



# THE ISLAND

WITH BEAR GRYLLS



# THE ISLAND

## WITH BEAR GRYLLS

In our world full of 21st century luxuries, few of us will ever experience what it is like to fight for our very survival; to sustain ourselves using the hunter gatherer skills of our ancestors. But in the second series of *The Island With Bear Grylls*, Bear conducts the ultimate survival challenge on the smart-phone generation, and sets 28 Britons just one test: survive for six weeks on an uninhabited island in the Pacific Ocean.

This year, that challenge returns harsher and longer than before. The “Islanders” not only had to endure the torrential downpours and stifling humidity of the tempestuous rainy season, they also had to cope for an extra two weeks; almost six weeks in total.

The series also returns with one fundamental difference; this year, both men and women are part of the task with each sex inhabiting their own island within a remote Pacific archipelago. After being whittled down from over 80,000 initial applicants, 14 male and 14 female Islanders lived 25 miles apart, never crossing paths, in what will be an intriguing look at how the different sexes handle all the islands had to throw at them.

The chosen few arrived by boat with just the clothes they stood up in, filming equipment, basic medical supplies, enough water for 24 hours, a few simple tools and survival training from Bear and his team. Their one assurance was that there were sufficient indigenous resources on the islands to sustain them, but only if they had the ingenuity to find and exploit them.

Once Bear waved goodbye to the Islanders there was no hand-holding. After a tough swim to shore, Islanders were left to battle the relentless elements, crippling hunger, extreme exhaustion and the ever-present, real threat of their habitat. Their physical abilities and mental strength were tested as they were forced to forage for and catch their food, light fires for warmth and water purification and build their shelters – and try to learn how to live and work together.

Filming their gruelling experience were four professionally trained camera people per island. With additional pressures to those experienced by the rest of the Islanders, they had to juggle documenting life on the islands; each animal slaughtered and each fire lit, with their own endurance of the same extreme conditions.

Could they survive without their 21st century comforts? Who is more resilient: the men or the women? Will gender stereotypes be reinforced or pulled apart? But above all, do men and women approach survival differently?

The story of each island will be told in separate episodes. An episode of life on the men’s island will be followed by an episode of the women’s island, each airing in the same week, across seven weeks. A raw and exhilarating series, this is an authentic look at survival and what it means to live in the 21st Century.

# Bear Grylls interview

## What can viewers expect from The Island?

This is the ultimate challenge into what modern man and modern woman are really made of when they are stripped of all the everyday modern conveniences we have grown so accustomed to.

## How does it differ to the first series?

This year The Island has ramped up the challenge exponentially. It is both tougher, and longer, and now lasts for six weeks rather than four. And trust me that extra two weeks makes a HUGE difference in terms of hardship, endurance, starvation and relational fall out. Those two extra weeks really take us into uncharted territory in terms of the scale of the survival challenge these people go through.

And then there is the fact that the series is filmed right at the height of the tropical storm season, which means every day and night we see torrential crazy downpours where up to four inches of rain can fall in an hour.

Trying to keep a fire alight in that is almost impossible, and trying to make any form of watertight shelter is a monumental task.

Such intense weather is also hugely draining on morale when you are continually wet and sodden-through 24/7. And then of course, the big one, this year we have two separate islands: one for men and one for women. This time we get to see and compare who copes better: the men or the women, under exactly the same harsh conditions. Is it about brute strength or mental willpower?

## How are you involved?

First up, this is my challenge. I have always been totally intrigued to see if modern man and modern woman still retain those hard-won skills and attitudes that have helped humankind evolve and conquer the entire globe, or have we lost that ability to adapt and thrive when stripped of all comforts?

In short, have we grown soft, or is that steel still in there when we are pushed, stripped and bereft of all modern technology?

Secondly, myself and my team train the contestants before the challenge start, but only really in the basics needed to keep them alive. We purposefully didn't want to teach them it all - this is about figuring it out the hard way, through failure and by using our resourcefulness and determination to create what humankind needs to sustain life. I then drop them off and pick them up some six weeks later. With my team, I monitor them through the weeks but I am not with them every step of the way. It's up to them to work as a

community and come through the toughest six weeks of their lives.

My role is to then to provide the context and survival information to the viewer to explain what they are going through and what it is like to be taken to the edge.

