute to the overall feeling of a destination and help create a well-rounded and engaging story.</i>
Links to articles	https://frontrowsociety.net/desert-deluxe/ https://frontrowsociety.net/urban-and-ocean/ https://frontrowsociety.net/southern-soul-cypress-gardens-south-carolina/ https://frontrowsociety.net/the-thrill-lives-on/
Instagram + Facebook	https://www.instagram.com/frontrowsociety/ https://www.facebook.com/frontrowsociety/
Email Address	astridraitmayr@me.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	436641160099
Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Randy Sharman
Origin Country:	Calgary, Canada
FAMs:	Georgia Gems
Title	Host/Writer/Producer
Publication(s) & Link	The Informed Traveler: https://www.theinformedtraveler.org/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Podcast – weekly – 2,000-3,000 downloads per month
Bio	<p>Randy Sharman is the host, producer and writer of The Informed Traveler Podcast, a weekly travel podcast dedicated to the latest travel news and information.</p> <p>His travel expertise stems from years working in the cruise line industry, which took him to destinations across North America, including Alaska, Hawaii, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. Additionally, he spent about a decade as a home-based travel consultant, further deepening his industry knowledge. Based in Calgary, Alberta, Randy has been involved in radio broadcasting for over 30 years. He hosted and produced The Informed Traveler Radio Show for 13 years. His contributions to travel journalism were recognized by the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) in 2019 for Travel Audio/Podcasts.</p> <p>Randy believes there's no better learning experience than traveling the world and meeting the people who inhabit it. The Informed Traveler is all about making that experience more enjoyable.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	The week during and following Global Media Marketplace
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>We cover topics that cater to a variety of travelers from families and couples to female solo travelers; both domestic and international travelers offering tips for both first-time visitors and those looking for something different from repeat visits.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I like to experience places and people that showcase what makes that destination unique to travelers. That shows me why people should go there.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>Ideally, I look for someone who is a great interview. Someone who can communicate a passion for their destination or tour. Someone who gives many reasons why a traveler should visit their location.</i>
Links to recent articles	https://www.buzzsprout.com/2111088/episodes/16922428-on-location-in-louisville-kentucky https://www.buzzsprout.com/2111088/episodes/16882530-on-location-in-southwest-louisiana https://www.buzzsprout.com/2111088/episodes/18391572-travel-year-in-review-tennessee-holiday-celebrations
Instagram + Facebook	https://www.instagram.com/theInformedTravler https://www.facebook.com/InformedTraveler
Email Address	randy@theinformedtraveler.org
Cell phone/WhatsApp	403-585-5197
Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Ms. Pallavi Mehra
Origin Country:	India (lives in Los Angeles)
FAMs:	Georgia Gems
Title	Freelance Journalist
Publication(s) & Link	TBD
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	TBD
Bio Profile: LinkedIn Instagram https://muckrack.com/pallavi-mehra/articles , https://linktr.ee/PallaviMehra	<p>Pallavi Mehra is Los Angeles-based writer, editor, and content strategist with over 12 years of experience working with global brands and publications. She graduated with a degree in English and Economics from Dickinson College, Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Her work appears in Indian and American outlets such as <i>Vogue India</i>, <i>Deccan Herald</i>, <i>India Today</i>, <i>Los Angeles Times</i>, <i>GQ India</i>, <i>Travel + Leisure India</i>, <i>Architectural Digest India</i>, <i>Condé Nast Traveler</i>, and more.</p> <p>She writes about travel, wellness, design, lifestyle, and beauty, drawing inspiration from her surroundings and global travels.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	"In the next few months"
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Indian families and frequent international travelers.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>Experience the unique offerings in the destination, which would be of particular interest to Indian tourists.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>I look for one-of-a-kind topics that aren't well known, relatability/interest for Indian travelers and ways to paint the entire picture that takes readers to the destination by reading the story.</i>
Links to articles	-https://www.travelandleisureasia.com/in/dining/what-is-cajun-cuisine-and-why-should-you-try-it/ -https://www.travelandleisureasia.com/in/trips/road-trip-across-california-in-usa/ -https://www.deccanherald.com/lifestyle/travel/it-s-all-roses-in-pasadena-3871178
Instagram	@pallywally_ and Pallavi.mehra.9
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/pallavi.mehra.9/
Email Address	pallavi.mehra13@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	Cell: +1.310.866.5435 WhatsApp: +91 9820234085
Food allergies/restrictions	Allergic to crab




KENTUCKY FAM PARTICIPANTS


Verena Wolff

Craig Silva

Sharmiladebie (Mila) Jaipal


Justin Jamieson

Journalist's Full Name	Verena Wolff
Country of Origin	Germany (Berlin)
FAMs:	Tracing Kentucky's Living History
Title	Freelance travel writer
Publication(s) & Link	360 Grad, AmericaJournal, dpa
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Quarterly Travel Magazine Newswire Weekly (dpa)
Bio	<p>Verena has been a freelance writer and photographer for longer than she has not.</p> <p>Specializing in North America and the cold regions of the world, she loves to explore new places and find unusual angles for both her stories and pictures.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Fall 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, photos
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>My story is for a US-centric magazine here in Germany, so people who have a certain knowledge of the US and travel there frequently.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>The most important aspect to me is always: people. Protagonists for the story, preferably with cool and unusual stories to tell.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>I'm not too interested in museums or exhibitions (only for background info), but people who bring stories to life!</i>
Links to stories	https://rp-online.de/leben/reisen/der-presley-und-der-country-sound-musik-trip-in-tennessee_aid-131619737 https://www.welt.de/reise/Fern/article250834234/Roadtrip-Unterwegs-auf-dem-einsamsten-Highway-der-USA.html
Instagram/Facebook	360° does not have Social Channels, my personal Insta is @verenawolff, but I'm hardly posting any longer since Meta is feeding its AI with my photos...
Email Address	hello@verenawolff.de
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+49 163 6828282
Food allergies/restrictions	No red meat, no bell peppers

Journalist's Full Name	Craig Silva
Origin Country:	Canada
FAMs:	Tracing Kentucky's Living History
Title	Freelance Writer / Editor
Publication(s) & Link "I will be writing for more than one publication, and providing social media coverage"	Big Daddy Kreativ: https://www.bigdaddykreativ.ca/ The Travel Pub: https://thetravelpub.com/ Living Local Magazine: https://livinglocalmagazine.ca/ Toronto Times: https://totimes.ca/ Ottawa Times: https://otttimes.ca/ Montreal Times: https://mtltimes.ca/ Mapsgirl: https://www.mapsgirl.ca/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Digital Travel Publications: Big Daddy Kreativ: Multiple times/week 295,000 U MVs (digital) The Travel Pub: 2x a week, 185,000 U MVs (digital) Living Local Magazine: Multiple times/month 70k (print and digital) Toronto Times: Multiple times/week, 85,000 U MVs (digital) Ottawa Times: Multiple times/week, 75,000 U MVs (digital) Montreal Times: Multiple times/week, 95,000 U MVs (digital) Mapsgirl: Weekly 57,000 U MVs (digital)
Bio	<p>Craig is a travel and lifestyle writer and the founder of Big Daddy Kreativ, a Canadian travel and lifestyle blog launched in September 2011.</p> <p>Through his work, Craig covers travel, food, lifestyle, and automotive experiences, offering readers insight into destinations, cultures, and experiences across Canada and beyond. Craig has over a decade of experience in digital publishing and is a respected voice in the travel and lifestyle space. In 2017, Cision recognized him as one of Canada's top 10 most popular male bloggers in the parents and family category. Craig is also a member of the Society of American Travel Writers and the International Travel Writers Alliance.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Within 60 days
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, photography and video
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Solo travelers, couples, families. Mostly Canadian, US, and Europe</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>Memorable experiences for people of all abilities, inclusive environments</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>-Really enjoyable experiences at the destination. I always look at each experience through a solo, couples, and family lens. -Good culinary spots and food tours, unique accommodations, historical significance of the area</i>
Instagram + Facebook	@bigdaddykreativ
Email Address	craigger73@gmail.com, craig@bigdaddykreativ.ca
Cell phone/WhatsApp	416-407-3622
Food allergies/restrictions	None. Some mobility issues, high blood pressure

Journalist's Full Name	Sharmiladebie (Mila) Jaipal
Origin Country:	Netherlands
FAMs:	Tracing Kentucky's Living History
Title	Blogger
Publication(s) & Link	Your Travel Reporter: https://yourtravelreporter.nl/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Blog 50,000 UVM
Bio	<p>Mila is the face behind Your Travel Reporter; a travel blog created for modern bon vivants seeking memorable experiences around the world.</p> <p>Through refined storytelling and striking photography, she guides readers to unique destinations and hidden gems — from scenic nature escapes to culturally rich cities. With a strong focus on gastronomy, wellness, and the art of slow, meaningful travel, Mila inspires her audience to embrace the good life wherever they go. Your Travel Reporter is the go-to platform for travelers who value authenticity, comfort, and beautifully curated journeys.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	Within one month of the trip, I can deliver the following: a minimum of 3 permanent blog articles on my website plus social media campaign during and after the trip: 10 stories/day on Instagram during the press trip, 10 posts on Instagram and 3 Facebook Posts sharing the article link
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Mainly experience-driven travelers who are looking for unique and high-quality travel experiences. They are often couples or solo travelers (25–55), with an interest in boutique hotels, culture, nature, gastronomy, and slow travel. Many of them are frequent international travelers who value well-curated, authentic destinations over mass tourism.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I'm especially interested in experiencing the authentic character of the destination. This includes a mix of nature, local culture, unique accommodations, and local food. I love destinations where I can combine outdoor experiences with beautiful places to stay and local stories that make the destination stand out.</i>
What makes a great story:	<p>For me, a great destination story always includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A strong sense of place (what makes this destination unique and different), the most beautiful and interesting places - also for (drone) photography -A combination of experiences (nature, culture, history, food, and stays) -Personal experiences & storytelling that inspire readers to plan their own trip.
Links to articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://yourtravelreporter.nl/calgary-naar-vancouver/ -https://yourtravelreporter.nl/wat-te-doen-op-madeira-tips-highlights-bezienswaardigheden/ -https://yourtravelreporter.nl/poznan-ultieme-reisgids-bezienswaardigheden/
Instagram + Facebook	@yourtravelreporter https://www.facebook.com/yourtravelreporter
Email Address	info@yourtravelreporter.nl
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+31 6 21261445
Food allergies/restrictions	Vegetarian, but sometimes I eat fish/chicken



