



Mamas

on

the

Move

Two fabulous, fearless, limitless women committed to seeing the world are making global travel a family affair

By Metanoya Z. Webb

Monet Hambrick and husband James, on an adventure with daughters Jordyn and Kennedy

COURTESY OF THE TRAVELLING CHILD

Black mothers travel. We go. Consistently. Locally and globally. Solo, or with our partners or with our girls. But over the past several years, it's families that have led a new wave for Black travelers—and moms are at the helm of that movement. Not only are we going, but we're bringing our beautiful Brown babies on these cross-continental journeys with us, documenting our experiences so that more Black mothers are empowered to do the same.

"We go places that people don't typically consider for family travel," says **Monet Hambrick**, 35, of Miami. She is the creator of The Traveling Child, a social and digital platform that provides trip-planning tips and educational destination spotlights. She and her husband, James, have two daughters—Jordyn, 9, and Kennedy, 7—who've already trekked with their parents to places like Egypt and Brazil. The family is set to travel to Senegal and the Gambia this summer. "We love to get out there and really experience culture," Hambrick continues. "We went to Jordan last year for the girls' spring break and met with the Bedouin tribes. They taught us how to make bread in the ground."

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—Monet Hambrick

New York City native **Jessica Kameko Rooks**, 27, known on social media as Travel With Meko, can relate. She and her kids, Amiyah, 7, and Camren, 4, have traveled to 32 countries together. Rooks decided to pursue a life of globe-trotting after suffering from postpartum depression following the birth of her daughter in 2015. "Motherhood came with so many changes," she recalls. Needing a break, she traveled solo to Costa Rica. "I faced all of my fears on that trip," she says. "I went zip-lining by myself—and I'm terrified of heights. I tried scuba diving, and now I'm an advanced certified scuba diver."

Once she returned from Costa Rica, Rooks had an epiphany. *Why can't I do this with my kids?* she thought. "After I took that trip, I was like, *They're free until they're 2, so let me see how many places we can go to,*" she says. "And after that, we just kind of got the travel bug." Some tried to convince Rooks that seeing the world with little ones would be too difficult. "A lot of people would tell me, 'Oh, your life is over after you have kids,'" she says. "I was just like, 'No. Why do I have to put myself in a box?' Yes, I am a mother, but I live by the motto 'Motherhood without limits.'"

Hambrick states that journeying with her children has unlocked a whole new world for all family members. "I love what travel has taught us and the way we've connected with people through it," she says. "Being able to get out there, and not having any limitations, has really provided amazing experiences for us all."

COURTESY OF JESSICA KAMEKO ROOKS

Getaway Game Plan

Hambrick and Rooks offer tips on how to pull off an affordable, fun trip with your kids



BE FLEXIBLE

Hambrick notes that flexibility helps you save money: "All of our travel is based on flight deals. Let deals dictate where you go."

VISIT PLACES WHERE THE U.S. DOLLAR GOES FAR

"It's strong in Southeast Asia and places in Central and South America, so your expenses won't be as high," says Hambrick. "You can find affordable food and accommodations."

START SMALL

Hambrick cautions that not everyone's ready for a 12-hour flight with their kid: "If you're nervous, start with a day trip or a weekend getaway to help you build up your travel confidence."

IF A DESTINATION IS NOT KID-FRIENDLY, MAKE IT SO

"We always try to go to a park or somewhere where my kids can meet other kids," Rooks says. "My kids have actually made friends around the world."

DO LIKE THE LOCALS DO

"We eat the food, opt for homestays and AirBnBs versus hotels, and really submerge ourselves in the local way of living," Rooks says.

DO MOTHERHOOD WITHOUT LIMITS

"Don't allow other people's fears or opinions to stop you from going," Rooks urges. "You make your own rules. Go!"



Jessica Kameko Rooks, her daughter Amiyah and son Camren have traveled to 32 countries together.