The truth on this series is that we had NO idea what would happen and whether anyone would even complete it. Nor did we know how the men and women's approach would differ and affect the outcome.



## What kind of struggles do the Islanders face?

Hunger and dehydration are the big challenges, like last year, but this year the storm season will be a massive test for them. The rain is a constant enemy that never lets up and that takes a huge physical and emotional toll. The constant fatigue and battle involved to keep their fire alight, and keep their bodies warm and dry.

Then there are the sand fly and mosquito bites that are relentless, day and night. Scratching, scratching, scratching produces weeping and festering sores. The constant extreme heat and humidity takes a massive toll on their bodies as well, as their feet and hands begin to rot, not to mention the blisters and sores that refuse to heal in those conditions.

And the malnutrition makes recovery near impossible. The dehydration makes every single person on those islands so lethargic that the simplest of tasks require Herculean effort.

As well as the physical struggles, each one of them will also face a huge mental struggle to overcome surviving on the island, isolated, away from family and loved ones, with no outside contact or entertainment or distraction. The isolation can be almost overwhelming for the contestants over such a long period of time.

## What does it take to survive for six weeks on an uninhabited island in the Pacific?

It is so clear now that surviving extremes is not all about muscles - it's about attitude, heart and soul. Each one of them will need ingenuity, resourcefulness, positivity, courage and determination, as well as faith, humility, kindness, and a sense of humour.

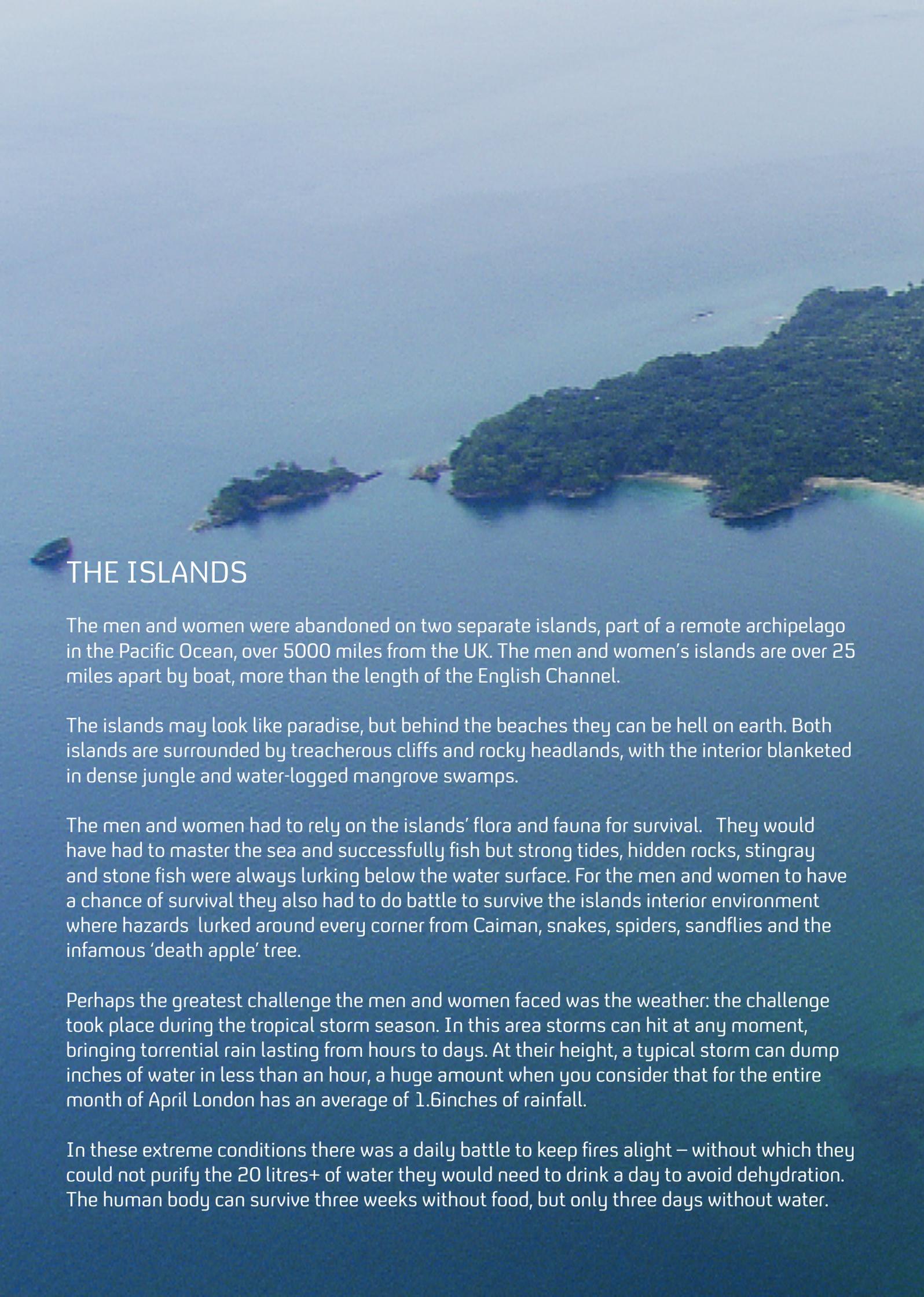
Those are the qualities of great survivors and this series proves that those qualities aren't limited to gender, but also that many fail to find the attitudes needed to endure.

