

# Q&A

## CAROL KENDRICK, WELLBEING DIRECTOR, INSIGHT VACATIONS

INTERVIEW BY Natalie Marsh

**Q. How did you start in travel?**

A. I am a retired school principal, but travel is a passion of mine and I do it because I love it, not because I have to do it. This is my 10th year in travel. I've just finished two trips; on one I was the wellbeing director, and on the other I was the travel director. We are discovering people cannot wait to get travelling again.

**Q. Wellbeing directors are a new addition to Insight Vacations' tours. What does the job involve?**

A. The wellbeing director is an added level that makes sure the protocols that have been set up are being followed. In the US, every state does its own thing. Within a state, every city or county can do their own thing. So it can be difficult when you're going to six different places to understand and know what the rules are. Guests meet the wellbeing director and the travel director, and we go through a health questionnaire. In terms of requirements, previously we were accepting either double vaccination or a negative PCR test, but moving forward, everyone travelling with us will need to have been double-jabbed, with their second dose given at least 15 days before the start of the trip. We'll continue to monitor local requirements but expect this policy to be in place until at least December 31 to ensure the experience is as seamless as possible. Everybody gets their temperature taken and uses hand sanitiser as they get on the coach, and the wellbeing director wipes



PICTURE: Shutterstock/Johnny Adolphson

“One couple stood at the edge of the Grand Canyon, where years before they'd planned to come on their honeymoon”



**CAROL'S TOP TIP**

My favourite place is Zion National Park. You're at the bottom of it looking up, so it gives you an entirely different perspective, and there's this silence that is hard to describe. I would definitely recommend it to anyone who hasn't been.

over handrails and overhead bins. If a guest does exhibit symptoms, you now have a person that's dedicated to helping them.

**Q. What did the training involve?**

A. The training is ongoing. There are some overarching things, like administering the thermometer or the testing itself, but then it's about forming a partnership with your travel director and driver. It's important that once we get on site, we spend a couple of moments as a team dividing up the duties. The Travel Corporation [Insight Vacations' parent company] has put us through several training modules too.

**Q. Have you had to leave out certain attractions or activities to comply with Covid safety?**

A. Every time there's something that can't happen, we replace it with something that we can do. There was a rafting trip where they could not guarantee social distancing, so that was something we replaced. In Monument Valley, we had a Navajo come talk to us out in the valley. They cooked tacos and steaks over an open flame mesquite grill. It was fabulous. We ordinarily don't do that, so this is a way that our team worked together and said: "We can't do this, but what can we do?"

**Q. Do you have a favourite tour memory?**

A. I have two. One was of a couple in their 60s or 70s who were standing at the edge of the Grand Canyon and having a moment. When they'd got engaged, they'd planned to

come to the Grand Canyon for their honeymoon but it never happened. Fast-forward all these years and to see them have that moment was great. With the other one, a guest told me he was going to ask his girlfriend to marry him and needed my help to find the most beautiful location. We figured out that the perfect place would be at Bryce Canyon. You stand right on the edge – it's just you and this whole amphitheatre of creation. I got his camera, turned it to video, and then he got down on one knee... **TW**