Journalist's Full Name	Justin Jamieson
Origin Country:	Australia
FAMs:	Tracing Kentucky's Living History
Title	Founder/Editor
Publication(s) & Link	Get Lost Magazine https://www.getlostmagazine.com/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Digital Monthly 200,000
Bio	<p>Get Lost Magazine is Australia's leading adventure travel title known for its irreverent voice, bold first-person narratives and commitment to immersive, on-the-ground storytelling. Rather than list-led travel coverage, Get Lost champions long-form features that prioritize character, culture and lived experience, often placing the writer directly in the story. The result is journalism that feels raw, curious and deeply connected to place.</p>  <p>Under Justin's editorial leadership, the magazine has carved out a distinct position in the Australian media landscape. It speaks to independent, experience-driven travellers who value authenticity over polish and seek destinations with texture and personality. The publication is known for uncovering lesser-known angles, spotlighting subcultures and encouraging readers to step beyond the expected. Justin's editorial style blends humor, candor and sharp cultural observation. He is drawn to stories that challenge perception and reveal the human layers of a destination, from regional food traditions and music heritage to evolving travel trends.</p> <p>Beyond print and digital, Justin is a recognized voice in Australian travel media. He discusses travel trends weekly on 2GB's top-rating Chris Smith Afternoon show and has appeared regularly on 3AW's travel and food program A Moveable Feast, as well as on Qantas' inflight program Up and Away, across the Austereo network and on ABC nationally.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	April/May
Shooting video/photos?	
Reader/viewer of their story:	<p><i>The Get Lost reader is typically 30–55, professionally established, cash-rich but time-poor, and deeply suspicious of anything that feels mass-produced. They value experience over luxury but still appreciate quality — a good lodge, a strong negroni, high thread-count sheets. They're culturally curious, environmentally aware, and seek travel with meaning: remote trails, family-run eateries, expedition vessels, desert roads, mountain air and the perfect local night out. They want to feel like travellers, not tourists.</i></p> <p>What does your reader care most about when choosing a destination? <i>Authenticity above all — they want places that feel real, textured and unscripted. They prize uniqueness and are drawn to destinations that feel under-the-radar or experienced in an unconventional way (backroads over highways, locals over tour buses, winter over peak season). They value meaningful connection — Aboriginal-led experiences, sake ceremonies, conservation-driven lodges — and want to understand a place, not just photograph it. Adventure with comfort is key; challenge is attractive but suffering for its</i></p>

	<i>own sake is not. They're increasingly impact-conscious and prioritize value over price. In short: they choose destinations that promise a story and a shift in perspective.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>Smaller, lesser-known towns that are off the radar for an Australian audience. Bardstown as the Bourbon Capital of the World is a compelling angle. Keen to meet generational distillers and learn about the development of Kentucky bourbon. The music scene surrounding Bardstown is of strong interest, as are road-trip-style destinations such as Lexington and Frankfort for their local experiences and cuisine.</i>
What makes a great story?	-Lesser-known local experiences — culinary and entertainment -Local people, identities and artisans
Links to stories	https://www.getlostmagazine.com/feature/south-pacific-the-cool-guide/ https://www.getlostmagazine.com/feature/top-5-west-hollywood-hotels/ https://www.getlostmagazine.com/feature/lesser-known-ski-mountains/
Instagram + Facebook	@jamo_gets_lost https://www.instagram.com/getlostmagazine https://www.facebook.com/getlosttravels/
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/@getlosttravelmagazine1052
Email Address	justin.jamieson@grincreative.com.au
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+61 412 476 257
Food allergies/restrictions	



LOUISIANA FAM PARTICIPANTS

Monica Quinta


Teja Lele

Amandine Liard


Elena Bittane


Vanessa Richards

Cole Dickson


Journalist's Full Name	Monica Quinta
Origin Country:	Brazil
FAMs:	Louisiana's Southern Charm on Tap
Title	Photojournalist
Publication(s) & Link	Qual Viagem Magazine: https://www.qualviagem.com.br/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Monthly Print Magazine 170k circ + Online 4M UVM
Bio	<p>As a photojournalist and writer, I create visual and editorial narratives that explore the richness of culture, emotion, and place. My lens captures fleeting moments that reveal deeper human truths, while my words trace the stories behind each image - stories of people, landscapes, and experiences that shape our world.</p>  <p>I document travel routes, cultural encounters, and immersive journeys with sensitivity and intention, blending photography and journalism to offer layered perspectives. Whether through a compelling portrait or a well-crafted article, my work invites reflection and connection. I believe storytelling is a bridge - between places and people, between image and insight.</p> <p>With a background in editorial travel writing and visual reportage, I approach each assignment with curiosity, empathy, and a commitment to authenticity. My goal is to translate the essence of a place into stories that resonate, inform, and inspire - stories that linger in memory and speak across borders.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	May, 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Readers seeking inspiration for culturally and gastronomically immersive travel experiences. This audience values experiential tourism, appreciating everything from architectural aesthetics to the living history of destinations, and is consistently looking for itineraries that go beyond the obvious.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>To capture the soul of the Deep South through two main pillars: Cajun/Creole cuisine and musical heritage. In cities such as Baton Rouge and Covington, I aim to explore the roots and authentic flavors of local cuisine. In Mobile and Charleston, my focus will be on understanding how music and history have shaped the identity of these destinations. I hope to engage in experiences that allow me to visually translate this vibrant and historic atmosphere.</i>
What makes a great story:	<p><i>-Gastronomic and Musical Identity: For me, a destination's food and sound serve as the narrative threads of the story. Access to local chefs, markets, or historic music venues is essential to conveying the destination's pulse.</i></p> <p><i>-Visual Narrative and Detail (Aesthetic): As a photographer, I look for locations with lighting and compositions that allow for a minimalist perspective focused on detail, creating an aesthetic that transports the reader into the scene.</i></p> <p><i>-Connection to Localism: I prioritize experiences that highlight the authentic heritage of the region, enabling culturally rich storytelling and the inclusion of characters that represent the essence of each city.</i></p>


Links to stories	https://issuu.com/editoraqual/docs/revista_qual_viagem_edi_o_133 - abril 2025 https://issuu.com/editoraqual/docs/revista_qual_viagem_edi_o_134 - _maio 2025
Instagram + Facebook	@revistaqualviagem https://www.facebook.com/qualviagem/
Email Address	quintamonica@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+5511979972447
Food allergies/restrictions	None


Journalist's Full Name	Teja Lele
Origin Country:	India
FAMs:	Louisiana's Southern Charm on Tap
Title	Consulting Editor
Publication(s) & Link	Mint Lounge, New Indian Express
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Weekly Print: 650,000 circ + Online Mint Lounge is a premium Saturday lifestyle magazine with largely exclusive readers.
Bio Profile: Muck Rack LinkedIn	<p>Teja Lele is an editor and writer based in India, covering travel, architecture, food, and lifestyle.</p> <p>Trained as an architect from MS University in Vadodara, Gujarat, she transitioned to journalism, with bylines in Lonely Planet, BBC Travel, Adventure.com, South China Morning Post, Nikkei Asia, and The New Indian Express.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Within 3 months of the fam
Shooting video/photos?	No
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>I write for a wide mix of families, solo explorers, groups of friends, multigenerational travellers and frequent international visitors, so my stories spotlight experiences that appeal across ages, interests and trip styles.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I'm looking forward to diving into Louisiana's culture through food, music and history, especially local flavors like Cajun and Creole cuisine, live jazz and blues, and immersive experiences. Since I trained as an architect, I will also keep a close eye on the "Castle on the River" - maybe weave that into my story.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>I look for experiences that are distinctive, authentic, and rooted in local culture, whether a meal with a story, a festival with meaning, or a landscape that shapes a community's identity. I also seek fresh angles that surprise everyone - new tourists and seasoned travellers.</i>
Links to stories https://muckrack.com/teja-lele/articles	-https://www.theweek.in/news/tourism/2026/01/19/above-the-clouds-at-mount-titlis.html -https://www.livemint.com/mint-lounge/ideas/travel-sporting-destinations-winter-olympics-commonwealth-games-asian-games-fifa-world-cup-11767878675194.html -https://www.newindianexpress.com/lifestyle/travel/2025/Dec/21/philadelphias-mosaic-magic
Instagram + Facebook	https://www.instagram.com/tejalele/ https://www.facebook.com/teja.lele/
Email Address	tejalele@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	9825166182
Food allergies/restrictions	None

Journalist's Full Name	Amandine Liard
Origin Country:	France
FAMs:	Louisiana's Southern Charm on Tap
Title	Journalist
Publication(s) & Link	Escapade Magazine: https://escapade-mag.fr/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Print Magazine quarterly 35k copies and 120k readers
Bio	<p>As a globetrotting journalist, I love meeting people who are passionate about their region and culture. After writing about slow tourism for various media outlets, I travel the world — from Los Angeles to Port-Louis and Montreal — to uncover the best places and experiences to share with Escapade Magazine readers.</p> <p>Escapade Magazine is a publication that's shaking up travel journalism with a fresh, modern, and often unconventional perspective.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	
Shooting video/photos?	some, for social networks
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>They are curious and inspired travelers, seeking well-planned city breaks, carefully selected addresses, and experiences that make them want to pack their bags. They enjoy being inspired and dreaming as much as possible: they want to be guided, from the best restaurants to the best hotels, with options ranging from affordable to premium favorites. Mostly urban, 25-49 years old, they are frequent travelers — as couples, with friends, families, or solo — who take several trips a year and strive to make the most of each getaway without sacrificing authenticity.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>A meeting with one or more people passionate about their city/neighborhood/country/culture. I also hope to discover experiences truly rooted in the local area: a dish eaten only there, a tradition practiced only there, an activity that tells the story of this part of the country and makes you want to go there specifically, partly for that reason. And if the program allows for some improvisation, through free time, it's often an opportunity to add a little something extra or a fun story.</i>
What makes a great story?	<p><i>A strong local "character": someone who embodies the place, whose voice and passion bring the destination to life. - A differentiating element: an activity, a tradition, an ultra-local detail, something you can only experience there — that gives the story its unique flavor. - Great places to eat, restaurants, accommodation, experiences to enjoy—with different price ranges, so that every reader can find something they like and leave with a list of ideas.</i></p> <p><i>⇒ More specifically, since we highlight several great restaurants and accommodations for the 'City Break' format in Mobile: addresses for our favorites to emphasize. And an experience/historical fact/tradition to feature in a mini "Good to know" section within the article. Similarly, for Louisiana, I will guide the selection based on the trip, the theme, and the experience there, but there will also be some favorite places to highlight.</i></p>

Links to stories	
Instagram + Facebook	https://www.instagram.com/escapade_officiel https://www.facebook.com/EscapadeOfficiel
TikTok	https://www.tiktok.com/@escapade_officiel
Email Address	Amandine.liard@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+33 7 67 47 47 70
Food allergies/restrictions	no spicy dishes, no avocado, no apple (allergy)

Journalist's Full Name	Elena Bittante
Origin Country:	Italy
FAMs:	Louisiana's Southern Charm on Tap
Title	Editor
Publication(s) & Link	Il Fatto Quotidiano: www.ilfattoquotidiano.it
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Digital Newspaper 59M UVM
Bio	<p>Elena Bittante is an Italian journalist and geographer specializing in travel and cultural reporting. As a regular contributor to the travel and lifestyle section of Il Fatto Quotidiano, she explores a wide range of global destinations. Her work spans from exotic locales like Polynesia and Uganda to extensive on-the-road adventures across the United States. From the iconic West Coast and the Wild West to the cinematic landscapes of California, her reporting captures the essence of the "American Dream" and the diverse Gold of the East and West Coasts.</p>  <p>In addition to her role at Il Fatto Quotidiano, Elena is an editor for Què Passa Magazine and has collaborated with travel platforms such as The Lost Avocado.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	May / June 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>A general audience, including readers with a broad interest in travel</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>The priority is to take part in immersive and authentic experiences that provide a meaningful understanding of the destination. Activities that allow for direct engagement with the territory, its heritage, and its people are particularly valuable in order to convey a vivid and well-rounded narrative in the final article.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>Having the opportunity to gain a well-rounded understanding of the local history and culture (for example through museums or live music performances), taking part in outdoor or sports activities that help explore the territory, such as biking or nature excursions, and discovering the local culinary scene. Equally important is the chance to meet and interact with local people, which adds authenticity and depth to the storytelling.</i>
Links to stories	
Instagram + Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/ilfattoquotidiano https://www.instagram.com/ilfattoquotidianoit/
Email Address	elenabittante@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+393389449035
Food allergies/restrictions	Cheese

