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High Profile Travel: Life Gets Better When Vacation Looms

It was somewhere between the long stopover in Dubai, the relaxing seaside lunch along the Mediterranean, and the afternoon spent visiting the ancient underground churches of northern Ethiopia that my grand travel dreams were interrupted with the realization that my online trip-planning aptitude wouldn't take me where I needed to go as efficiently as I wanted to get there. Not wanting to give up on our family's ambitious summer adventure but frustrated by the jigsaw puzzle of flights, times, and Visa requirements, I contacted Lynne Voelliger at High Profile Travel in Bettendorf.

Ms. Voelliger began her career as the Director of Destination Sales for Keystone Resort in Colorado prior to moving to the Quad Cities in 1990. She later created a company representing upscale resorts from around the world and developed a team of regional sales managers in key U.S. markets to focus on increasing travel agency business.

"In 2008, I decided to make a change to 'the other side of the desk' and become an accredited agent," Ms. Voelliger explains. "I enrolled in Black Hawk College and earned a certificate in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality." She opened High Profile Travel in 2012 and recently, my husband Jake and two of our three children found ourselves sitting in her office in Bettendorf putting the final touches on our summer plans.

Before contacting Lynne I had never worked with a travel agent, preferring to navigate my own flights and itineraries using a handful of websites, but found that the multi-continent undertaking we were hoping to embark upon necessitated more time and insight than I had. After a short interview with Ms. Voelliger at which Jake and I laid out our hopes, she created several options that fit our budget, timeline, and vision. What followed was a flurry of emails, a few pleasant phone calls and text messages, and another short meeting during which Ms. Voelliger cheerfully put the puzzle pieces together. Soon, we'll be on a journey that will take us from Ethiopia to Barcelona to Monaco with stops in between. Ms. Voelliger skillfully and gracefully helped us plan the adventure, and now the world awaits.

Why Ms. Voelliger loves her job: "Hands down," Ms. Voelliger says when I ask her about her favorite part of her job, "it's meeting new people and making their travel dreams come true." She goes on to explain that because of her long career in travel, she has been "blessed to travel the world." This experience, she says, allows her to "confidently create custom vacations for my clients." Internationally, her favorite destinations include Italy, Israel, and Peru. Within the United States, Ms. Voelliger professes her love for New York. "I could go there every year!"

Why you should check out High Profile Travel: High Profile Travel offers a variety of services to help people plan. In some cases, they handle every detail of a trip from start to finish, and in others, such as ours, the company simply mapped out an itinerary that made the most sense, booked the flights, and helped navigate trip insurance (which is always a good idea when traveling to a developing nation with children).

Last year, Susan Burke joined Ms. Voelliger at High Profile Travel. Reminiscent to Mark Twain's view of the value of travel (it is "fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness"), Ms. Burke believes that leaving one's small corner of the earth can shape who we are as humans: "Our reality centers around our own experiences, so growing up we perceive the world to be similar to what we are experiencing. As we travel and actually see what others across the continent and across the world experience as their reality, then we can truly appreciate what we have and it changes who we are."

The details: High Profile Travel helps would-be vacationers book flights, plan details, organize escorted group tours, and create custom itineraries. Learn more at High Profile Travel's website (highprofiletravel.net) or follow along on Facebook (High Profile Travel). Connect with Lynne directly at 563-949-6178 or lynne@highprofiletravel.net and Susan at 563-940-2592 or susan@highprofiletravel.net.