## How do you think the women compared to the men?

I would ask the audience to judge for themselves. I never wanted the challenge to become a battle of the sexes, and it isn't. The first series sparked a lot of armchair survivors saying, 'I could do better than that', and that was reflected in the 80,000 applications we had to be on the show from men and women

Ultimately, those that endured did themselves so proud. But first there was an awful lot of pain and deprivation.





## THE ISLANDS

The men and women were abandoned on two separate islands, part of a remote archipelago in the Pacific Ocean, over 5000 miles from the UK. The men and women's islands are over 25 miles apart by boat, more than the length of the English Channel.

The islands may look like paradise, but behind the beaches they can be hell on earth. Both islands are surrounded by treacherous cliffs and rocky headlands, with the interior blanketed in dense jungle and water-logged mangrove swamps.

The men and women had to rely on the islands' flora and fauna for survival. They would have had to master the sea and successfully fish but strong tides, hidden rocks, stingray and stone fish were always lurking below the water surface. For the men and women to have a chance of survival they also had to do battle to survive the islands interior environment where hazards lurked around every corner from Caiman, snakes, spiders, sandflies and the infamous 'death apple' tree.

Perhaps the greatest challenge the men and women faced was the weather: the challenge took place during the tropical storm season. In this area storms can hit at any moment, bringing torrential rain lasting from hours to days. At their height, a typical storm can dump inches of water in less than an hour, a huge amount when you consider that for the entire month of April London has an average of 1.6 inches of rainfall.

In these extreme conditions there was a daily battle to keep fires alight – without which they could not purify the 20 litres+ of water they would need to drink a day to avoid dehydration. The human body can survive three weeks without food, but only three days without water.



## RESOURCES ON THE ISLANDS

Bear and the production team ensured that the men and women had enough water, indigenous animals and vegetation to survive. This included introducing indigenous animals such as black pigs, iguana and caiman, vegetative food sources such as coconuts and yucca and lining a muddy pool - the water source of the women's island. The men's island had a natural water source and so no modification was required. These modifications ensured that, in theory, it was possible for the islanders to last the course of the challenge, but the men and women would still have to have the ingenuity to find, catch and kill to survive.

Whilst the islands' flora and fauna would provide the means of survival, the men and women could make the most of the islands' other resources including the flotsam and jetsam that washed ashore. Scientists have estimated that over 5 trillion pieces of plastic are floating in the world's oceans - from water bottles to toothbrushes and toxic containers to flip-flops. The flotsam and jetsam provided the men and women with a source of materials that could be potentially helpful for their survival. But only if they had the wits and resourcefulness to adapt it.

To prepare them for the task ahead, the men and women had two intensive days of survival training with experts where they learnt the basics of survival - from first aid to lighting fire and water purification to the humane dispatch of animals. They were also given information on what they could eat – and importantly what they should avoid, including the indigenous 'death apple'. As dangerous as it sounds, the death apple is one of the islands' biggest threats. The poison in one tiny apple can kill. Even standing under a death apple tree during a rainstorm can result in the water dripping poison on to those below, causing the skin to crack and blister.

All the men and women also received basic camera training so that they could take turns in documenting life and events on The Island.