Journalist's Full Name	Vaneesa Richards
Origin Country:	Australia
FAMs:	Louisiana's Southern Charm on Tap
Title	Co-founder and CEO
Publication(s) & Link	Byrdli: https://www.byrdli.com/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Digital travel content platform
Bio https://au.linkedin.com/in/vanessarichards1	<p>Vanessa brings more than two decades of leadership experience across media, travel and technology, combining editorial storytelling with strategic marketing and digital innovation. She is the CEO of BYRDLI, a tech platform transforming how travel creators turn storytelling into bookable travel experiences. BYRDLI enables creators to build and monetize their own travel businesses through personalized 'Travel Clubs', dynamic, customizable spaces where travel stories become bookable products. From individual hotel stays to bespoke itineraries and personal recommendations, creators design and curate every product to reflect their unique voice, authentic insights and visual storytelling.</p>  <p>What makes BYRDLI different is simple: it turns inspiration into action. A story does not end with a post or an article, it leads directly to a travel product and booking, allowing travelers to move from discovery to checkout in just three clicks. For tourism boards, brands and agencies, BYRDLI provides a full-stack creator marketing solution that sits at the intersection of storytelling, technology and travel distribution, helping destinations connect with creators while linking content directly to measurable travel bookings.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	May 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>My audience is primarily affluent, experience-driven travelers all ages who are interested in culturally rich destinations and curated travel experiences. They tend to favor boutique hotels, design-led stays, culinary experiences, music and cultural heritage, and destinations with a strong sense of place. Many of them are frequent travelers looking for deeper, more immersive travel rather than traditional sightseeing. I am chief curator for creators. For musicians, artists and designers who are high end travel.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>A moment that captures the cultural heartbeat of a place, such as live music in an intimate historic venue, sharing a meal with a local chef, or experiencing the energy of a neighborhood where food, music and culture intersect.</i> <i>Historic streetscapes, vibrant neighborhoods, atmospheric bars and restaurants, boutique hotels, markets, and places where culture and design are highly visible. Locations that feel visually distinctive and authentic to the destination perform best.</i>
Instagram + Facebook	@_vanessarichards @byrd.li
Email Address	vanessa@byrdli.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+61 4168 918 191
Food allergies/restrictions	Peanut allergy

Journalist's Full Name	Cole Dickson
Origin Country:	Australia
FAMs:	Louisiana's Southern Charm on Tap
Title	Content Creator
Publication(s) & Link	@itscoleyboy: 137k followers on Instagram & 1M likes on TikTok
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	IG: https://www.instagram.com/itscoleyboy/ TIKTOK: https://www.tiktok.com/@itscoleyboy www.byrdli.com
Bio	<p>Cole Dickson is a Melbourne-based fashion, lifestyle and travel content creator. With a background as a wildlife scientist and rescuer, he brings a grounded, purpose-driven perspective to his work, combining editorial-style visuals with authentic, in-the-moment storytelling.</p> <p>His approach blends polished, creative execution with a more personal and immersive style, taking his audience through destinations and experiences as they happen. This allows him to showcase accommodation, locations and itineraries in a way that feels both aspirational and accessible.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Stories: April in Market Published Posts: April/May
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>With more than 137K followers on Instagram and over 1M likes on TikTok, Cole has built a highly engaged audience through content that spans fashion, skincare, wellness and travel, all of which consistently perform strongly across platforms.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>Cole regularly partners with brands and destinations to create content that captures the look and feel of a place, while also connecting with audiences through a strong sense of personality and story.</i>
Instagram + TikTok	IG: https://www.instagram.com/itscoleyboy/ TIKTOK: https://www.tiktok.com/@itscoleyboy
Email Address	itscoleyboy@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+61 415 444 398
Food allergies/restrictions	Lactose intolerant




MISSOURI FAM PARTICIPANTS


Jans Nybo


Bryen Dunn

Jacqui Agate

Michelle de Vos

Journalist's Full Name	Jens Henrik Nybo
Origin Country:	Denmark
FAMs:	Kansas City Calling: The Sound, Taste & Spirit of the City of Fountains
Title	Journalist
Publication(s) & Link	Politiken: www.pol.dk Kristeligt Dagblad: www.k.dk
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Daily newspaper - Politiken: 237,000 circ + 1.6million UVM Website - Kristeligt Dagblad: 800,000 UVM
Bio	<p>Jens Henrik Nybo is a Danish travel writer and photographer who, for the past three decades, with passion and curiosity has traveled around the globe capturing interesting aspects from each location in his work - culture, traditions, history, architecture, landscapes, outdoor experiences, etc.</p> <p>His material is published in the major Danish media, targeting all groups and levels of society - nationwide as well as regionally. Jens Henrik has participated in the GMMs previously with great articles as a result.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	unknown
Shooting video/photos?	Photos
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>It is both families, individuals and frequent travellers.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>A full perspective on Kansas City, as well as the city's characteristics when it comes to food, culture, music, sports, neighborhoods and architecture. All in all: This is why you should visit KC</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>What makes the city special and focuses on issues that are rarely found alike in other cities.</i>
Links to Articles	PDFs in online folder
Instagram/Facebook, etc.	N/A
Email Address	jenshenriknybo@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+45 20976055
Food allergies/restrictions	None

Journalist's Full Name	Bryen Dunn
Origin Country:	Canada
FAMs:	Kansas City Calling: The Sound, Taste & Spirit of the City of Fountains
Title	Online Content Editor/Travel Writer
Publication(s) & Link	PinkPlayMags: www.pinkplaymags.com theBUZZ: www.thebuzzmag.ca
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Weekly Magazine (with daily social media updates) 50-100k depending on month, with summer events/festivals/travel increasing readership, winter leaning toward the lower count
Bio	<p>Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist based in Toronto, Canada, and Editor in Chief of PinkPlayMags, an LGBTQ-focused lifestyle magazine covering community, travel, entertainment, and culture. His work focuses on adventure travel, ecotourism, lifestyle, entertainment, and personal profiles, and appears across both trade and consumer publications in digital and print formats.</p> <p>With over 20 years of experience in journalism, Bryen has built an extensive portfolio that includes celebrity interviews with musicians, actors, and other public figures, as well as destination-focused and first-person travel features. His reporting has taken him to destinations across Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe, the Caribbean, the South Pacific, and much of North America, including Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Spring/Summer 2026
Shooting video/photos?	No
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Solo and couples from the LGBTQ+ community, frequent travelers looking for safe and welcoming destinations, typically higher income seeking unique experiences and high-end accommodations, tend to travel a few times a year</i>
Most wants to experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Meet locals and hear their stories -Discover something different and unique to the region -Gain a first-hand knowledge of the area.
What makes a great story:	<i>Unique experiences, off-the-beaten path discoveries, a new attraction/accommodation/business, etc.</i>
Links to Articles	
Instagram	@PinkPlayMags
Facebook	@theBUZZmagazine
Email Address	travelyyz@hotmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	418 838 0744
Food allergies/restrictions	Vegetarian preferred

Journalist's Full Name	Jacqui Agate
Origin Country:	UK
FAMs:	Kansas City Calling: The Sound, Taste & Spirit of the City of Fountains
Title	North America Editor / Freelance Journalist
Publication(s) & Link	Wunderlust Magazine: www.wunderlustmagazine.com
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Print 6x/year + Online + Podcast 236,718 circ & 1.2million UVM
Bio	<p>Jacqui Agate is a journalist, US travel specialist and the North America editor at <i>Wanderlust</i> magazine, the UK's largest and longest-running travel media brand, committed to "authentic, responsible, meaningful travel".</p> <p>Jacqui also writes regular freelance features for newspapers including <i>The Times</i> and <i>The Telegraph</i>. She has a particular passion for the Southern USA and her travels have taken her across all 12 of the Travel South USA member states.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	TBC – Kansas City story linked to FIFA World Cup dates.
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, via iPhone for social
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Wanderlust</i> readers are cultured, frequent international travellers who care about being deeply immersed in a destination and connecting with locals. Their core interests are culture and heritage, the outdoors and wildlife, Indigenous stories and traditions, and history.
Most wants to experience:	<i>I'm interested in experiencing the cultural touchpoints that make Kansas City and Missouri unique. There's a strong hook with the city being a host for FIFA World Cup, so it's about discovering how our readers can dive deeper and really understand the city.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>News hooks are always essential. What's the reason we should be writing about a destination now? An anniversary/major event/new museum or trail opening/new flight route? Next, it's about what's unique or surprising about the destination (eg: I loved N. Alabama's surprising musical history or the fact that Chattanooga has been named America's first national park city). How can this be shaped into an interesting angle on the destination? Finally, I'm looking for narrative drivers and local people to connect with. Which characters can bring the story to life? <i>Wanderlust</i> features are filled with local cooler and voices from diverse perspectives, so this is key.</i>
Links to Articles	-https://www.wanderlustmagazine.com/inspiration/virginias-historic-triangle/ -https://www.wanderlustmagazine.com/inspiration/the-sounds-of-mississippi/ -https://www.wanderlustmagazine.com/inspiration/adventures-in-appalachia-where-to-go-in-west-virginia/
Instagram + Facebook	@wanderlustmag / @jacquiagate
Email Address	jacqui.Agate@wanderlustmagazine.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+44 7498287805
Food allergies/restrictions	Vegetarian

Journalist's Full Name	Michelle de Vos
Origin Country:	Netherlands
FAMs:	Kansas City Calling: The Sound, Taste & Spirit of the City of Fountains
Title	Editor
Publication(s) & Link	Amerika Only: https://amerikaonly.nl/ https://www.pawblish.nl/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Media-kit-Amerika-Only.pdf
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online Magazine 25,000 US travelers/month
Bio	<p>Michelle de Vos is the editor of Amerika Only, a Dutch media platform for travelers who have already visited the United States at least once and are eager to return. Amerika Only inspires its audience daily through its website, newsletter, and social channels, including Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.</p> <p>Beyond her role as editor, Michelle is driven by a personal love for the United States. Her fascination with the country began in childhood, sparked by movies and shows like Gossip Girl and dreams of wandering the streets of New York City. That curiosity evolved into real-life adventures, from exploring the iconic city that first captured her imagination to discovering hidden gems across the country. No two trips to America are ever the same; each journey reveals a new side of the country.</p> <p>Through Amerika Only we combine practical travel knowledge with enthusiasm, inspiring fellow travelers to look beyond the familiar and discover new destinations while also reconnecting them with the places they already love.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	Initial publication in June 2026, with repetitions throughout 2026 and 2027
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<p><i>Our audience consists of men and women of all ages, but they share one important thing: they have already visited the USA. They are familiar with destinations such as New York City, a West Coast road trip, or parts of Florida. Once they have experienced the U.S., they almost always want to return.</i></p> <p><i>We inspire them by revisiting iconic destinations and introducing new places they may not yet have considered.</i></p>
Most want to experience:	<p><i>We are currently working on a project called Cities Beyond the Cup, highlighting all host cities of the upcoming FIFA World Cup. During the tournament, coverage will focus on stadiums and fan zones, but our long-term goal is to show what makes each city worth visiting well beyond the event itself. We aim to help destinations maintain momentum even after the World Cup ends.</i></p> <p><i>Kansas City is one of the host cities, and during this FAM trip we want to experience and document the aspects of the city that resonate most with our readers.</i></p>
What makes a great story:	<i>First, authenticity. As true America enthusiasts ourselves, we only recommend places we genuinely find inspiring and enjoyable.</i>



