

The Boston Globe

Gordie Gronkowski on his favorite souvenir socks, extra legroom, and why he'd travel with Derek Jeter

We caught up with Gronkowski, who lives in Quincy and is leading the Gronk Fitness brand expansion in Boston, to talk about all things travel

By **Juliet Pennington** Updated April 27, 2023, 10:00 a.m.



Gordie Gronkowski and a friend in Antigua. HANDOUT

As the oldest of five sons of a former Division I college athlete whose passion for keeping healthy and strong led him to start what became a hugely successful fitness equipment company, it's no wonder Gordon "Gordie" Gronkowski Jr. played professional baseball in the minor leagues for six years after college, and that his other brothers — including New England Patriots and later Tampa Bay Buccaneers tight end Rob — all played in the National Football League.

Now, the five brothers are all involved in G&G Fitness, the family business their former football player father started in the 1980s that initially focused on outfitting commercial and home gyms with fitness equipment and now includes a lifestyle brand component. Gordie Gronkowski, 39, is leading the Gronk Fitness brand expansion in Boston and throughout New England, including a fitness center at The Parker, a new high-end condo complex bordering the city's theater district. And while the company still works as distributors for what he said are the top fitness equipment brands in the country, Gronkowski said he is especially excited about the company's own line of equipment, which has been designed for maximum effectiveness — and includes a logo of his brother Rob doing his famous ball spike in the end zone after scoring a touchdown. "People just love that," he said. "I'm lucky. I love what I do, and the great thing is we help people live a better lifestyle and reach their goals."

We caught up with Gronkowski, who lives in the Marina Bay section of Quincy, to talk about all things travel.

If you could travel anywhere right now, and money was no object, where would you go?

Ibiza. I love a good daytime outside dance party. No better place to show off my dance moves and fit right in with everyone else.

Where was the first place you traveled to after COVID restrictions were lifted?

I was going back and forth to Tampa for my brother's NFL football games. I wasn't going to miss that season or the Super Bowl.

Do you prefer booking trips through a travel agent or on your own?

I would prefer to book through an agent, but my schedule changes so quickly that it's easier for me to do it myself. Plus, I'm so tall — 6 feet, 6½ inches — so you need to know the tricks to get the extra legroom seats!

Thoughts on an “unplugged” vacation?

I don't think an unplugged vacation is in my deck of cards right now. Maybe in the future when the work hustle slows down.

Do you use all of your vacation time or leave some on the table?

What's vacation time?

What has been your worst vacation experience?

I was in Tampa [in spring 2021] hanging with my brothers and we decided it would be a good idea for us to have a boxing match with [YouTuber] Logan Paul a few weeks before his fight with Floyd Mayweather Jr. We each had a round with him and when it was my turn . . . I got lit up in the boxing ring and felt sick the rest of the trip. I'll definitely not do that again.

Do you vacation to relax, to learn, or for the adventure of it all?

I vacation to work somewhere new with my team. Different scenery and events keep your team stronger and they appreciate it.

What book do you plan on bringing with you to read on your next vacation?

I read my notes from all the Zoom calls and meetings I have each day.

If you could travel with one famous person/celebrity, who would it be?

Derek Jeter all day. As a former professional baseball player, I looked up to DJ. I read his book on my bus rides in the minor leagues and watched his documentaries. He's “The Captain” for a reason.

What is the best gift to give a traveler?

A portable phone charger.

What is your go-to snack for a flight or a road trip?

It's lame, but unsalted nuts. My favorite? Cashews all the way.

What is the coolest souvenir you've picked up on a vacation?

It would have to be socks with my brother's [Rob's] face on them. I got them in Florida as a joke — and even got a pair for my mom — but it turns out they were really comfy.

What is your favorite app/website for travel?

I don't really have one. I just use Google most of the time.

What has travel taught you?

Traveling has a lot of ups and downs, especially when you roll solo. In some countries, I find myself nervous or lonely because I don't know what to expect, but then I'm also excited to see what's going to happen. Overall, traveling has helped me find clarity and be in complete happiness. It has also taught me a lot about stereotypes. Most of them are completely wrong.

What is your best travel tip?

I noticed flying in the morning gives you fewer chances of your flight being delayed. And if there are any issues, you can usually hop on the next one. I also recommend getting TSA Pre-Check. It is inexpensive and will save hours in lines at the airport.