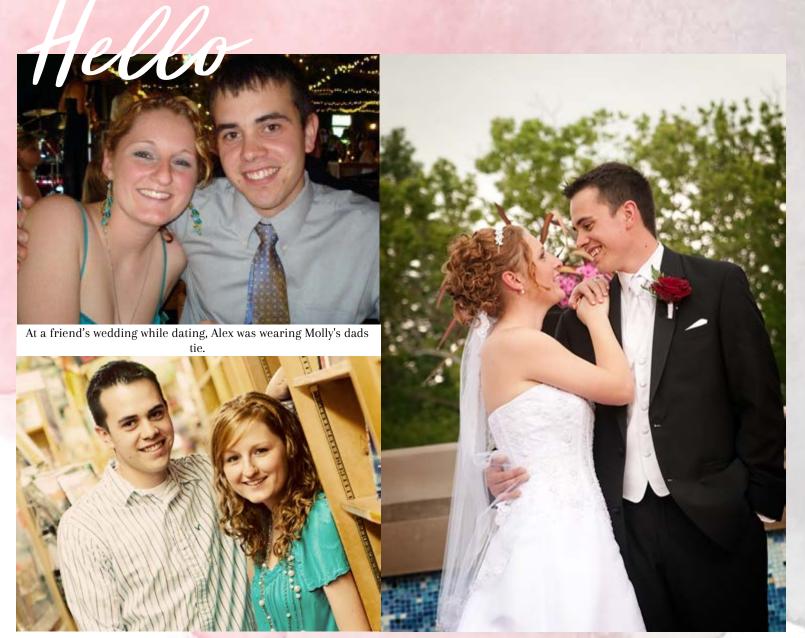


Molly & Alex Welcome To Bur Colventures



Alex proposed at our favorite little bookstore in Columbus on Super We were married on a rainy day two years to the day we started dating.

Bowl Sunday.

We are Molly & Alex and are excited to share our adventures with you.

We met 16 years ago in aisle 14 (the hardware aisle) at the Home Depot. Molly would say that they are together today because SHE asked him out even though he initially said no to watch a "historic" Reds game. We ended up going on our first lunch date at Frisch's, then spent the next 9 months falling deeply in love. Alex romantically proposed at their favorite small bookstore using one of Molly's favorite books, Post Secret, to ask the big question. On a rainy Saturday in June, after a 16-month engagement, we celebrated their marriage surrounded by family and friends.

In the years that have followed a lot has happened. Most importantly we became parents. We have traveled, changed careers and cities, become home owners, rescued pets and continued to put a focus on having a strong relationship through all life has thrown at us. We have also learned to appreciate each other's interests. Molly has become a professional scorekeeper at Reds games and Alex has grown a fondness for going to plays.

Bur Relationship

Our communication has also grown and changed over the years, using middle of the day email's while at work, a composition notebook we write to each other, and face-to-face conversations over the dinner table. No matter the way, the most important part has always been us being open with one another. We have learned that we are very different people, but balance each other well. Molly is not the best with math but Alex is a human calculator and Alex is an analytical thinker while Molly has a more creative mind.

Looking to the future we know we have so much more love to give and look forward to continue growing our family through adoption. Being parents has been the greatest blessing of our lives. We are unable to grow our family biologically. Prior to the adoption of our son Merrick, adoption was already a part of both of our families. Molly's dad was adopted and Alex has cousins who were adopted. Both our families and friends are deeply supportive of our son and along with us look forward to welcoming any future children.

What Molly loves about Alex: His subtle sense of humor, work ethic, his strong family relationships, and how supportive of my dreams he has always been. Since becoming parents I have fallen deeper in love with him, watching him sing to, play with and love on our son. How hard he works both in and out of the home to support our family.

What Alex loves about Molly: Her outgoing personality and her fun-loving nature are what made me fall in love with her initially. Watching her become a mom to our son has taken that love to a whole new level. The affection and love she shows him makes me smile and adore her more every day.



We have laughs over our in-house Browns vs. Bengals football rivalry.



Touring the Colosseum and eating too much pasta while in Rome, Italy.



Eating peanuts on a hot August night at a Reds baseball game.