	<p><i>Second, experiences that are distinctly American and not easily found in Europe. Think of classic diners, general stores, independent coffee shops, historic main streets, and locally owned businesses with character.</i></p> <p><i>If we can capture those elements in Kansas City and its surrounding areas, we can create destination stories that strongly connect with our audience!</i></p>
Links to Articles	<p>https://www.amerikaonly.nl/ybor-city-tampa/ https://www.amerikaonly.nl/oceania-allura/ https://www.amerikaonly.nl/oklahoma-city/</p>
Instagram + Facebook	5,900 Followers on IG 24,000 followers on Facebook
TikTok	“Reach of 100,000 US travelers per month via TikTok”
Email Address	michelle@amerikaonly.nl
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+31 6 53 17 26 03
Food allergies/restrictions	



MISSISSIPPI FAM PARTICIPANTS


Ralf Johnen


Françoise Le Bras


Ilari Santi


Katrina Lobley

Carol Gehlen


Journalist's Full Name	Ilaria Santi
Origin Country:	Italy
FAMs:	Ride & Revel: Coastal Mississippi by Rail
Title	Editor in chief
Publication(s) & Link	SiViaggia.it: www.siviaggia.it
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online Daily 3,000,000 unique visitors/month
Bio	<p>Ilaria Santi is an accomplished journalist and digital strategist with over 20 years of experience in travel media. SiViaggia is Italy's leading editorial travel site. Part of Italiaonline S.p.A., SiViaggia is a cornerstone of Italy's digital landscape.</p> <p>Santi's expertise extends beyond travel writing, with past roles as editor-in-chief for various Virgilio platforms and contributions to GATE magazine. She is also experienced in content creation, social media strategy, and multimedia storytelling. Her passion for travel and storytelling has solidified her position as a trusted voice in Italian travel journalism.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	April 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Travelers, with a strong focus on solo travelers and frequent international explorers who are constantly seeking new and meaningful experiences.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>The FAM trip will likely generate multiple story angles; however, a key focus will be on slow travel, particularly given that the journey itself unfolds by train, allowing for a more immersive and reflective narrative.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>When crafting a compelling destination story, particular attention is given to uncovering lesser-known and unconventional places—whether natural landscapes or cultural sites such as small towns, museums, or distinctive architecture. Additionally, filming locations (where relevant) and authentic, locally rooted experiences play a central role in shaping the narrative.</i>
Links to articles	-https://siviaggia.it/idee-di-viaggio/savannah-georgia/548695/ -https://siviaggia.it/idee-di-viaggio/tour-atlanta-capitale-georgia-usa/188306/ -https://siviaggia.it/posti-incredibili/hotel-grande-gatsby/551099/
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/siviaggia/ - 44k followers + @santiilaria
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/siviaggia.it - 532k followers
Email Address	ilaria.santi@italiaonline.it
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+39.331.604.1251 / +39.347.274.2925
Food allergies/Restrictions	Shrimp

Journalist's Full Name	Carolina Gehlen
Origin Country:	Brazil
FAMs:	Ride & Revel: Coastal Mississippi by Rail
Title	Head of Design, Editor-at-Large
Publication(s) & Link	Exame: www.exame.com & Exame Casual: www.exame.com/casual
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Website (18.5M UVM) & monthly magazine (31,000 circ)
Bio	<p>Exame Magazine is one of Brazil's leading business publications, known for its rigorous analysis of economics, finance, and topics that shape the market. Founded in 1967, it has evolved to also cover technology, innovation, sustainability, and lifestyle. Within this broader editorial scope, Exame Casual is the section dedicated to lifestyle and trends, offering a sophisticated yet accessible look at culture, gastronomy, fashion, travel, and everyday innovation. Carolina is Exame's Head of Design and Editor-at-Large for Exame Casual. She leads the magazine's visual team and contributes special features for Casual. She also writes a monthly culture column and recurring guides to standout coffee shops around the world, blending her passion for design, coffee, and travel while helping readers discover unique experiences in global cities.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	First half of 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>It is a demanding, high-income audience that values curation, context, and meaningful experiences. These readers are interested in gastronomy, travel, shopping, culture, and global trends, always with a strategic and sophisticated perspective.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I aim to transform the journey itself into a narrative, demonstrating that the experience goes beyond simply visiting cities. The goal is to tell interconnected stories through the train journey, where each stop functions as a chapter, revealing different cultural, gastronomic, and human layers of Mississippi. In this way, the route becomes an essential part of the experience, creating rhythm and context so the reader follows the trip as a continuous narrative rather than a simple sequence of destinations.</i>
What makes a great story:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cultural context: understanding the history and transformations that shape the destination today. -People: engaging with local voices who bring authenticity and depth to the narrative. -Sensory experience: translating flavors, sounds, and atmospheres so the reader can "travel" through the story.
Links to articles	-https://exame.com/casual/louisville-o-que-acontece-fora-da-pista-na-151a-edicao-do-kentucky-derby/ -https://exame.com/revista-exame/carolina-do-norte-em-close-up/
Instagram + Facebook	https://www.instagram.com/casualexame/ https://www.facebook.com/Exame/
Email Address	carolina.gehlen@exame.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	5511984117277
Food allergies/restrictions	None

Journalist's Full Name	Ralf Johnen
Origin Country:	Netherlands/Germany <i>Please note: even though I live in the Netherlands, I work for German publications</i>
FAMs:	Ride & Revel: Coastal Mississippi by Rail
Title	Freelance - Journalist, editor, blogger, vlogger
Publication(s) & Link	DPA (German news agency), America Journal, boardingcompleted.me, 360 Grad Medien, ADAC, Marco Polo, DuMont Reisebuchverlag
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	DPA: several million Papers: several hundred thousand Magazines: five digits BoardingCompleted Blog: five digit
Bio	<p>Ralf Johnen is a Netherlands-based travel journalist and author with German-Dutch roots who writes exclusively for German media. After nearly 15 years as a staff writer for Cologne's daily newspaper, he became a full-time freelancer in 2014 and has since contributed to the German news agency dpa as well as leading magazines and newspapers.</p> <p>His travel blog boardingcompleted.me is consistently ranked among Germany's top travel platforms. Johnen has written more than 40 guidebooks on the Netherlands, the United States and other international destinations. In 2025, he received the U.S. Travel Association's "Best Travel Story" for his report on Alabama. His latest book, 66 Stories on Route 66, has just been published.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Second half of 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>A wide variety depending on the publication ranging from frequent US travellers to culinary, individual road trippers, city breakers, shoppers, nature lovers, cultural & music</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>A good train story with a variety of different experiences ranging from culinary to beaches and lovely people</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>Meet interesting characters, make authentic experiences like locals do, have time for individual needs (fotos, video, interviews)</i>
Links to articles	-https://www.sueddeutsche.de/reise/buergerrechte-in-den-usa-the-big-easy-new-orleans-civil-rights-museum-dpa.urn-newsml-dpa-com-20090101-231027-99-727996 -https://www.sueddeutsche.de/reise/musikfestival-so-ungezwungen-geht-es-beim-woodstock-der-blasmusik-zu-dpa.urn-newsml-dpa-com-20090101-250415-930-443069 -https://www.sueddeutsche.de/reise/oestliches-niedersachsen-steinzeit-trip-speerwerfen-wie-homo-heidelbergensis-dpa.urn-newsml-dpa-com-20090101-250810-930-896852
Instagram + Facebook	@boardingcompleted facebook.com/www.boardingcompleted.me
Email Address	ralf@boardingcompleted.me
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+31 6 3445 9488
Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Katrina Lobley
Origin Country:	Australia
FAMs:	Ride & Revel: Coastal Mississippi by Rail
Title	Freelance, contributor
Publication(s) & Link	Sydney Morning Herald's Traveller: https://www.smh.com.au/traveller
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online & Print: Weekly travel section 4 million UVM (digital + print)
Bio	<p>Katrina is an accomplished writer specializing in travel, tourism, culture and the arts, with more than 30 years' experience as a journalist. She began her career at The Sydney Morning Herald. Today her byline appears in leading publications including The Australian (which she represents at GMM), The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, MiNDFOOD, Explore Travel and TIME magazine.</p> <p>Katrina is known for immersive storytelling that blends cultural insight, history and a strong sense of place. Her work has played a key role in introducing Australian audiences to the Southern USA, including nationally syndicated coverage spotlighting Missouri's role in the legacy of Route 66 and features exploring Charleston and South Carolina's lesser-known stories.</p> <p>At The Australian, Katrina focuses on luxury travel, high-end accommodations and fine dining, always seeking distinctive stories and exceptional talent. In 2025, she was recognized with an Ambassador Award at the Travel South Ambassador Awards.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	TBD
Shooting video/photos?	Phone photos *Any supplied hero images should be in landscape (horizontal) format rather than vertical.
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Sophisticated but also budget-conscious — could be solo travellers, couples, families or friends groups. Interested in local flavor: dishes, drinks, culture and character.</i> What does your reader care most about when choosing a destination? <i>A destination that offers authentic local color, presented in a way that feels accessible and worth the investment. Readers appreciate both the aspirational and the practical.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>Local flavors in the broadest sense — distinctive food and drink, music, arts, heritage and characters along the way. The return of the Amtrak service/route is a strong editorial hook and the primary 'why now' angle for the story.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>Quotable characters and access to local knowledge</i>
Links to articles	-https://www.theage.com.au/traveller/inspiration/these-cities-and-towns-should-be-on-your-travel-radar-in-2026-20251104-p5n7pe.html -https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/8951663/beneath-the-dust-surprise-mount-isas-secret-mine-lake-and-fine-dining/ -https://www.smh.com.au/traveller/inspiration/on-a-women-only-trip-in-one-of-the-world-s-most-divisive-countries-20250327-p5ln39.html
Instagram + Facebook	IG @katrinalobley

Email Address	gallerylobley@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+61 412 642 947
Food allergies/restrictions	None