They were abandoned with only the clothes they stood in and some basic tools - including three knives, three machetes, basic fishing equipment, whistles and a medical kit. They were also each given enough water to last them one day, a radio and satellite phone in case of emergency and camera equipment to film with.

## PROTECTING THE CONTRIBUTORS

Health and safety of the Islanders was a top priority for Bear and the production team. Before going on the islands all the men and women had a full medical check-up to ensure that they were fit enough for the extreme physical demands of the challenge.

Once on the islands the men and women were alone. As well as ensuring that there was enough water, indigenous animals and vegetation for the men and women to survive, each group of Islanders was prepared for medical emergencies. In each group one of the Islanders was a doctor who could offer first response medical support and who had access to a medical kit.

In the case of serious medical emergency there was a support medical team based on a nearby island who could reach the islands by boat supported by a helicopter evacuation team.

## THE PRODUCTION

On each island there were four experienced cameramen or camerawomen who had a specific responsibility to document day-to-day life on the islands on film. They lived in exactly the same conditions as the other contributors and were part of the island community. Alongside them all the men and women had camera training so much the footage you see was shot by the other members of the group. This method of filming not only ensured that the men and women were alone throughout the challenge, but it also resulted in a raw and intimate portrait of life on the very edge of survival.

# The Women





## Chavala, 29 Psychotherapist Blackpool,

Chavala, 29, from Blackpool, is building a successful career as a psychologist but yearns for an adventure.

### Why did you want to take part in The Island?

I question that myself! I look back and think, 'Why did I do it?'

I decided The Island would get me away from everyone and strip me raw. It gave me something to do for myself rather than other people. I do love wildlife and bird watching. Me and my dad were pigeon racers when I was a child. But other than that, I'm probably the least outdoorsy person you could meet! I like dresses and nice comfy things.

### How did you get along with the rest of the group?

I'm not a confrontational person. I like to get on with everyone. I guess I look at the world with rose-tinted glasses. I tried my hardest not to get sucked into that world of emotions and fall-out but I was starving, and thirsty, and that made it hard to be impartial.

### What was the hardest part?

Being away from all of my family, because we're really close. Nobody was there to support me and get me through it. It was down to me. I'd never had that before. Nobody there saying, 'Come on, you can get through it'.

### How did your time on The Island affect you physically?

After the first week or so, I was really struggling to drink the water because it smelt of poo, even after boiling it. People were trying to get it down me and I was throwing it up. I tried not to tell anyone, because I didn't want to be taken off the island.

I also got bitten by a scorpion, and my foot got infected by a bite and blew up with green pus. But it's fine. I didn't go there to be pampered.



## What were your highlights?

I was so proud of myself because I faced so many of my fears. Before, I was scared of my own shadow!

I couldn't go to sleep without a night light, so sleeping in a jungle with big scorpions and snakes was a big deal for me. And there I was, skinning things, ripping the heads off fish. It was a side to me I didn't know existed.

Spending my birthday there was amazing. The girls pulled off this surprise party. I had no idea they cared! It was one of the highlights of my life, actually.

## What have you learned about yourself?

I could write a book with everything I've learned! I thought I knew a lot about myself through my job because we have to do a lot of soul searching when we're training. But I always thought I was quite a fearful person, and actually it turns out I can control those fears.

I've learned to appreciate everything. Instead of focussing on what I don't have, I focus on what I do have, and that's helping me so much. I don't complain about anything really. Even if I start to feel a bit hungry, I stop myself from saying it out loud!

Since The Island, I've become more sociable and put myself out more, because I've got the confidence to do that. Especially with the girls I met on The Island, because those friendships are deep, and life-long.

## Beth, 30, Potter, Hastings

Beth thinks there is too much choice in the modern world and wanted to experience something simpler

### Why did you want to take part in *The Island*?

I saw the first series and it said at the end, 'Do you think you've got what it takes?'. And I thought, 'Oh my God, yes I do!'

I grew up in Botswana until I was 11 and I was always the one who wanted to be with the boys helping to chop the wood. My father was involved in bush craft and he passed away a couple of years ago. So I also wanted to reconnect with the life that he lived.

### What makes *The Island* different from other survival shows?

The fact we had nothing. We had three machetes, three knives, no idea at all what we were supposed to do.

