



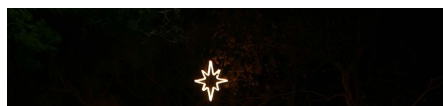
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A TELLURIDE DESTINATION WEDDING DURING COVID-19

 SANDRA BORNSTEIN —
SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

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View of Telluride Valley from Jud Wiebe Trail

Photo by Sandy Bornstein

Before the COVID-19 pandemic restricted social gatherings and turned the hospitality industry upside down, destination weddings successfully paired a bride and groom's romantic celebration with their choice of a dream location. After our youngest son proposed to his girlfriend at **Telluride's Bridal Veil Falls**, the site for their wedding was set. Numerous visits to this remote mountain town left an indelible impression that they were intent on sharing with family and friends. "Save the Date" postcards were mailed. Within no time, guests were making reservations so they could attend the festivities.

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The Marriage Proposal 2019
Photo by Kiki Garthwaite



A few months later, the unexpected and disappointing ramifications of the pandemic displaced the thrill of planning a destination wedding. Our son and his fiancŽ made the difficult decision to postpone their party to the following year but hesitated on choosing when and where they would wed. Time worked in their favor. By mid-June, many popular Colorado destinations were welcoming visitors again. **Telluride** remained their first choice for a mid-July wedding. The abbreviated invitation list included the bride and groomŃs parents, siblings and their partners, and nieces and nephews. Luckily, everyone was healthy, residing in Colorado, and willing to take the road trip.

Even though my husband and I had already

visited **Moab, Utah**, for a handful of days in early June, my anxiety levels spiked as the date drew nearer. Isolated pandemic hotspots were being identified in other states. I had remained healthy while visiting Moab by staying a safe distance from others, washing my hands frequently, and wearing a mask when I was close to other people inside buildings. While I knew that these recommended safety measures had kept me free of illness in Utah, it was impossible to predict what would happen in Telluride.



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*Jordan and Kayla
Exchanging Rings*

Photo by Kiki Garthwaite and Gunnar Auttersen

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*The Wedding Kiss Photo Photo by Kiki Garthwaite and Gunnar
Auttersen*

Hoping that their vows will be renewed during a formal celebration next summer, our son and future daughter-in-law opted for a retro dress code. All family members were asked to wear 70s attire, a throwback to their parents' generation. Our traditional wedding attire will be worn at the 2021 party.

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Bornstein-Garthwaite Wedding (Both Families)

Photo by Kiki Garthwaite and Gunnar Auttersen

Flexibility and patience became the mantra for our time in Telluride. Almost everything we did took longer than anticipated. We had to coordinate five grandchildren's (toddlers and preschoolers) schedules and cope with COVID-19 restrictions while dealing with a series of driving rainstorms. Long lines at carryout restaurants during peak times were the norm, and reservations were required for restaurant dining. When we traveled between the Mountain Village and the town of Telluride, we frequently stood in downpours waiting for the gondola. At the terminals, the cabins were swiftly disinfected between passengers exiting and entering. The occupants of each cabin were restricted to family members, and everyone was required to wear a mask during the entire ride.