Journalist's Full Name	Françoise Le Bras (pen name is Françoise Surcouf)
Origin Country:	France
FAMs:	Ride & Revel: Coastal Mississippi by Rail
Title	Editor in Chief
Publication(s) & Link	Art(s): arts-mag.fr
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Magazine Bi-Monthly 60,000 circ Audience : 210,000
Bio	<p>Françoise Surcouf Le Bras is a journalist and writer. Editor-in-chief of "Le Magazine des Arts" for five years, she has held the same position at the magazine "Art(s) - d'ici et d'ailleurs" since June 2025. She contributes to numerous publications such as Ouest-France and Challenges (a business magazine) and has published around 20 books with various publishing houses (Seuil, Edilarge/Ouest-France, H.C. Editions).</p> <p>Passionate about art and history, she has a particular fondness for the Middle Ages, the Victorian era, and maritime epic stories.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	July 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Our readers are primarily art and travel enthusiasts eager to discover a destination through its cultural heritage, but also its "intangible" aspects (lifestyle, traditions). They are generally from higher socioeconomic groups.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I would like to discover and share with my readers the culture of the Southern United States and its history (French period, pre- and post-Civil War, development and history in the 20th century etc.), every story that can nourish that purpose.</i>
What makes a great story:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explore museums (historical, artistic) and sources of cultural interest (foundations, etc.). -Discover cities and their must-see attractions. -Discover local traditions (culinary, among others).
Links to articles	https://www.swisstransfer.com/d/2a24d07a-474d-48db-951e-9f4b3ce22df7
Instagram	www.instagram.com/magazine__arts/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/annefrancoise.surcouf
Email Address	surcouff@ymail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+33 6 58 81 93 64
Food allergies/restrictions	No meat





NORTH CAROLINA FAM PARTICIPANTS

Christian Muda


Sebastian Erkens

Elena Barassi

Journalist's Full Name	Christian Muda
Origin Country:	Sweden
FAMs:	Culinary & Culture in North Carolina
Title	Travel Influencer/Writer
Publication(s) & Link	Matochresebloggen.se (blog) Premium Magazine
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Matochresebloggen.se (blog) – 300,000 yearly readers Bi-monthly travel magazine 32,000 readers /issue
Bio	<p>Christian is a travel writer, podcaster, and influencer who has been running one of Sweden's largest high-end travel blogs, matochresebloggen.se, for over 11 years. He shares luxury travel experiences through in-depth articles and engaging reels across his social media channels.</p> <p>Christian is also a regular contributor to the Swedish high-end travel magazine <i>Premium Magazine</i> and is the founder and host of <i>Drömrerespodden</i>, a podcast exploring dream destinations worldwide.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Magazine: October 2026 Website & SoMe: May 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, both
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Couples 30 years+ interested in luxury travel, interesting restaurants, active holidays.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>To explore the culinary capital of Charlotte. Focus on interesting restaurants in North Carolina - and that Guide Michelin is now in the south.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>I always try to find interesting dining spots - that's a reason to travel. Also, really cool bars, secret bars, rooftops etc. Also, hotels that really stand out.</i>
Links to articles	-https://www.matochresebloggen.se/louisville-dromresemaleet-for-en-whiskyfantast/ -https://www.premiummagazine.se/en-veckan-i-den-amerikanska-sodern-otrolig-natur-spännande-mat-och-bourbon/ -https://www.matochresebloggen.se/hotel-zurserhof-i-zurs-femstjarnig-lyx-med-ski-in-ski-out/
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/matochresebloggen.se/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/Matochresebloggen.se/
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/matochresebloggen1
Email Address	christian.muda@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+46707733070
Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Sebastiaan (Bas) Erkens
Origin Country:	Netherlands
FAMs:	Culinary & Culture in North Carolina
Title	Editor
Publication(s) & Link	Foodies Travel www.foodiestravel.nl
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online Magazine 1.5M pageviews/month (700 – 900,000 UVMs)
Bio	<p>Bas Erkens is constantly on the move, discovering the world one bite at a time. As an editor for Foodies Magazine and Foodies Travel, he shares his love for food and travel both at home and abroad. From lobster in Belize and authentic paella in Valencia to yakitori in Japan, Bas is always on the hunt for real flavors, local products and the stories behind them.</p>  <p>Through inspiring travel stories, he takes you to destinations near and far - whether that's foraging with in Ireland, searching for the perfect gorgonzola in Italy or celebrating classic Dutch favorites like liquorice and mussels. Along the way, he also loves creating lists of must-visit restaurants and dishes you'll want to recreate at home.</p> <p>Although his parents loved food, cooking wasn't exactly their strong suit. It wasn't until he moved out on his own - after a long phase of frozen pizzas - that Bas discovered how much better food tastes when you cook it yourself. That curiosity quickly grew into a deep passion for food, travel and storytelling.</p> <p>Bas is always hungry, endlessly curious, and constantly looking for the best hotspots and newest food trends. Combining travel with food is where he feels most at home, and that's exactly what Foodies Travel is all about.</p> <p>He could talk about food all day. Before going to bed, Bas already knows what breakfast will be, and the moment he wakes up he's thinking about lunch or dinner. He dips his chips in salsa but also dances it. And cold pizza? Best breakfast imaginable.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	Summer 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, mostly with phone
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Our readers are mostly foodies, 35+ and are looking for stories about gastronomy and food, combined with tips to explore a certain country or city. It's mostly couples, where 70% of our readers is female. Research shows they have higher incomes and travel multiple times a year.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>I would love to experience the culinary scene of Charlotte. From local street food to fine dining and everything in between. And online article about the best restaurants in the city would work really well, as well a story about why the city is a paradise for foodies when they travel to the US. Besides gastronomy it's always good to see some projects about local produce, for example.</i>

What makes a great story:	<i>I look forward to writing about the city and why foodies should travel to Charlotte. I think the destination has a lot to offer, of course more than just food – which I will include in the story as well. For this I need a good overview of different foodie hotspots (like restaurants and bars), but also some time to explore the city on my own. That's the best way to experience the vibe of the city.</i>
Links to articles	https://www.foodiesmagazine.nl/travel/smaken-van-madeira/ https://www.foodiesmagazine.nl/travel/foodtour-dubai/ https://www.foodiesmagazine.nl/travel/yuzu-in-japan/ https://www.foodiesmagazine.nl/travel/lokale-gerechten-taiwan/
Instagram	@foodiestravel.nl
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/FoodiesMagazine
YouTube	@foodies-magazine
Email Address	berkens@fnl.nl
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+31(0)6-15453920
Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Elena Barassi
Origin Country:	Italy
FAMs:	Culinary & Culture in North Carolina
Title	Freelance travel editor
Publication(s) & Link	GQ Italia: https://www.gqitalia.it
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Monthly Magazine 240K Print Readers + 2.4 UVM + 5.4M Page Views
Bio https://it.linkedin.com/in/barassi-elena www.clippings.me/users/elenabarassi	<p>Elena Barassi is a journalist with over 30 years of experience in communication and journalism, specializing in tourism and lifestyle. She collaborates with <i>Il Giornale</i>, <i>Confidenze</i>, <i>Tu Style</i>, <i>GQ</i>, <i>La Voce di New York</i>, and <i>Il Giornale Viaggio per Voi</i>.</p> <p>In addition to her editorial work, she has extensive experience in event organization and press office management in the corporate sector. An expert in travel and food & wine, she is a board member of the Milan Press Club and a member of GIST.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Within 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>The target audience varies depending on the experiences featured, as the content is developed for a range of publications addressing different readerships: men (such as GQ), women (including F, Natural Style, Io Donna, Confidenze), and families (such as Style Piccoli). The narrative approach is therefore adaptable, shaped each time by the angle and tone most relevant to the specific readership.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>In the case of NC, the interest lies in exploring the local gastronomic scene—ideally through encounters with female chefs—alongside themes of sustainability and green living. Particular attention is also given to art and architecture of note, as well as to hospitality concepts that are thoughtfully integrated into their surrounding environment.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>What defines a strong destination story is, above all, the presence of meaningful narratives—places, people, and experiences that resonate beyond their local context and can connect with an Italian audience. Stories that stand out are those capable of translating a destination into a recognizable and compelling cultural reference, much like the enduring fascination with Amish communities, the architectural legacy of Chicago, or the musical identity of Nashville.</i>
Links to articles	-https://stylux.net/home/louisville-tra-bourbon-gatsby-e-leggende-del-kentucky/ -https://blog.ilgiornale.it/viaggiopervo/2025/04/24/virginia-lelegante-culla-della-storia-americana/ -https://www.iodonna.it/lifestyle/viaggi/2025/11/01/viaggio-a-chicago-lanima-verticale-del-midwest/
Instagram + Facebook	@gqitalia www.instagram.com/elena_barassi
Email Address	elenanibe@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	0039 347 2618800
Food allergies/restrictions	