At the art museum on a weekend trip to Chicago.

Get To Know Molly

I grew up in the Columbus, Ohio area in a Christian/Catholic household. I was blessed to spend so much time with my grandparents growing up. These are some of my fondest memories and really helped shape who I am as an adult. I started playing recreational soccer at 5, went on to play for a Christian college, and won a national championship. I earned my Bachelor of Arts degree and became an art teacher. I loved teaching my students, but after a lot of thought I switched careers and became a nursing aid in a hospital. My mom is a nurse and dad is a retired teacher. Both caregiving and educating came naturally to me, and nursing has allowed me to do both. I went back to school while working, obtained a Master's Degree in nursing, and was inducted into the National Honor Society of Nursing.

My nurturing nature started early, helping care for my younger brother at 9, my soccer teammates in college, rescuing animals my whole life and continued into my nursing career. I am curious about everything and love learning. I continue to take classes, join groups and read books to conitnue my learning. I enjoy expressing myself creatively, from crafts to decorating cupcakes. I try my best to be open-minded, but I am not afraid to speak up and stand up for my loved ones and what I believe in. I am easy-going and have a lot of patience, not too many things get me upset. I show my love by spending quality time with loved ones, giving them thoughtful gifts and gestures, helping them when in need and using my words to encourage them.



Graduating with my Master's Degree in Nursing, Alex supported me every step of the way.



HOBBIES & INTERESTS:

I craft, paint, knit, sew and scrapbook. I enjoy cooking, baking, and learning new recipes. I like to read and listen to books on tape. I play video games and board games. I love music, going to concerts and have a record collection. I like camping, hiking and kayaking. I enjoy snowboarding. I look forward to sharing my many hobbies with our child, and learn what they enjoy doing.

OCCUPATION:

I am a registered nurse. I currently run a clinic in a cardiologist office which has flexible hours and allows me to be home more days a week and not miss out on weekends and holidays. In the past I worked in the ER and ICU. My favorite part of my job is helping and educating people to be their best. I also love that I always get to learn something new.

FAVORITE PLACE:

Honestly it's our home. I love how welcoming it is and that everyone always hangs out here. I enjoy having everyone over for a party or holiday. It just brings me joy to host people in our home. If I had to pick somewhere else I would say Rome, Italy.

FAVORITE TRADITION:

I LOVE Christmas, decorating the tree, watching ALL the movies, making a gingerbread house and decorating sugar cookies with my family. We also play board games/do puzzles as a family after dinner before going to the movies.

At the art museum making Christmas ornaments.

WHAT ALEX SAYS ABOUT MOLLY:

"Molly was meant to be a mom. From the moment I met her she has shown so many motherly qualities. Whether it is caring for her brother when he was younger or watching our two little nephews, Molly has a way with kids that I admire. She has a caring heart and is the most genuine person I know. She always puts others first and I know she will pass that love on to our children."

FAVORITE FAMILY MEMORY:

Learning to cook and bake with my Grandma. I grew up playing in her kitchen, pretending it was a restaurant, and as I grew she taught

me everything she knew about cooking and baking. To this day, cooking/baking is one of my favorite ways to show love to others.

FAVORITE CHILDRENS BOOK:

The Velveteen Rabbit. My Grandma read it to me as a child during sleepovers and I always wished that my stuffed dog Ozzy would be real someday like the rabbit.

WHAT I AM MOST EXCITED TO SHARE WITH OUR CHILDREN:

So many things! But if I had to pick one, it would be doing crafts/projects/baking. I want to make things with them, get messy, paint, and glue, do experiments, make Rice Krispies Treats and so much more. I am also excited to find out what they are into and learn about what gives them passion.





Ocean kayaking in California. Playing frisbee golf with my mom and Ryan while on a camping trip.





On a hike with Merrick in a National Park. He enjoyed it so much he fell asleep.



Exhausted and sweaty, hiking in Hot Spring National Park, Arkansas with my friend Krysti.



Dressed all silly with my mom, Alex's mom and friend Ryan for a fundraiser downtown.



Sharing my love of baking with Merrick, he's a good helper with stirring.

Sharing some laughs with family while decorating Christmas cookies.

