

James & Laurence



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Our Story

James had recently moved from Alaska to Denver in late 2016 and Laurence had been living in the Denver metro area for most of his life. Our first date was supposed to be at Beatrice and Woodsley, but upon arrival, James did not have a reservation. So, Laurence took over the date and we found another place for dinner, and then to Milk (a night club in Denver) while bonding over our shared interest in international travel, language, culture, adventure, politics, and animals. We dated for the next three months before making it official and in 2019, we decided to join households and get our first townhome together. In June of 2023, we bought our first home together in the Berkley area and got married in October of 2023 in Westminster, Colorado.



Our wedding day



At a pop up park in Denver

Our Home

Our 4-bedroom, 3 bathroom, ranch style home is next to an elementary school with a large, open field, many bike paths, two large lakes, parks, jungle gyms, a dog park, and the Westminster light rail station. Our corner lot features two front yards, a back yard, and oversized two-car garage, filled with sporting, outdoors, and camping equipment. Laurence brings organization and structure to the household, also doing the cooking, while James maintains the yard, keeps the home filled with living plants, and handles most of the cleaning.

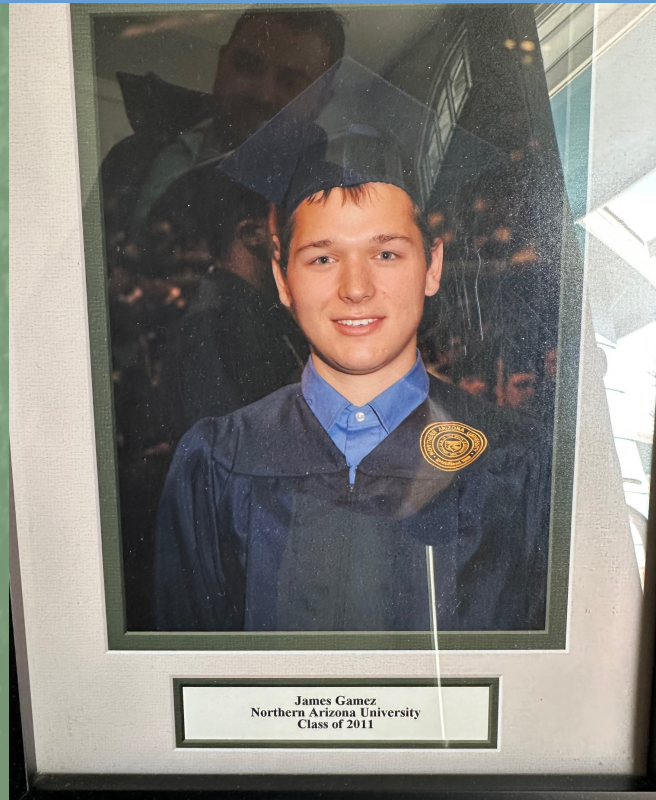
The home was fully renovated in 2020, each room furnished with a modern-rustic approach incorporating James' Alaska heritage and passion for the outdoors, with Laurence's eye for modern, minimalist design. Our open concept, high ceiling living areas feature contemporary finishes, and decorations from our worldly travels. The approximately 130 square-foot nursery will be just steps away from our bedroom, the master bathroom, and the kitchen. We have a three-year-old pet Red Iguana, Apollo, who lives in a large terrarium just off the kitchen. Apollo loves to crawl out of his cage and bask in the sunlight during the day, occasionally cuddling up with one of us when we are working in the living room



Closing day on our first house!

Meet James

James' graduation photo



James' hockey team



James was born in Juneau, Alaska, living a typical Alaskan life, full of fishing, camping, ice hockey, hunting, and achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Before the age of 17, James logged over 100 nights of camping in Alaska's wilderness. Dubbed "mister nice guy" on his high school hockey team, James was the team captain for two years. Upon graduating, James attended Northern Arizona University, majoring in international affairs and Russian studies and after graduation, James eventually made his way to Colorado. James plays in a hockey league, every week. He loves cheeseburgers, maple syrup, camping, Russian culture, international politics, technology, baking, learning guitar, and music.