SOUTH CAROLINA FAM PARTICIPANTS


Christiane Reitshammer


Paulo Basso


Louise Alkjær

Antoinette Paoli

Journalist's Full Name	Louise Alkjær
Origin Country:	Denmark
FAMs:	From Peaks to Palms: Exploring SC from the Mountains to the Sea
Title	Freelance
Publication(s) & Link	Politiken: Politiken.dk Berlingske: b.dk Jyllands-Posten: jyllands-posten.dk
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Daily newspapers with separate travel outlets during the weekend. Politiken: 237,000 + 1.6 million UV/month Berlingske: 213,000 + 207,000 UV/Month Jyllands-Posten: 205,000 + 31,000 UV/Day
Bio	<p>Louise has been deeply fascinated by the American South for decades and feels both fortunate and privileged to have written countless articles about the region as a freelance journalist. She has worked as a writer and freelance journalist since 2003. Her work has taken her from Washington, D.C., through Virginia and further south to Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.</p> <p>She is especially drawn to stories where people share their voices and perspectives on compelling subjects. With a lasting passion for the South's history, literature, food, and culture, she strives to capture the richness and complexity that make the region so distinctive. Her last visit was fall 2024 where she went on a trip to Tennessee and Arkansas.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Within six months (hopefully I will write several articles over the months following the FAM to be published within 2026 and into early 2027)
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, iPhone only
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>The readers are more frequent travellers and solo travelers than families, but overall, I write for readers who are curious, educated, want to go off the beaten path when travelling. They like quirky, but not too weird.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>History, food and nature.</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>Interesting people to quote, extraordinary experiences, stories about food.</i>
Links to articles	PDFs in online folder
Instagram	@Louisealkj
Email Address	Louise_alkjaer@hotmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	0045 27 28 24 76
Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Paolo Basso
Origin Country:	Brazil (he lives in Arkansas)
FAMs:	From Peaks to Palms: Exploring SC from the Mountains to the Sea
Title	Editorial Director
Publication(s) & Link	Rota de Férias: https://rotadeferias.com.br/ MSN Brasil https://www.msn.com/pt-br
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Website 85k (Rota de Ferias) 1m (MSN Brasil)
Bio	<p>Paolo has been a travel journalist for over 20 years and is winner of the IPW Travel Writer Awards in 2023 and the Europa Communication Award in 2014 and 2017. He gained recognition for developing travel guides and special editions for <i>Revista Viaje Mais</i> and is currently co-owner of Agência Entre Aspas and editorial director of <i>Rota de Férias</i>, a digital travel content platform partnered with MSN Brazil. Originally from São Paulo, Brazil, he has been based in Arkansas, USA, for seven years. He has visited more than 50 countries and has been published in some of the most renowned print and digital media outlets in Brazil.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	May/June 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>In general, travelers who have already visited major U.S. cities and are now looking to explore new experiences. My audience for destinations outside the mainstream tourism circuit typically arrives at the website through Google or social media in search of essential information, such as “what to do in Charleston” or “where to stay in Mobile.” In addition, there is strong engagement with content that highlights curiosities and activities that offer an element of surprise. Gastronomy, for example, is always a key driver.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>I am looking to discover inspiring attractions that will help me create detailed content that is still largely unexplored in Portuguese. This approach tends to attract a broader audience and reinforces the fact that few, if any, Brazilian travel platforms offer information on as many U.S. destinations as Rota de Férias. Strong stories related to nature, culture, gastronomy, shopping, lifestyle, and nightlife are fundamental in this regard. Essentially, everything that typically appeals to Brazilian travelers.</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>The key elements are gastronomy, nature (such as beaches or mountains), and culture in general (including shows and museums). Shopping, sports, and nightlife are also important secondary components.</i>
Links to articles	-https://rotadeferias.com.br/louisiana-mississippi-alabama -https://rotadeferias.com.br/guia-de-baton-rouge
Instagram + Facebook	@rotadeferias
Email Address	paulo@agenciaentreaspas.com.br
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+1 (479) 402-7191
Food allergies/Restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Christiane Reitshammer
Origin Country:	Austria
FAMs:	From Peaks to Palms: Exploring SC from the Mountains to the Sea
Title	Freelance
Publication(s) & Link	<i>Tip Exclusive USA</i> (travel trade magazine): www.tip-online.at <i>Reisetipps</i> (consumer travel magazine): www.reisetipps.cc
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Tip monthly / Tip Exclusive USA, once a year, 8,000 circ Reistipps, 2x/year, 55k circ (supplement to newspapers, in doctors' offices, hair salons, cafes, tobacco shops, travel agencies and airport lounges); E-Paper
Bio https://www.textkitchen.at/	<p>Christiane Reitshammer is a freelance journalist born in Salzburg and based in Vienna, Austria. She writes articles and reports on tourism and travel, as well as on culinary topics, health, and art.</p> <p>After attending the University of Vienna, she worked for the Austrian National Press Agency, followed by nine years at the publishing company <i>Profi Reisen Verlag</i>, where she was a full-time writer for the travel trade magazine <i>tip</i> and the travel magazine <i>reisetipps</i>. In 2012, she became a freelance journalist, working for Austrian and German newspapers and magazines. In recent years, she has traveled to various states in the USA. She likes to discover new regions and cities, exploring everyday life, cultural programs, outdoor activities and culinary experiences. Above all, she wants to meet people and tell the stories of their passions in businesses, crafts or community organizations.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Summer/Autumn 2026: 2 articles are confirmed. Further articles in daily newspapers possible.
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>The target group is a mix of families, solo travelers, frequent travelers.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>I like to have a mix of nature and landscapes as well as urban experiences. I enjoy activities in nature (short hikes, bike rides, boat or kayak trips...), visiting studios and museums, culinary experiences, especially producers and craftsmen. I enjoy meeting people who live here, are productive, creative, are involved in social issues, sustainable projects, and can tell me something about their lives and experiences.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>I want to showcase the diversity of a region, write about activities you can do, things you should definitely see, and people who are creative and committed.</i>
Links to articles	-https://www.reisetipps.cc/blog/new-york-state-erntezeit-und-farbenspiel -https://www.reisetipps.cc/blog/aktiv-statt-action-die-redaktion-macht-mit -https://www.textkitchen.at/wenn-mars-und-mond-ein-kind-haetten/
Instagram	www.instagram.com/chris_reitsham
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/tip.magazine + https://www.facebook.com/reisetipps.cc
Email Address	c.reitshammer@textkitchen.at
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+43 676.934.8459
Food allergies/restrictions	None

Journalist's Full Name	Antoinette Paoli
Origin Country:	France
FAMs:	From Peaks to Palms: Exploring SC from the Mountains to the Sea
Title	Freelance journalist & photographer
Publication(s) & Link	Touristica Travel: http://www.touristicainternational.com
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online-Monthly 50k
Bio	<p>Since leaving Paris for the Basque Country, where she settled 30 years ago, a camera and a notebook have always accompanied Antoinette on her hikes and reporting trips, as she meets the women and men who embody the spirit of these regions.</p> <p>Passionate about radio and travel, she has produced numerous reports from behind the microphone, in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Canada. Whatever the medium, her driving force is to be surprised by the diversity of cultures and the creativity of the inhabitants, which she loves to showcase by highlighting their talents, with the aim of taking readers off the beaten path. Her region, nestled between the Atlantic coast and the Pyrenees, perfectly embodies this powerful and unique relationship between nature and its people.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Upper-middle-class people, aged 40 to 70, curious, walkers, nature lovers, heritage enthusiasts, open to the world and different cultures, and those who want to avoid mass tourism.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>I'm looking forward to interesting encounters with nature-specialist guides or various specialists, people invested in their region, that sort of thing. And I hope to be pleasantly surprised by the locals, the local culture, and the landscapes.</i>
What makes a great story?	<p><i>To write about a country or region, and therefore to find inspiration, I look for unique landscapes and natural environments (ecosystems), a rich heritage and history (very old- world European values for Americans), but many people know the Basque Country or have Basque ancestors.</i></p> <p><i>And of course, I look for portraits of women and men who embody a territory (artists, writers, historians, media personalities, chefs, winemakers, artisans, etc.) who have stories to tell and share.</i></p>
Instagram + Facebook	@instapresstrip
Email Address	apress.info64@yahoo.fr
Cell phone/WhatsApp	0033 (0)625 73 29 86
Food allergies/restrictions	



TENNESSEE FAM PARTICIPANTS


Cecilia Padilha

Virginie Garcia


Sebastiaan Klijnen


Kate Cox

Daniela Solito


Journalist's Full Name	Kate Cox
Origin Country:	Australia
FAMs:	Tennessee's Hot Bites, Harmonies, History & Haunted Hills
Title	Head of Travel
Publication(s) & Link	Australian Community Media (Explore Section): https://www.canberratimes.com.au/travel/ https://acm.media/brand/explore/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online & Print Weekly print and daily online 437k weekly print + 389,652 Monthly Page Views
Bio	<p>Kate Cox is Head of Travel for Australian Community Media (ACM), overseeing the Explore travel section, which runs across 15 daily newspapers nationally, as well as travel content across ACM's digital network. ACM represents more than 140 mastheads across Australia, reaching regional and community audiences at scale.</p>  <p>Kate has led national content teams, established content studios and overseen branded and editorial storytelling across print, digital and broadcast. She has also been a regular panelist on Channel 9's The Morning Show and Sunrise, commenting on current affairs and lifestyle topics. A passionate traveler, Kate has visited all seven continents, including completing a year-long lap of Australia with her young family.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	TBD
Shooting video/photos?	Yes ("Would appreciate an overview of what photography and video assets are already available to help plan the visual package.")
Reader/viewer of their story:	<p><i>Explore is the travel brand of Australian Community Media (ACM), Australia's largest independent publisher. Content is distributed across 60+ mastheads and published in print in Explore magazine and Explore Extra, which runs in all 28 ACM newspapers. The audience is broad — couples, solo travellers, families and retirees — but they over-index on travel, tend to stay longer and spend more.</i></p> <p><i>Top-performing topics include train travel, food and dining, local community stories, new destinations and events. International destinations that resonate include Japan, USA, Bali, South Korea, Europe, and off-the-beaten-track picks like Palau, Norfolk Island and the Arctic. Outdoor and adventure content performs well, as do flight and hotel reviews. The audience appreciates first-person pieces, tips and practical advice. They're not budget travellers but respond well to deals and 'hack' stories. Wellness is a growing area of interest.</i></p>
Most want to experience:	<p><i>Open to being guided by Travel South on the best story angles.</i></p> <p><i>Current thinking is a wider wrap story capturing unique experiences, plus a separate food story — food is likely a key motivation for ACM readers visiting the region. Stories may also include a hotel review, flight review or a Hungry Traveller column piece focused on a memorable food moment. Will remain alert to bonus stories: a standout moment, a money-can't-buy experience, a best-of list item.</i></p>

What makes a great story:	<p><i>-Unique places and experiences she can share exclusively with her audience - making them feel the trip and want to go</i></p> <p><i>-Unique people - always great for color, movement and memorable quotes</i></p> <p><i>-A detailed itinerary to research before arrival, plus adequate time to think, absorb and seek out non-mass experiences</i></p>
Links to articles	<p>-https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/9104224/norfolk-island-blends-beauty-and-darkness-with-surprising-impact/</p> <p>-https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/9128088/the-standout-travel-destinations-of-2025-and-where-to-head-in-2026/</p> <p>-https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/9021082/virgin-australias-new-sydney-to-doha-service-a-review/</p>
Instagram	<p>https://www.instagram.com/kate_cox/</p> <p>https://www.instagram.com/exploretravel_au/</p>
Email Address	kate.cox@austcommunitymedia.com.au
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+61 411 422 889
Food allergies/restrictions	


Journalist's Full Name	Cecilia Padilha
Origin Country:	Brazil
FAM:	Tennessee's Hot Bites, Harmonies, History & Haunted Hills
Title	TV Hostess
Publication(s) & Link	Sabor & Arte TV Yes We Cook Prazeres da Mesa Magazine www.prazeresdamesa.com.br
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Sabor & Arte, 53 million viewers Prazeres da Mesa Magazine, 30,000 readers weekly
Bio	<p>Cecília Padilha is a journalist and TV host of the shows “Experimente” and “Drops”, broadcast on Sabor & Arte and Band News TV — one of Brazil’s leading news channels.</p> <p>She has been a contributor for many years to Prazeres da Mesa, the country’s most prestigious gastronomy magazine. Her work focuses on global culinary and travel experiences, as each episode of her program is filmed in a different country.</p> <p>Cecília also manages the social media platform @yeswecook, is a certified professional sommelier by ABS-SP (Associação Brasileira de Sommeliers – São Paulo) and also a chef.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	May 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, both videos and photos
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Upper-middle to high-income travelers who enjoy international travel and are seeking unique, out-of-the-box experiences that surprise, capture attention, and are truly worth the trip. This audience is also highly interested in wine and gastronomy, including fine dining, farm-to-table concepts, and local culinary curiosities.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>Experiences and regional insights that also incorporate gastronomy.</i>
What makes a great story:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -An agenda aligned with potential editorial angles -Experiences that spark curiosity -Gastronomy with a distinctive element or point of difference
Links to Recent Stories	https://www.prazeresdamesa.com.br/kentucky-onde-bourbon-cavalos-e-cultura-correm-soltos/
Instagram + Facebook	@yeswecook @saborearte https://www.facebook.com/mcmariz/
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/@canalsaborearte https://www.youtube.com/@experimenteporceciliapadiil5377
Email Address	cecilia@yeswecook.com.br
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+55 11 99297-3543
Food allergies/restrictions	None