Cill Cibout Cilex

I was born and have spent most of my life here in Cincinnati. I was raised by two loving parents who always had my best interest. I attended Catholic school from kindergarten through high school. As a child, I was extremely close with my siblings, particularly my brother Nick who is three years younger. I also have a younger sister Abby. After graduating high school I decided to move away for college, but not too far and attended Ohio State. I enjoyed my time in Columbus, but couldn't wait to get back home. After spending nine total years in Columbus, graduating from Ohio State and meeting Molly, I was fortunate enough to get to move back home to pursue a career.

I would describe myself as an extremely hard worker and somebody who is willing to help others. I am always looking out for my family and those I love. I consider myself a thoughtful person, particularly when it comes to my family. From a young age, I always had a love for sports. Whether it was baseball, basketball, football or soccer I enjoyed playing and watching all different types of sports. That is something I am excited to pass on. I am a glass half full type of person and always look at the bright side of things. I am an extremely loyal person, especially to my family and will always have their back. I enjoy making people laugh and can be funny in subtle ways with people once I know them. I am not the most outgoing person, but once I get to know someone I become more comfortable and outgoing.



Sharing my love for the Reds with Merrick



At the Bengals vs Browns game with my brother Nick, our nephews and Molly's Dad.

At my first game in Yankee stadium in NYC with my brother Nick.

At the end of a half marathon after convincing my friend Rufus to run with me.

WHAT MOLLY SAYS ABOUT ALEX:

"Watching Alex get to be a Dad has been amazing. He is an incredible father. He gets down on the floor and plays with Merrick, he loves on him and is patient with him. He is such an involved parent from feedings in the middle of the night, diaper changes, and going to all the doctors appointments with me. I am excited at the chance of him parenting another child as I know it is something he is passionate about."

FAVORITE FAMILY MEMORY:

Vacationing to Myrtle Beach. My mom is one of eight kids and I have 20 cousins who all went on vacation the same week every June. That was something I always looked forward to as a kid.

FAVORITE CHILDRENS BOOK:

Green Eggs and Ham. I not only liked the book, but my grandpa used to make us green eggs and ham for breakfast sometimes when I would stay the night there as a kid and it always brings back fond memories.

WHAT I AM MOST EXCITED TO SHARE WITH OUR CHILDREN:

Sharing my love for sports with our children. I have always played sports and gone to sporting events. I want to take our children to sporting events and also toss in the yard and pass on my love for sports.

Dressed up as the Baby Shark Family for Halloween and heading out to get some candy.



Enjoying the waves with Merrick in Belize.

HOBBIES & INTERESTS:

I enjoy exercising and running. I love reading books, particularly about history and sports. Going to sporting events is definitely one of my favorite things to do. Whether it is baseball, basketball, football or soccer, I love live entertainment and I hope to share that with our children.

OCCUPATION:

I work for Procter & Gamble at a Chemical Plant. We make liquid laundry detergent like Tide and Gain. I manage our laboratory and enjoy teaching our new employees what I know.

FAVORITE PLACE:

New York City. I went there a few years ago and the amount of things to do amazed me. The variety, whether it is with the food or the different cultures made me love New York City more than any other place I have been.

FAVORITE TRADITION:

Carving pumpkins every Halloween with family. Molly always has a much more detailed pumpkin than me, but I love our yearly activity. During Halloween we also dress up in costumes, have family over for dinner and hand out candy.



I enjoy taking our nephews to sports games and am excited to take our children when they are a little older.



Doing our annual pumpkin carving together as a family.



Family is important to me. I even get to travel with them sometimes. Eating a meal together in China with cousins from both sides of my family.



These guys have been my best friends for over 30+ years, we have a group chat to keep in touch since two live out of town. We hang out with Dan and his family often since they are in Cincinnati.

Bur Livez Since Becoming Parents

Life since Merrick joined our family has been the most fun! He is a year and half old and is such a happy, loving and smart boy. Becoming parents has been the most rewarding experience of our lives. We are both honored and humbled that we have the opportunity to love, teach, nurture and raise this child. But we still have so much more love to give. We look forward to the opportunity to parent another child and to giving Merrick the chance to be a big brother.