More About James

According to Laurence: James is pensive, kind, compassionate, athletic, and introverted. He is one of the most thoughtful and caring people that I have ever met and his patience and open-mindedness is unmatched. James is sensitive and deeply in touch with himself and the feelings of others, which will make him an amazing father. James' knowledge and passion for the outdoors is unmatched and I cannot wait to see him guide our child through the wilderness and everything that it has to offer.



James playing hockey



James playing with Laurence's niece

Meet Laurence

Laurence was born in Los Angeles, California, moving to Littleton, Colorado with his parents when he was five years old. After his parents divorced in 1997, Laurence primarily lived in Centennial, Colorado with his mother. As a child, Laurence was involved in theater, band, marching band, French, DECA, and Model United Nations. In college, Laurence majored in Economics and Political Science, ultimately pursuing his law degree at the University of Colorado School of Law. Laurence loves yoga, making elaborate charcuterie platters for friends' gatherings, cooking, reptiles, international travel, finance, camping, music, politics, law, and philosophy.



Laurence and friends in San Diego



Laurence and family hiking in Oregon

More About Laurence

According to James: Laurence is driven by his goals, incredibly resourceful, and exceptionally intelligent. His ability to effectively balance caring for his loved ones and running a law firm showcases his efficient time management skills. He actively seeks to understand and appreciate individuals for who they are, constantly expanding his knowledge of different cultures in order to experience the world through multiple perspectives. His vibrant personality is always upbeat and full of energy, with an infectious smile and laughter that can illuminate any room he enters. During his free time, Laurence finds joy in traveling, socializing, practicing yoga, and simply being with friends. He is at his happiest when surrounded by others and effortlessly blends in with any crowd he encounters. I eagerly look forward to seeing him share these incredible qualities with our future child.



Laurence judging a mock trial competition

Our Families

James has one sister, Cassie, a 38-year-old social worker that lives with her wife, Meredith, a financial planner, in Portland, Oregon. James' mother, Carol, is a farmer in Vermont and lives with his aunt, and his father, Larry, is safety consultant in their hometown of Juneau, Alaska. James has a retired stepmother, Rebecca, who lives in Eugene, Oregon.

James has several cousins, aunts, and uncles that live in Colorado and visits them often. James is extremely close with his large, blended family, sending them handmade cards and gifts for the holidays throughout the year.

Laurence has one brother, Marc, a 45-year-old physical therapist, who lives with his wife, Eva, a homemaker in Astoria, Oregon with their two children. Laurence's retired mother, Diane, lives in Centennial (and is in the process of moving within a mile or so of us), and his retired father, Joel, lives with his wife, Louise, in Pfafftown, North Carolina. Laurence's 98 grandmother, Irene, lives in Los Angeles, CA with her husband, Howard, and Laurence will visit her two to three times per year.

We visit Oregon at least annually to see our siblings, their families, and James' stepmother and love staying with them and spending time with their children. Occasionally, we will travel to Los Angeles or Oregon for Passover, Thanksgiving, Christmas, or other holidays to spend time with Laurence's family.

James' family participates in a nationwide annual family gift exchange, with over 20 participants. Laurence and his mother will host an annual Passover seder for his close friends to share stories of courage, resilience, and freedom. We host an annual holiday party with our friends to share our interfaith traditions, reflected in our annual, diversely decorated "holiday bush."

James and his grandparents



Us with James's sister and her wife



Laurence's family in Los Angeles



Laurence's extended paternal family

Our Support System

We are close with our families, who are all very excited and supportive of us growing a family. Laurence's mother and James' stepmother are beyond excited to become grandparents and have been waiting for this day for years. James' aunts and uncles live close by and are equally excited. Laurence's mother plans to be very involved with our child's life, including providing care a couple of days during the work week.

We have a very large, eclectic friend group in Colorado, many of which have very young children or who are on a similar timeline as us. With our friends, we love to entertain in our home, go to concerts and music festivals, host group camping trips, ski and snowboard across the continent, host overly competitive board game sessions, and go out to restaurants.



