

## CELEBRITY TRAVEL

# For star of Broadway, Istanbul has it all

By Jae-Ha Kim  
Tribune Content Agency

Irene Sofia Lucio has played numerous parts that she loved, but the actor said the character that resonates with her the most is the one she's playing on Broadway.

"I come from a long line of immigrants on both sides of my family," said the New York resident. "Isidora from 'Liberation' particularly reminds me of my mom. While the specifics of their past are not the same, they have both experienced exiles, poverty and family tragedies. Yet with all of that adversity, they refuse to get bitter or accept defeat. Rather, they have a buoyant, vibrant, relentless approach to life and they both have a miraculous sense of humor that has helped them weather many storms."

This interview with Lucio has been edited for clarity and length.

**Q: Do you have any upcoming trips planned?**

**A:** I am from Puerto Rico and most of our family lives there. We go to Puerto Rico several times a year, so that will likely be our first stop after the show wraps.

**Q: What is your favorite vacation destination?**

**A:** Istanbul! Oh man, for so many reasons. It has it all! It's East and West at the same time. It has a fascinating history and countless sights while remaining a very modern society. It is chaotic, loud and fun, and has a great night life. You can go to an Ottoman palace in the morning, go to a fabulous French bistro



Broadway star Irene Sofia Lucio said that acting in "Liberation" has been a liberating experience. **YELLOWBELLY**

for lunch and go shopping in a bazaar all on the same day.

**Q: How do you separate work from vacation trips?**

**A:** I try to limit checking emails to once or twice a day while on vacation. As an actor, there's a saying, "Want a job? Plan a vacation." So you can't fully disconnect while on vacation. There's often a self-tape audition to do. I take a portable tripod to be able to tape from wherever. You never know when your break might come from and it's never going to be at a perfect time.

**Q: What's the most important thing you've learned from your travels?**

**A:** Traveling teaches humility and nurtures a sense of wonder about the world. There is no one way to live, eat, worship (or) exist. I've learned to be a gracious guest in a new country — to learn and honor the rules of the new house I'm entering and appreciate it on its own terms.

**Q: Do you have a knack for picking up new languages?**

**A:** I do! I grew up speaking English and Spanish in school and in life. I took up French in high school and college and have kept it up. I have always loved to read in different languages. I studied comparative literature at Princeton, because English felt too limiting a concentration in terms of

languages to get to read in. And I love trying to learn as many phrases as I can of the language of whatever country I'm visiting.

**Q: Where would you like to go that you have never been to before?**

**A:** Vietnam.

**Q: When you go away, what are some of your must-have items?**

**A:** A book, AirPods, walking shoes, jeans, travel guide, notebook, tripod, phone and cute outfits. I like curating my whole wardrobe to wherever I'm going.

**Q: What is your guilty pleasure when you're on the road?**

**A:** Chips. All kinds.

**Q: What is your best or worst vacation memory?**

**A:** When I was a kid, my family got into a terrible car accident in Mexico. My dad had to pull over and ask for help in a busy street. My mom had a bad injury to her leg and needed to go to a hospital. But I remember a family stopped, helped us get medical help and even took us to their home to keep me and my sister entertained and not (be) scared at the hospital. It was very scary but to this day it is a testament to how amazing that family was to us and how generous people can be.

For more from the reporter, visit [www.jaehakim.com](http://www.jaehakim.com).



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