We just stuck it out. I think a lot of shows out there, they get given a first meal, a hut, some clothes, whatever. We were in the elements and we had to start from scratch. It was a real-life scenario.

### What was the hardest part?

The rain was intense. Just when you think you're dry, it starts raining again.

The first night, I woke up with a massive crab on my stomach! It was huge, bright blue and red. That gave me a fright!

Keeping the fire going was really difficult but it was great when we did. We called her Vesta and became very attached to her. She became a safety blanket. If we couldn't sleep at night, we'd sit around it. It dried us and fed us. It was symbolic.



## What have you learned about yourself?

I learned I'm a lot stronger than I think I am. And that anybody, female or male, can do whatever they like if they're determined enough. You just have to commit, and have guts, and take a risk.

I learned I'm a lot like my father. Not much fazes me, and I always admired that in my father. And now I can relate to that. I know why he did things that he did.

Plus, I have never been that vain, but there's still always part of me that thinks, 'I look crap today, I have a big spot, I don't want to go out'. Since being out there, I really don't give a \* \* \* ! I looked hideous and everybody still loved me and was supportive of me. Getting over those personal barriers was so wonderful. We were walking around pretty much naked by the end of it. We were just free. All women should give it a go.

## Julie, 55, Betting Shop Cashier Liverpool

Julie is a former foster carer as well as a single mum of two daughters. Now her children are older, she is finally free to have the adventures she has always craved.

### Why did you want to take part in The Island?

I'm a single mum. I was a foster carer for eight years. Then I stopped that and I was just a lady who lunched and I was going a bit stir crazy. My youngest girl who's 16 was at school all day so I was just doing DIY and gardening all day.

I thought I would just get a little part-time job that got me mixing with adults again. Then I saw the form for The Island and thought I'd give it a go.

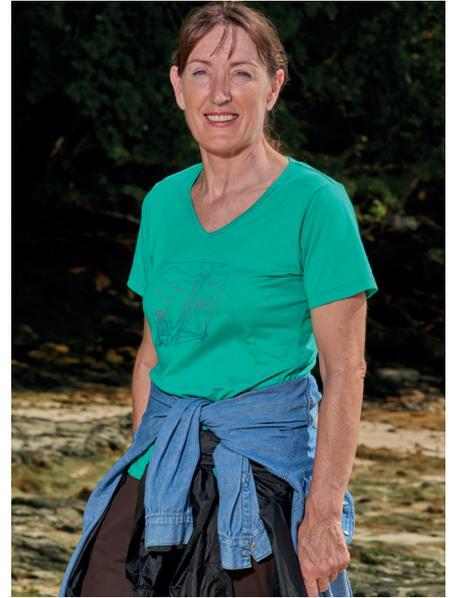
### Were you thrilled that the second series was open to women as well men?

Well, when I filled out the form, it didn't say whether it was for men or women. So I just thought I wouldn't let on I was a woman! I just wrote 'J Henderson' so they wouldn't know. I wasn't expecting to hear anything back to be honest with you.

### How did your time on The Island affect you physically?

I couldn't bear how weak I got. Not having the energy to do more. Your energy only comes from the food you eat and when you're at home in the western world, you don't really think about the relationship between your food and your energy. But when you take the food away, you're like a kitten. And when you're used to being strong and powerful, that's tough. You take that physical strength for granted. I hated feeling weak.

We were eaten alive by sand flies too, that was horrible. I love sunbathing but you couldn't lie on the beach because you got bitten to death.



## What have you learned about yourself?

I was a bit worried about going. I was worried that with no distractions, and lots of time spent by myself, I might not like myself very much. But ultimately, I discovered that I am okay, I'm alright. I'm not horrible or nasty. I'm more tolerant of people than I thought. I've got more empathy than I thought. I'm mentally stronger than I thought, although I'm physically weaker than I thought.

I can find calmness in myself that I didn't know I had. I'm a bit of a stress-head at home normally, but there is inner peace in me that I didn't know I had. I've been determined to try and keep a bit of that in me now that I'm home.

I feel like I've missed out on lots of adventures all my life now, I'll have to make up for lost time!