Journalist's Full Name	Virginie Garcia
Origin Country:	France
FAMs:	Tennessee's Hot Bites, Harmonies, History & Haunted Hills
Title	
Publication(s) & Link	YONDER
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Digital webzine daily 70,000
Bio	<p>As a curious and multi-task journalist, I love meeting people who are passionate about their region and culture.</p> <p>I write about high-quality experiences, immersive programs and initiatives that associate travel with local communities. Local figure encounters and in-depth storytelling are essential to travel content rendition and readers' expectations.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Yonder's readership is primarily composed of frequent international travelers who are curious, discerning, and demanding, seeking high-quality experiences rather than standardized ones. They are an urban, predominantly upper-middle-class audience, sensitive to aesthetics, upscale or distinctive hospitality, and emerging cultural and culinary scenes. Our readers travel as couples or solo, sometimes with their families, but with a strong expectation: to discover a destination through unique places, encounters, and a personal editorial approach, far removed from tourist clichés.</i>
Most want to experience:	<p><i>Above all, I hope to experience Tennessee as a sensory and cultural immersion, through what constitutes its core identity: music, of course, but also the places that bring it to life today. In Nashville, I'm particularly eager to discover the energy of legendary venues like the Grand Ole Opry and the Ryman Auditorium, but also to understand how this history continues in more contemporary or intimate spaces. A visit to the Country Music Hall of Fame and the National Museum of African American Music is especially appealing to me for its perspective on musical influences, from gospel to hip-hop.</i></p> <p><i>Beyond institutions, I'm drawn to live experiences: stepping into a honky-tonk on Broadway, discovering a concert in a more intimate venue, or chatting with local musicians to get a feel for the current scene. The contrast with Rugby also intrigues me greatly: the timeless atmosphere of this Victorian town, its stories and legends—especially through nighttime visits—offer powerful, almost cinematic narrative material.</i></p> <p><i>Finally, in Knoxville, I want to explore this "Maker City" identity through its artisans, breweries, and hybrid spaces, where artistic creation, music, and gastronomy seem to converse. The proximity to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park also adds a dimension of respite and landscape that I find essential in a travel narrative content.</i></p>

What makes a great story:	<p>- <i>Evocative and tangible locations: I seek out places that immediately tell a story and possess a strong visual and cultural identity: a legendary concert hall like the Ryman Auditorium, a historically significant site like Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary, or even an artisan's workshop in Knoxville.</i></p> <p>- <i>Encounters with local figures: These exchanges are essential to move beyond a purely descriptive approach. This could be a musician in Nashville or even a historian or guide in Rugby who can recount the village's utopian origins.</i></p>
Links to articles	
Instagram + Facebook	@yonderfr 36.3K followers
Tik Tok	@ynder.fr 2404 Followers
Email Address	viriniegarcia@hotmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+33 676958436
Any food allergies	Cucumber

Journalist's Full Name	Sabastiaan Klijnen
Origin Country:	Antwerp, Belgium
FAMs:	Tennessee's Hot Bites, Harmonies, History & Haunted Hills
Title	Founder aka 'Mr. USA'
Publication(s) & Link	Hey! USA: heyusa.nl
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Multiplatform: print, online, app & streaming approx. 27k UVM + 150k annually (website) + approx. 5k listeners (podcast)
Bio	<p>Sebastiaan Klijnen is the founder of Hey!USA and has over 25 years of experience as a marketer and art director for leading media brands in The Netherlands and Belgium. He turned his passion for traveling to the US and his experience in media into the multiplatform media company that Hey!USA has become today. Sebastiaan's first contact with the USA was New York City, a city he calls his second home. He is passionate about authentic experiences, storytelling, food, culture, the locals, and Hollywood, for movies and television.</p>  <p>Even though he has seen a whole lot of the USA, the Southern states are a big empty gap on his map. He loves American nature but confesses he is not a major hiker—yet he easily walks tens of thousands of steps while visiting the USA's most beautiful cities. As writer of numerous USA destination guides, he's achieved bestselling status. Sebastiaan is also the co-host of the weekly USA podcast 'In Alle Staten' (In All States) with over 75.000 unique and fully finished podcast streams.</p> <p>Travel South Global Week is a major opportunity to connect with all the beautiful Southern destinations in the USA. As the driving force behind Hey!USA, he seeks new content, destinations, and experiences for the potential Best of the South travel guidebook, the Hey!USA app, website, podcasts and video.</p> <p>"We're anticipating publishing a 'Best of the South' travel guidebook in 2028."</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	- podcast episode + social media coverage on FAM and tours + online article about FAM + online article about Mobile
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Primarily new visitors AND returners seeking their next USA trip.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>The true destination, locals, great local businesses, food, history and the overall ambience and experience of the destination.</i>
What makes a great story:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A combo of true classics & hidden gems. Real surprises (that only locals know) -Great conversations with locals, business owners and guides / hosts -The weather gods, a destination is so much better when the weather is great. For photography, video and storytelling. I'm aware that this is impossible to control. -Authentic, true and real experiences. -Stories. History is always one of the key aspects in all our content, as it is important to understand the destination today
Links to Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -https://www.heyusa.com/nl/wild-west-wyoming/ -https://www.heyusa.com/nl/charmant-bradenton-aan-de-golfkust-van-florida/

Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/hey_u.s.a/ https://www.instagram.com/heyusa.nl
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/heyusa.nl
X	https://x.com/heyusa_nl
Email Address	sebastiaan@heyusa.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	32468137155
Food allergies/restrictions	Tomato

Journalist's Full Name	Daniela Solito
Origin Country:	Italy
FAMs:	Tennessee's Hot Bites, Harmonies, History & Haunted Hills
Title	Freelance Journalist
Publication(s) & Link	La Repubblica: Repubblica.it
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online-Daily Newspaper 31.6 million UVM
Bio	<p>Daniela Solito is a freelance Italian journalist and photojournalist primarily recognized for her extensive work within the La Repubblica network.</p> <p>As a key contributor to the newspaper's Milan edition, she serves as an authoritative chronicler of the city's urban evolution, covering everything from major cultural events to the redevelopment of local neighborhoods. Her expertise extends to Repubblica Viaggi, where she writes about international and domestic destinations, blending her storytelling with her own evocative photography.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	May 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, photos
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>A broad and dynamic audience, primarily young travelers, including solo travelers as well as couples and families. The editorial approach is intentionally wide-ranging, designed to resonate with different travel styles and sensibilities.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>The goal of the FAM trip is to capture the true spirit of Nashville, exploring its deep-rooted musical heritage and highlighting key places for country music lovers and beyond. At the same time, the intention is to portray Tennessee through multiple lenses—natural, historical, and cultural—while also incorporating selected gastronomic insights. The result is envisioned as a well-rounded, 360-degree narrative.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>A compelling destination story is built on the ability to uncover and tell the stories that define a place, giving voice to the people who live there and shaping a vivid, almost iconic image of the destination. The ultimate aim is to inspire readers and spark their imagination, leaving them with the desire to experience those places firsthand.</i>
Links to articles	https://www.repubblica.it/viaggi/2026/01/09/news/chicago_tra_musica_arte_e_architettura_la_citta_sul_lago_michigan_che_fa_sognare_gli_italiani-425084741/ https://www.repubblica.it/viaggi/2025/10/13/news/south_dakota_far_west_mount_rushmore_cavallo_pazzo-424896583/
Instagram + Facebook	https://www.instagram.com/larepubblica/ @Repubblica https://www.instagram.com/iamdanielasolito/reels/
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9ePmjVRHLL8x8vq5fOKflg
Email Address	danielasolito4@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+39 340.802.4861
Food allergies/restrictions	No allergies, no intolerances




VIRGINIA FAM PARTICIPANTS


Karen Temple


Namita Gupta

Chris Singh

Journalist's Full Name	Karen Temple
Origin Country:	Canada
FAMs:	America: Made in Virginia
Title	Web Editor
Publication(s) & Link	Ottawa Life Magazine www.ottawalife.com
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Digital magazine + two weekly e-newsletters 3.1M visits annually 365k page views and 95,500 UVM
Bio	<p>Karen Temple is an award-winning graphic designer and the web editor for Ottawa Life Magazine. With extensive experience in print media, she has worked on everything from corporate branding to annual reports and advertising campaigns. She first joined OLM as a layout designer for the print edition before expanding into writing travel features and theatre reviews. Today, she oversees the magazine's website while continuing to share compelling stories from her journeys.</p>  <p>OttawaLife.com/Travel: A long-established Canadian lifestyle and culture publication with a strong digital travel section. Our travel features focus on narrative storytelling, cultural insight, and practical trip-planning value.</p> <p>TravelTrekTour.com: A dedicated travel platform aimed at adventure-minded and globally oriented travelers.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	Stories can be published within one week of the trip and roll out from there. Often, there are multiple stories from one trip! Social media reels are produced by a separate team and follow a week or more after stories are published. Instagram stories will be posted daily during the trip.
Shooting video/photos?	Yes- video for TikTok and Instagram
Reader/viewer of their story:	<p>OttawaLife.com/Travel: OLM readers are primarily Canadian professionals, couples, and families planning mid-range to premium trips. They're interested in culture, food, outdoor experiences, and destinations with a strong sense of place. They value storytelling, insider recommendations, and practical guidance that helps them plan meaningful travel.</p> <p>TravelTrekTour.com audience leans more toward adventure-oriented and frequent international travelers. They're drawn to national parks, road trips, outdoor recreation, and immersive, off-the-beaten-path experiences. They want depth, authenticity, and itineraries that feel personal and discoverable.</p> <p>Across both platforms, our readers are curious, experience-driven travelers who appreciate narrative-rich features paired with useful, actionable information.</p>
Most want to experience:	<p><i>Experiences that help me understand the character of a destination — the things that make it distinct and memorable. That typically includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Signature cultural, historical, or culinary experiences -Opportunities to meet local makers, chefs, artists, or guides -Outdoor or nature-based activities that showcase the landscape -Unique or story-rich locations that help differentiate the destination <p><i>These elements allow me to produce multiple story angles and create content that resonates with both of our readerships.</i></p>

What makes a great story:	<p>1. <i>Authentic storytelling moments: Encounters, conversations, and experiences that reveal the destination’s personality. These details make a story come alive.</i></p> <p>2. <i>Distinctive, place-specific elements: Local food traditions, landscapes, architecture, history, festivals, or community culture — anything that gives readers a sense of discovery.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Practical value for travelers: Clear takeaways: where to stay, what to eat, how to get around, and the best times to visit. Our stories blend narrative with useful guidance so readers can easily plan their own trip.</i></p>
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/ottawalifemag/?hl=en
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/OttawaLifeMagazine
YouTube	YouTube/Ottawalife
X	@ottawalifers
TikTok	TikTok/ottawalife
Email Address	karen@ottawalife.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	
Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Namita Gupta
Origin Country:	Bengaluru, India
FAMs:	America: Made in Virginia
Title	Editor-in-Chief
Publication(s) & Link	Provoke Lifestyle Magazine: https://provokelifestyle.in/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Monthly Magazine + Digital 60k circ + 600k UVM
Bio	<p>Namitha Gupta is a lifestyle journalist and editor with over a decade of experience across leading magazines and newspapers in India. She currently serves as Editor-in-Chief of Provoke Lifestyle Magazine and previously held the role of Editor at Ritz Magazine (2017–2020). Prior to this, she was Lifestyle Editor at the Bengaluru Chronicle of Deccan Chronicle (2011–2017) and worked with MiD DAY, Bangalore as a Senior Correspondent and later Features Editor.</p>  <p>She writes about travel, new restaurant/pub reviews, shopping hubs, fashion trends, beauty, gigs and lifestyle reporting.</p> <p>Profile: LinkedIn Instagram</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	One month after the trip <i>"If content is shared, we can post on our YouTube too."</i>
Shooting video/photos?	Both
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>Luxury travelers and aspirational luxury travelers. Our content is edgy and informative.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>Experiences that are unique to the destination. Adventure.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>Photo friendly places and unique experiences</i>
Links to articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Sixth Sense Unveils A New Era of Immersive Storytelling (Provoke Lifestyle) -Shaping Holistic Luxury (Provoke Lifestyle) -Nostalgia On A Global Plate (Provoke Lifestyle) -Savour The South (Provoke Lifestyle)
Instagram + Facebook	@provokelifestylemagazine @namionthemove
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAgjBEUqz4R906yHummlI9A
Email Address	namitaprovokemag@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+919845513531
Food allergies/restrictions	None