Currently Merrick does not go to any child care, he is taken care of at home by our families and this would continue to be the plan with any other children moving forward. A typical week for Merrick includes Monday spending the day with Alex's parents, Tuesdays and Thursdays with Molly, Wednesdays with Molly's parents and Fridays with Alex. We spend the weekends together as a family, are all together for dinner each night and we are off on holidays with no on call.

We have been super busy on adventures with him and look forward to sharing these and many more adventures with another child. Here is just a sample of what we have been up to:

Starting his National Park Journey, he has been to 2, caving, hiking, he has been to 9 states and 4 countries, camping with his Godmother, swimming in the Atlantic Ocean at Hilton Head Beach, SC. Reds opening day parade and games, visiting grandmas horse Beamer. Trips to the zoo, aquarium, children's museum, splash pads, different parks, Kings Island, pools, library trips for story time, family walks and his first 5K downtown. Playing with his cousins Leo and Austin who can't get enough of him. He goes to music class once a week, swim lessons and we go the YMCA to swim. Playing with grandparents, aunts and uncles who are very involved in his life. Play dates with friends. Celebrating all of the holidays and starting new traditions including hayrides, pumpkin and apple picking, carving pumpkins, trick or treating, Easter egg hunts and meeting Santa. Also doing crafts and anything to do with music.



Visiting the Hot Springs National Park in Arkansas.

Out to lunch with Grandma and YiaYia.





Hiking in Mammoth Cave National Park

On his first trip caving

In Hilton Head SC with Yiayia, Papou and cousins



Making silly faces wtih Grandpa while eating Skyline

Rolling around playing wtih cousins Leo and Austin



Many laughs on Merrick's first cruise

Exploring the beaches of Honduras wth Grandma

Meeting Santa for the first time aka Uncle John









On his first me<mark>rry-go-round at Kings</mark> Island

Visiting Grandmas horse Beamer

Cooking dinner wtih Dad



Trying out new foods with Aunt Abby and Uncle Dakota

On a walk in one of the many area parks.



Learning to ride his first bike wtih Uncle John

Watching his cousins football game

Playing music with Grandma





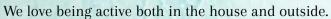


Painting Thanksgiving crafts with Krysti

Playing video games with Leo

Spending a sunny day at the Zoo

Pumpkin Picking









Reading a book with Dad

We love getting out to see Christmas Lights

Seeing the trains at Krohn's Conservatory with Yiayia and Leo





Down on the field at the Red's stadium Sharing laughs with Aunt Abby at Easter Getting cuddles from Uncle John and Aunt Leah

Playing wtih Aunt Leah



Swim Lessons



Meeting mascots at a game



Playing in fountains downtown



On a family walk with the dogs

Seeing holiday displays with Uncle Nick and cousins

Playtime with Grandpa





"Running" his first 5K race downtown

Playing basketball with Ryan

Visiting the Art Museum with Grandparents

Fun with playdough

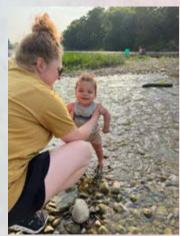
Apple picking



He is always in the ballpit



Cuddling with Papou after playing at the park



Playing in the creek At the aquarium







Bur Founily

We think our family is pretty awesome. Despite coming from two separate families, our parents have become friends. We all go on cruises together and became one large family over the years. We live 4 miles from both of our parents. Our families and friends all hang out with each other, even without us around. It has been amazing, always having the support of so many people who love us and are supportive of our family growing through adoption.

Alex is the oldest of three siblings, his brother Nick in Cincinnati (sons Leo and Austin) and sister Abby in California (husband Dakota). His parents are Dean and Kathi or YiaYia and Papou, Greek for Grandma and Grandpa. Alex has always been close with his family and has a large extended family, consisting of over 20 cousins. Some of them are adopted. Growing up he spent every Sunday at his grandparents' house with dozens of cousins, who were more like siblings. Family has always been important, and the cousins still make time to get together with their own children. When his family is together it is often revolving around a sporting event, even traveling together to games out of town.



