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Column: From Owasso to Istanbul

By Kyndall McDorman Contributing Writer Sep 29, 2017



Ever had the urge to get out of town and experience life in a foreign place? Here's a little story about doing just that.

From birth to age 26, I lived in Owasso. My elementary through high school years were spent in Owasso Public Schools, and I lived a content native Owasson lifestyle. I went to Vacation Bible School singing, "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands," got a black eye from a fly ball playing softball for F.O.R., participated in the Owasso Library's Summer Reading program and had a sweet mom who always came up to eat lunch with me whenever Turkey a la King graced the menu.

After high school, I stayed in Owasso working in the pharmacies of Drug Warehouse and Walgreens while I attended NSU. When I completed my degree, I had an opportunity to go to Turkey for a graduate degree. With some hesitation, I moved to Istanbul. That was five years ago. I never expected to stay as long as I have. Time flies.

Turkey is a country deeply rich in history and culture. One can make a trip to the Grand Bazaar to find beautiful hand-woven carpets, piles of fragrant spices, chewy Turkish delight and mesmerizing mosaic lamps galore lining the halls of this enormous, ancient covered market. There are snowy mountains for skiing in the winter, serene Mediterranean and Aegean beaches in the summer and famous sites like Ephesus and Cappadocia. Not to mention, the food is incredible.

Turkey has so much to offer, but its convenient location on the map has afforded me a plethora of travel opportunities. I've been fortunate enough to visit about 30 different countries while living here, which thrills me.

My brothers and I were lucky growing up. My cool dad works for an airline, so my parents took us to places like Mexico and Hawaii from an early age. This must have been where the wanderlust gene in me began to blossom. I remember simple pleasures like going on excursions to Grand Lake for camping. We had the windows down, some snacks from QuikTrip and K95.5 blaring. I'd stare out the window for miles without tiring. The passing fields, houses, people, cars and just evidence of life in general could completely amuse me for hours.

From living outside the U.S., I have been able to continually feed this fascination I have with foreign people and places. Once, I was telling my grandpa how delighted I was to gawk at the passersby in India... a monkey... a tuktuk... an elephant. He said, "I'd be just as happy to sit in my lawn chair with my Coke and watch the trains go by in Talala". To each their own, I guess.

I make sure to come home every summer and around Christmas time. It would be nice if it were more often. Generally, I don't fail to miss a Driller's game, Taco Bueno, the Admiral Twin Drive-In or a trip to the Owasso Christmas Tree Farm during these visits.

While I enjoy my current lifestyle, it's complicated. I have homes in two distant places, Owasso and Istanbul. Because of my family, my heart beats a bit harder for the former and, unfortunately, it's the one I can't spend as much time in.

If you have the desire and opportunity to get out in the world, I'd say hop on that plane tomorrow. It's exciting and the ultimate way to broaden your views about this crazy, beautiful world we live in.

Realize, though, that it's not simple to settle down far away. Don't forget where you came from.