View of Bridal Falls

Photo by Sandy Bornstein

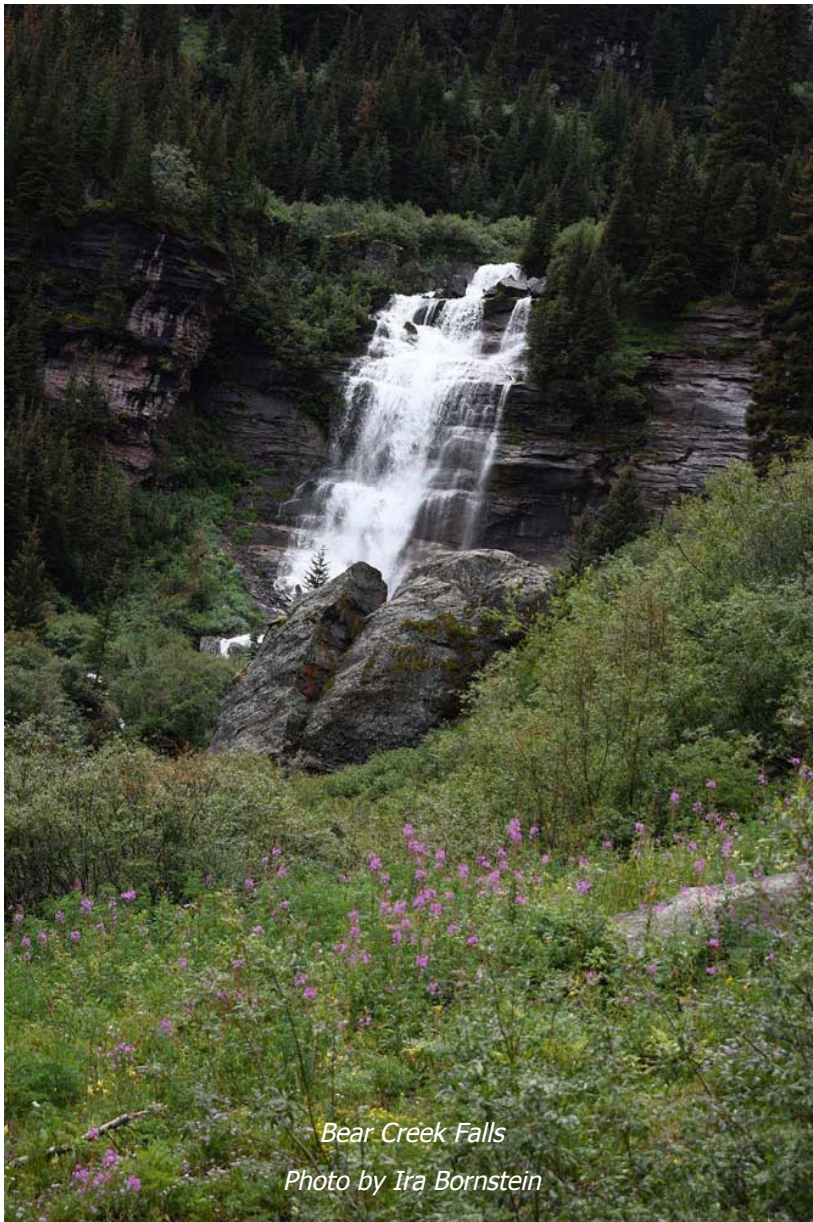
My husband and I used our free time to dine at popular restaurants, sip locally made alcoholic beverages, savor handmade chocolate at [Telluride Truffle](#), learn about the town's mining history, and take memorable hikes.

At the [Telluride Distilling Company Tasting Room](#), we were introduced to two drinks worth consuming. Even though it wasn't wintertime, we tasted a *Chairlift Warmer*, a shot of peppermint schnapps. I also enjoyed a frozen *Peach and Strawberry Mule*, a summertime favorite.



Sandy and Ira Bornstein

Photo by Jordan Bornstein



Bear Creek Falls
Photo by Ira Bornstein

To learn about local history, we followed the visitor guide's walking tour highlighting fourteen designated spots. Strolling along the town's hilly sidewalks prepared us for the treks later in the week. On another day, we toured the **Telluride Historical Museum**.

Our appetites were satisfied by Telluride's diverse culinary options. After a long drive, we enjoyed a Mediterranean inspired dinner at The Village Table. Coffee/tea and breakfast foods were ordered from Ghost Town, The Butcher & the Baker, and the Telluride Coffee Company. Innovative tacos prepared at Taco

Del Gnar were the highlight of our midday options. A reservation at award-winning *Chef Eliza Gaven*'s 221 South Oak introduced us to creative vegetarian cuisine showcased in her recently published cookbook, *Hold the Meat*.

On Thursday, the sun made a rare appearance, so we headed to the *Jud Wiebe trail*. This three-mile steep trail with multiple switchbacks offered panoramic views of the town, the rest of the valley, and the adjacent ski mountain. We were calmed by the soothing sound of running water cascading from waterfalls and running streams.

By midday, overcast skies made us wonder whether a mountain top wedding would be possible. Rain pelted the cable car as it ascended to the San Sophia Station. Luck was on our side. At the top, dark clouds hovered overhead, but raindrops did not fall during the short non-denominational ceremony. This informal atmosphere encouraged our five grandchildren to roam freely while the adults sat in small clusters.

To ensure our safety, our son and daughter-in-law arranged a private party at the eclectic *There* restaurant. Small plates and starters along with alcoholic beverages were served at our tables as we continued the celebration. Music from the 1970s enticed family members to dance.

The next day, we had the honor of hiking with the bride and groom on the Bridal Veil Falls Trail. An earlier storm and a constant drizzle made the steep trek too slippery for me to reach the apex. Our photos capture the waterfall and the majestic terrain. Even though we never reached the spot where our son proposed, we appreciated why they chose Telluride for their wedding.



Waterfall seen while hiking Bear Creek Trail

Photo by Ira Bornstein

For dinner, we dined in outdoor tents set up across the street from the **Cosmopolitan restaurant**. COVID-19 restrictions mandated our seating arrangements.

A grassy area between the white temporary structures allowed our rambunctious grandchildren to play while multicourse dinners were served to the adults.

On our last day, an intermittent heavy rainstorm did not stop us from scampering up the crowded **Bear Creek**

Trail. Days of rain caused an abundance of water to pour down into the rapidly moving river in the tree-lined valley. In awe, we gazed at other natural wonders and were grateful for an uplifting week. Despite the persistent rainstorms and concerns for traveling during a pandemic, both families came together joyously to celebrate a destination wedding in Telluride, Colorado.

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