Alex's side all dressed up at Abby's Wedding. From Left to Right: Nick, Austin, Dean, Kathi, Dakota, Abby, Leo and Us.





Joann (Molly's mom, left) and Kathi (Alex's mom, right) enjoying some laughs before touring a museum in Mexico.



Us with our parents boarding a bus to head to a beach in Mexico.

We love spending time with both our dads, Dean (Alex's dad, left) and Doug (Molly's dad, right) are such goofballs when they get together. Both are handy and always willing to help out.





There are always laughs when hanging out with Aunt Abby, Leo and Austin.



Both of our families together for lunch at the Art Museum following Merrick's Adoption.



Austin, Merrick and Leo enjoying lunch at the Hibachi Grill.



Our family spending time at Kings Island with YiaYia, Papou and Grandma.



Molly's side feeling festive at Christmas. From Left to Right: John, Leah, Doug, Joann, Alex, Merrick, Molly

Molly grew up as the older sister to John with her parents Doug and Joann or Grandma and Grandpa. John lives with his Fiancé Leah in Columbus. Her dads side of the family is small and see each other on holidays. Her mom's side of the family is a little bigger but is spread out all over the country. They have zoom calls where they cook together and share stories. When her family gets together there are often movies or games being played with cooking and a lot of goofing off and laughs.

Merrick has two older cousins, Leo and Austin whom he loves. Despite their age difference they all enjoy spending time playing together.

Dean and Kathi's words to a new grandchild: "We are YiaYia and Papou and we are eagerly looking forward to meeting you. We can't wait to embrace you and love you. We will be here to spoil you, teach you, fill in when needed, have fun and laugh with you. We will try to spend all our time with you."

Doug and Joann's words about Molly and Alex: "We have been watching Molly and Alex on this journey for the past several years. They are more ready than anyone to take this big step and adopt another child. My sister and I were both adopted and I know from my parents what it took to take on this huge

responsibility. Joann and I both know that these two are ready and waiting for a chance to change the life of another and make it the best they can. We are happily awaiting a new member of the family."

Friends, Bur Other Family

Many of our friends are from our childhood, some for over 30 years, others are from college, sports teams, neighbors and newer friends from work. These relationships are very important to us, many have children who we have built relationships with. Several of our friends are as good as members of our family, they come to family events and have relationships with both sides of our family. We enjoy the fun times we have with our friends and their families but the most important part is the support we give and receive. All of them love and support our son and are supportive of us in growing our family though adoption.



On a double date downtown, with Josh and Kelly. We used to be neighbors and developed a close relationship with them and their four kids. We spend time with them hanging out and having a lot of laughs.



Alex has been friends with Dan for over 30 years and I love his wife Brittany. She is so funny. We love hanging out with them and their three kids. We go to a lot of sporting events with them.



Enjoying a Reds game with Kianna and Nick, Molly met Kianna though work. We have play dates with their young daughter.



Hiking in the Smoky Mountains with Molly's mom and Ryan. Molly has been friends with Ryan for over 25 years and he is another brother to her. He will be such a fun uncle to our child and is so excited to meet them.



Krysti and Molly were each other's Maid of Honor in their weddings. Krysti and her husband Matt live in Arkansas and we enjoy all kinds of outdoor adventures when we visit. Sometimes we meet in different cities in-between for weekend adventures. This was on a camping trip with Merrick to Mammoth Cave National Park.



At the NCAA basketball tournament with our friends Rufus and Ryan. Alex and Rufus met at work and had a quick bond over their love of sports.



Alex is still friends with many of the people from his freshman dorm floor in college. We meet up with the ones who live in town and their families for different events, like Red's opening day.



Some of our friends we hang out with the most are actually family. Siblings and cousins. We have fun for whatever the reason we are together. It's always a great time, whether it is a birthday, shower, sporting event, or just because it's been too long.



Molly has several great mom friends, Michelle is introducing her young daughter to Merrick and Abbey has two young boys. Well all get together with our children.



Kianna's daughter Gabby is Merrick's best friend, their favorite is going to the aquarium or the zoo together.

We enjoy spending time in our yard and decorating our house for Halloween and Christmas.



Penny (left) and Athena (right) sitting for a treat in the yard after 100 attempts to get them together in a photo.