Journalist's Full Name	Chris Singh
Origin Country:	Australia
FAMs:	America: Made in Virginia
Title	Editor-at-Large
Publication(s) & Link	The AU Review: https://www.theaureview.com
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Online Publication 500k UVM
Bio	<p>Chris Singh is Editor-at-Large at <i>The AU Review</i>, one of Australia's leading independent online publications covering travel, music, film, food and culture. The platform publishes daily editorial across travel, entertainment and lifestyle.</p> <p>Chris specializes in travel and hospitality storytelling that highlights the cultural character of destinations. His work often explores the intersection of travel with music, cuisine and the arts, uncovering the venues, neighborhoods and local experiences that define a place. He has a particular interest in historic hotels, emerging restaurant scenes, a destination's strong cultural identity, and the growing influence of wellness travel.</p> 
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, both
Reader/viewer of their story:	<p><i>With a strong split between an Australian readership and Australian expats (mostly in the US), we appeal most strongly to solo travellers, those who travel for food and culture, luxury splurges at the start or end of event-based travel, and creatives who travel frequently for art, food and music events. Our readers care about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Culture. There has to be an in-depth cultural or historical element to tie to, with our readers focused on the arts. -A wellness or restorative angle, could be physical wellness or mental wellness but as long as the experience can bring personal value to visitors. -Quirky. Focused on interesting, "hipster" neighbourhoods and trendy arts districts where creatives have created something original and wholly unique to the destination.
Most want to experience:	<i>I'm trying to incorporate more wellness (both physical and mental) into our travel features, so history, heritage and nature are primary interests. Luxury and historic hotel features perform well for us and we're always interested in the arts/music. Food & drink is of interest only if it's unique to the destination.</i>
What makes a great story:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lesser-known local experiences — culinary and entertainment -Local people, identities and artisans
Instagram + Facebook	Journalist social: IG: @chrissingh @theaureview
Email Address	chris@theaureview.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+61 412 784 903
Food allergies/restrictions	Low salt diet.




WEST VIRGINIA FAM PARTICIPANTS

Qin Xie

Pallavi Pasricha


Randy Mink


Edwin Vrielink

Journalist's Full Name	Pallavi Pasricha
Origin Country:	India
FAMs:	West Virginia's National Parks & Mountain Towns
Title	Freelancer
Publication(s) & Link	I plan to pitch it to: <i>Mint Lounge, India Today Spice, Conde Nast Traveller, Deccan Herald, Elle Gourmet</i> and more
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Pallavi's website: www.pallavipasricha.com
Bio	<p>Pallavi is a travel and food writer with over 18 years of experience in journalism, editing, and content creation. She has visited more than 30 countries. From luxury escapes to hidden gems, she tells stories that celebrate culture and cuisine in leading lifestyle publications such as Condé Nast Traveller, Mint Lounge, The Hindu, India Today, Travel + Leisure, Elle Gourmet, NDTV, Namaste AI, and Outlook Traveller, among others. She has also authored travel guides for Lonely Planet India.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Within 3-6 months of the trip
Shooting video/photos?	Yes (phone)
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>It will be a mix - frequent travellers, the affluent individuals who enjoy travelling and exploring different destinations that are off the beaten path. This also includes adventure enthusiasts. They travel in a group, with friends/family as well as solo.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>New River George - America's Newest National Park - which will be very interesting to explore and write about. The USA is known for its national parks and experiencing a new one will be extremely interesting and different.</i>
What makes a great story:	<i>I enjoy going beyond the usual sightseeing spots to discover something different about the place. Talking to the guide or locals is always helpful to bring a destination or story alive. The way I experience the place after talking to them is completely different. Local food is also key. I always try to eat where locals eat, because food is one of the best ways to truly understand a destination.</i>
Links to recent articles	Charge of the Light Brigade (India Today Spice) Skylines, Shrines & Culinary Rituals in Japan (Global Spa) 5 Places to Eat and Drink in Lisbon (The Gourmet Edit) Worth the Trouble (The Hindu)
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/pallavipasricha/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/pallavi.pasricha.9/
YouTube	https://youtube.com/@pallavipasricha
X	https://x.com/pallavipasricha?s=11
Email Address	Pallavipasricha82@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+91 989.938.3828
Food allergies/restrictions	None

Journalist's Full Name	Qin Xie
Origin Country:	UK
FAMs:	West Virginia's National Parks & Mountain Towns
Title	Freelance
Publication(s) & Link	TBD
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	
Bio Qin's website: qinxie.co.uk	<p>Qin Xie is an experienced writer and editor who specializes in food and travel. She regularly writes for newspapers, websites and magazines both in the UK and internationally. Qin is based in London, but travels frequently for assignments, often spending weeks in a destination to truly get a feel for the place. After studying philosophy and economics at the University of Bristol, Qin went on to train as a journalist at Harlow College, where she gained her NCTJ certificate. Early on in her journalism career, Qin trained as a chef at Leiths School of Food and Wine, which fed into her food writing. Qin also holds the Level 3 Award in Wines and Spirits from the WSET and judged for the International Wine Challenge.</p> <p>She is the co-author of two books. Hunan: A Lifetime of Secrets from Mr Peng's Chinese Kitchen was published by Random House April 2014. It was voted one of the 20 best food books of 2014 by Observer Food Monthly. She also co-authored the Experience London guide for Lonely Planet, published in summer 2022.</p>
Anticipated Date of Story	TBD
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>In general, the readers I write for are affluent, well-travelled and curious. I tend to focus on cities, nature/wildlife, soft adventure, and restaurants. I don't cover family travel. My editors love stories about hidden gems and angles that make you think differently about a well-covered destination.</i>
Most want to experience:	<i>Appalachian Trail aside, I'd love to do some kayaking if that's an option (flatwater rather than white water). Also looking forward to the ghost tour.</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>People who can put the destination into context. Time to explore and take it all in.</i>
Links to recent articles	-https://www.thesun.co.uk/travel/37198594/travel-usa-chicago-city-break-holidays/ -https://www.thesun.co.uk/travel/36460858/mcdonalds-headquarters-global-menu-burger/ -https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/north-america/united-states/houston-direct-flights-underrated-wildlife/
Instagram + Facebook	@qinxiesays
TikTok	https://www.tiktok.com/@qinxiesays
X	https://x.com/qinxiesays
Email Address	qin.xie.work@gmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+44 782.544.6492
Food allergies/restrictions	None



Journalist's Full Name	Randy Mink
Origin Country:	Canada
FAMs:	West Virginia's National Parks & Mountain Towns
Title	Senior Editor
Publication(s) & Link	Canadian World Traveller: https://worldtraveler.travel/
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Magazine + Website Quarterly
Bio	<p>Randy Mink is a veteran American travel journalist and editor with more than 50 years of experience writing about destinations, cultures, and travel experiences around the world. He writes for <i>Canadian World Traveller</i> magazine, contributing three to four feature articles to each quarterly issue—bringing his seasoned perspective to Canadian leisure readers as well as international audiences.</p> <p>Randy's travel industry background spans editorial work, writing itineraries, arranging travel logistics, and even acting as a tour director for both senior and student groups. He has visited more than 70 countries and participated in dozens of cruises, giving him a broad, firsthand foundation for his travel storytelling.</p>
	
Anticipated Date of Story	
Shooting video/photos?	Yes
Reader/viewer of their story:	<p><i>Gender: 58% are female. 87% are 40-65 years old.</i></p> <p><i>Education: 85% are College/University graduates.</i></p> <p><i>Yearly Household Income: 89% make \$100,000+</i></p> <p><i>Travel: 73% take two or more trips per year.</i></p> <p><i>Amount spent per trip: \$3,500 to \$5,000/person.</i></p> <p><i>Preferred trips: discovery, culture, history, gastronomy, shopping & luxury stays.</i></p>
Most want to experience:	<i>History, local culture, popular attractions, local cuisine and drink, local events, popular: towns, cities, countryside, nature.</i>
What makes a great story?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What makes the state different from other states. 2. Hospitality of the locals. 3. Overall ambiance of a state and its unique experiences.
Link to articles	https://worldtraveler.travel/exploring-arizonas-tribal-lands/ https://worldtraveler.travel/discovering-kansas-city-kansas/ https://worldtraveler.travel/cruising-the-loire-river-with-croisieurope/
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/worldtraveler_daily/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/worldtravelerdaily
Email Address	
Cell phone/WhatsApp	
Food allergies/restrictions	

Journalist's Full Name	Edwin Vrielink
Origin Country:	The Netherlands + Belgium
FAMs:	Alabama: A Southern Coastal Retreat
Title	Travel Writer/Substack bi-weekly co-founder
Publication(s) & Link	AmericA Magazine: www.Americamagazine.nl www.journeylism.nl
Media Type + Frequency + Circ	Quarterly Magazine & Daily FB Posts 15k circ. + 40k readership.
Bio	<p>Edwin writes for <i>AmericA Magazine</i>, a Dutch quarterly publication focusing on travel, culture, and society in the United States and Canada. Their articles highlight regional stories, cultural encounters, and the broader context behind places and people across North America. With a strong interest in transatlantic perspectives, their work connects Dutch readers with the realities and nuances of American life beyond stereotypes. By combining narrative detail with historical and cultural insight, Edwin Vrielink contributes to a deeper understanding of the North American experience for a European audience.</p> 
Anticipated Date of Story	Autumn- or Winter-edition 2026
Shooting video/photos?	Yes, for both magazine articles & FB posts
Reader/viewer of their story:	<i>The readers of my stories are frequent travellers to the United States and Canada, most of them couples over the age of 40. They are well travelled and open to new experiences. They are interested in gaining deeper insights into the societies of these countries, and my stories are known for their strong historical context, which encourages readers to explore these destinations further themselves.</i>
Most wants to experience:	<i>The stories I enjoy writing usually have a strong historical background, either rooted in history itself or connected to well-known figures such as musicians. For this reason, I would like to visit homesteads, a civil rights museum, and, if possible, a national park. My first travel book was titled <i>Nature and History</i>.</i>
What makes a great story?	<i>To write a strong destination story, I usually work with about six key topics. For America Magazine, I write multi-page feature stories. I prefer to focus on one central theme that provides a clear narrative thread for the story to develop around. In this new story, I would like to describe the historical development of the area and how it has evolved into what it is today.</i>
Links to articles	
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/americanmagazine
Email Address	Edwin_vrielink@hotmail.com
Cell phone/WhatsApp	+31614305306
Food allergies/restrictions	