Boating day with friends



Enjoying Father's Day with our friend's child

Our Work

James is a Customer Success Engineer Manager at a drone software company, where he manages a team that helps companies use drones and advanced software to improve their processes.

James was recently promoted to his management position and is a member of his office's diversity, equity, and inclusion committee. James' company provides incredibly generous healthcare and family leave benefits, including very flexible work schedules for parents and a hybrid work environment.



James in Vietnam on a work trip



Laurence's headshot

Laurence is a founding partner of a Denver based law firm. He works in family law, trust, and estate law and is also a child custody expert witness. He has been a lawyer for almost nine years and founded his firm in 2017, which has now grown to 9 attorneys and 17 employees.

Laurence is a former President of the Colorado LGBT Bar Association, is on the Denver Bar Association Board and Trustees, and has served on many bar association committees and in leadership positions. As the managing partner of his firm, Laurence is lucky to have tremendous flexibility with his work schedule and can usually work from home.

Our Pet



We have a healthy three-year old, active, energetic, Red Iguana named Apollo, who loves to bask in the sun, eat collard greens, perform gymnastic routines, and is an excellent climber. Apollo loves trees and plants and teaching us about patience, non-verbal communication, and unconditional love. Laurence has found an excellent exotics vet in Littleton that Apollo visits for checkups every six months. We have cared for Apollo's illnesses twice when he had intestinal stomach parasites and nurtured him back to health.

Apollo is a central part of our family and resides in a giant enclosure, always supervised when he is wandering though the home. He poses no risk to children and will help our child learn about animals, patience, love, and respect for the natural world.

Our beloved Apollo

Our Spirituality

We envision exposing our child to many belief systems, values, teachings, and philosophies, regarding our world and our purpose.

James is not religious. Rather, James has his own value system that is guided by preservation and protection of the natural world, unconditional kindness and respect, and being a life-long learner, always leaving room for new understandings and changes in social consciousness. James' parents are Catholic.

Laurence's parents are reformed Jewish and Laurence was a bar mitzva when he was 13 year's old. Since then, he occasionally attends services on high holy days, such as Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Laurence still identifies a reform Jew, culturally, spiritually, and ethnically, while not formally participating in religious practice. Laurence feels a connection to his Jewish heritage and Jewish values shape many of his own such as always first taking care of those who cannot care for themselves, the lifelong pursuit of knowledge, coexistence, and advocating for the oppressed.

Our family seder plate



Laurence and his mother setting up for Passover

Our Travels

Laurence has traveled to 17 countries outside of the United States, including Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, France, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Ecuador, Peru, Mexico, Canada, Japan, Israel, Netherlands, Portugal, Monaco, South Africa. Laurence has been to 47 states.

James has traveled to 18 countries outside of the United States, including Russia, Mexico, Canada, Vietnam, South Korea, New Zealand, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Sweden, Finland, Norway, England, Italy, France, Spain, Monaco. James has been to 40 states.

Together, we have taken many road trips, traveled to Alaska, and gone to Los Angeles and Oregon several times for family events. With a family, we envision continuing our travels to: Northern Canada, Hawaii, Kazakhstan; Shri Lanka; Komodo Island; United Arab Emeritus; India; and Antarctica.



On a cruise with Laurence's family



Us in Monaco on a family vacation

On Parenting

As children of divorced parents, we are deeply committed to being excellent parents and providing a stable, and accepting, household. As parents, we will build a nurturing, caring, and supportive environment with natural consequences, never using physical discipline. We are excited to help our child problem solve, understand rules and expectations, and facilitate open, healthy, two-way communication where all feelings are valid. Our child's physical safety and emotional wellbeing will always be our top priority. As a family, our parenting values are self-compassion, self-determination, humility, mutual respect, honesty, and flexibility. We will prioritize the importance of relationships with people and experiences over things and items. Our goal is to raise successful, self-sufficient children who are able to care for themselves while loving and building deep connections with people, animals, and the environment.



Painting with our friend's kid



Laurence and his niece



Spending time with Laurence's niece

Thank you!