Our basement is our favorite place to hang out, play video and board games, and watch TV with loved ones.



Merrick playing in a play set with Grandpa in the living room. We love having enough room to get energy out in the house even when the weathers bad outside.

Bur Home &

We recently moved to a new house in a large neighborhood full of young families with children. Our house is on a peaceful court where all the neighbors get together and grill out. We have a large yard and a small area of woods behind our home which is great for seeing wildlife and exploring. We are excited about all the room our house has for playing both inside and out, cooking and having loved ones over.

We love having family and friends in our home. We host different events, from large holiday parties for Christmas and Thanksgiving to friends and family over to watch sports or play board games. We also have friends and family that visit from out of town. We look forward to the birthday parties, troop meetings, sleep overs and other events that having a children will bring to this home.

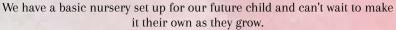
We are happy to be able to have a loft space in our house just for kids to play pretend, be creative and make a mess.

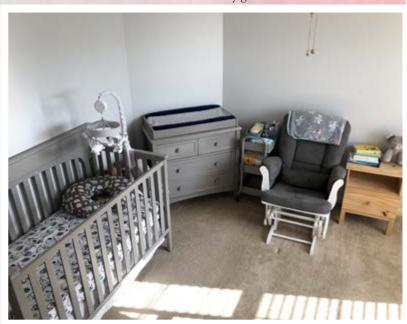


Community

We have four animals in our house. Our dogs Penny and Athena are always excited to play with Merrick but are equally happy to take a nap. They are very loving, like to cuddle and be involved in what everyone else is doing. Our cats Bella and Bo are siblings and are shy around others until they get to know them.

We live about 20 minutes from downtown Cincinnati, which we go to often. We frequent sporting events, Findlay Market, the zoo, museums and other events downtown. We live close to many different parks, offering bike paths, hiking, fishing, kayaking, and even camping. We live near a branch of the library and get involved in their programs.







One of Alex's favorite spots in the house. We both enjoy reading and have been growing our children's book collection and reading to Merrick daily.



Bo (left) and Bella (right) are siblings but are so different, Bo is more vocal and Bella is the cuddly type.



Our kitchen is always a gathering place for our family. Celebrating Alex's Dads birthday with both our families.



Merrick, Leo and Austin playing with chalk in the driveway. We have lots of room outside to do different activities.

Traditions & Cativities

Our traditions are very important to us, the biggest are surrounding holidays. We enjoy spending time with family and keeping traditions alive. We have made new ones since coming together as a family. Whether it is decorating Christmas cookies, carving pumpkins or watching fireworks, we love all the traditions that revolve around the holidays. We have other family traditions too, like the Reds Opening Day Parade, and an annual trip to the Gatlinburg area. We look forward to including our children in our current traditions and making new ones.



We love supporting each other's passions. Alex ran his first marathon and Molly was so proud of him, she made funny signs and rang a cowbell to cheer him on from start to finish.



Enjoying a warm afternoon kayaking and swimming after a picnic at Brookville Lake in Indiana.



Trying to get to all the different parks around the area.



We pick our own pumpkin each year and year they had sunflowers too!



Enjoying Merrick's 1st Reds Opening Day Parade.



At the Cincinnati Zoo lights, excited for the magical train ride.



At one of the biggest UC basketball games of the year, the Crosstown Shootout with Alex's dad, brother Nick and two cousins, Adrian and Triffon.



Having a blast with our moms and Ryan at a fun run. We enjoy doing them together even if Alex is the more serious runner of the group.



We had so much fun hunting for Easter Eggs and look forward to bigger egg hunts.

OMING NEXT



Molly's parents were in town for the weekend and we all went to see a Christmas Carol at the Playhouse in the Park.

we can, we love playing in the sand. Merrick in Mexico.

We enjoy many different activities from exploring our city to a night in with games and movies. We frequent many sporting events, FC Cincinnati soccer, UC basketball and football, Reds baseball games and the occasional OSU football, Bengals or Browns game. We also go to different events held downtown, including plays, Findlay Market, the opera, museums, fairs and festivals. We make a point to try new restaurants around town. We also have memberships to the Zoo and Kings Island. We spend time at many of the local parks and also ones further away. We kayak, ride bikes, camp and swim. We are excited to share all of these experiences and more with our children.



Molly and Alex's families together at Christmas working on our annual puzzle.



Molly and Kathi enjoy going to musicals together, they make a whole evening of it and get dinner somewhere new beforehand.

Trowel

One of our greatest shared passions is traveling. Learning about different places, cultures, and people and trying new food is something both of us enjoy. We never traveled the world until we got married then we started with Italy, Greece and Croatia. Molly loved all the art in Italy and Alex enjoyed the history. Greece was extra special because Alex is half Greek. As the years have passed, we have been to China twice, walking on the Great Wall was really a wonder. We have also been to Thailand which had some of the best beaches in the world. We have been around the Caribbean on cruises to Jamaica, Belize, Honduras, Mexico, Dominican Republic and others. We have also been working our way around to all 50 states and would like to visit all the National Parks. No matter where we have gone we have loved embracing other cultures and opening our minds. We are excited to share this love of travel with our children. Merrick has already been to 2 national parks, 9 states and 4 countries with more trips planned.



Exploring the history of Ayutthaya, Thailand that was founded in 1351. We both enjoyed learning the history and culture here.



Athens, Greece was a highlight of our Honeymoon. We got to visit the Acropolis which was one of Molly's favorites because she grew up loving the stories about the Greek Gods.



According to legend, tossing one coin into the Trevi Fountain means you'll return to Rome someday. We tossed our coins and hope to bring our child here some day and eat pizza at a nearby cafe.



In Belize we had an adventure through the rainforest. We went ziplining and caving or spelunking.



One of the most impressive things we have done was walk on the Great Wall of China. Its 2,300 years old and was as far as we could see into the mountains. All the time we have spent in China changed our lives.



Taking in the spectacular sunset view from the top of Willis Tower in Chicago.



Venice, Italy was such a magical city. We went on a romantic gondola ride.



Enjoying a nap in the shade with Merrick at the beach in Honduras.



Molly and her Dad messing around at Universal Studios in Orlando.

These two are always trying to make others laugh.



Checking out the hot springs at Hot Springs National Park in Arkansas.



An afternoon swimming and snorkeling off the Cayman Islands with Alex's parents and sting rays.



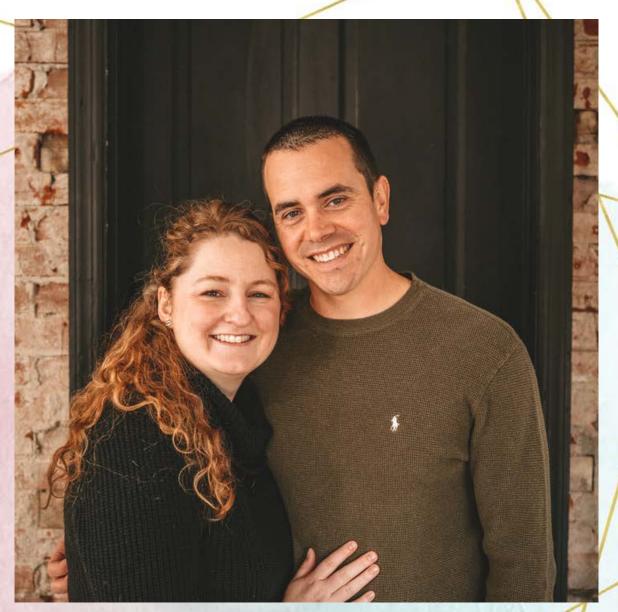
Alex excitedly eating some authentic Jerk chicken in Jamaica after a day of ziplining and bobsled riding.



In the middle of the Gulf of Mexico on a cruise. We decided to have a chess battle with all of our parents before going to the comedy club.



We went hiking and caving at Merrick's first national park. We are excited to get to as many in the country that we can.



Thouk You

Thank you for taking the time to get to know us and our adventures a little bit. We hope you agree in some way to share in this journey with us. We believe that giving our child a connection to where they came from will give them certainty that they were loved from the earliest moments of their life.

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