## Lauren, 25, Nurse, West Yorkshire

Lauren is one of the youngest women on The Island

### Why did you want to take part in The Island?

I'd just come back from attempting to row across Atlantic. Me and another girl were trying to become the youngest female pair to do it but we were plagued by problems and after four months at sea, we didn't manage it. So I was feeling a bit lost. I'd pushed myself a lot during the attempt but never got the sense of achievement at the end.

I've done sport all my life, and pushing myself has always been a part of who I am, so I thought The Island would be right up my street.

### Were you thrilled that the second series was open to women as well as men?

To be honest, I'd watched the first series but it hadn't crossed my mind, 'Why aren't women allowed to do it?'

And when I saw the advert for the second series, I didn't even clock it was for women. I actually just sent the application form to both my brothers and my boyfriend.

Then the day before the deadline, I realised women could do it too! I stayed up until 1am to write the form and apply myself.

### How did you get along with the rest of the group?

There were some strong personalities. At first I was hugely intimidated by that.

I'm the youngest one, and when someone who is 50 is screaming instructions at the group, you naturally want to do what they tell you. It took me a while to stick up for myself.



## What was the hardest part?

People were happy for us to get food and they were happy to eat it but didn't like to do the skinning and the killing.

So I ended up doing all the killing and slaughtering!

## What makes The Island different from other survival shows?

It was so real, that's the only way I can describe it. We were given absolutely no outside help.

When we arrived, we had to swim to shore in all our clothes. We didn't know what to do. Nothing was given to us, we didn't have any shelter, no warm or dry clothes. It was a complete challenge. It was as real to me as if I really had washed up on a desert island. And the weather was monsoon season. It rained every single day, pretty much. It was hard work, relentless.

## What have you learned about yourself?

I think I learned I'm tougher than I ever thought I was. And that I enjoyed overcoming that mental and physical hardship to achieve something.

I've actually decided not to work as a nurse since doing The Island. You're set up for this path where you finish your degree, you get a job, maybe you raise money for a house or whatever. That has been blown out of the water by this experience. I don't want to do that anymore! I want adventure.

I'm currently training to do seven marathons in seven days in seven countries, and I'm going to attempt the Atlantic rowing record again in December. It's hard work and I'm tired but now I think, this is small compared to what I went through in those six weeks.

It's been hugely life-changing for me. I realised you can do anything if you really want to

## Fi, 58, Camerawoman, London

Fi was brought up in the Scottish countryside – which she says means that spending a lot of time outside in bad weather doesn't bother her – but she has a genuine phobia of snakes.

### Why did you want to take part in The Island?

I was embedded as a camerawoman which is something I've never done before in my career.

But I was more excited about doing this than anything I've ever done in a work capacity.

It was such an extraordinary challenge. Our modern lives are so cosseted and you don't often get to physically and mentally challenge yourself in this way.

### What was the hardest part?

I went along pompously thinking I would be suited to doing it.

I was brought up in a remote part of Scotland and I'm not scared of anything other than snakes. I had no fear about the thought of killing things. I know how to light a fire, I know how to keep a fire going. I felt I had a lot of the practical skills. But it turns out I had a tenth of the skills I thought I had. We never managed to build a proper shelter that was big enough for all of us, because we didn't have the skills.

And it was monsoon season, which I foolishly thought meant that it would rain for a short period at 2pm every day but in fact, it was entirely random, and often at night which was hard to deal with.

### How did your time on The Island affect you physically?

I was the oldest one there but the others were all amazed at how physically strong I was. I didn't suffer exhaustion, nor did I ever feel hungry.

I used to weigh 20 stone but I had gastric surgery and over the last three years, I've lost ten stone. Part of my promise to myself after the surgery was to get fit, so I ran a half marathon last year and have been training ever since.

I am unusually fit for 58.



## What were your highlights?

I loved all of it! I would still be there if I could be. It's an extraordinary privilege to step outside 21st century life and look at what actually matters.

If you are put in a situation where you have to survive, it's nice to know that you can. I knew we weren't ever going to die, but we were very responsible for making sure we didn't ever have to call on the support that was there for us. And we managed pretty well, I think.

And then just the simple things like the awe of the night sky in the Pacific and the sound of the sea. The fact you have 12 hours to achieve everything and after that it's dark and you can see nothing. The simple thing of lighting a fire and keeping it going, the simplicity of the fishing net that provided our food.

I loved all of it.

## What have you learned about yourself?

I spoke to people sometimes in a way that wasn't always the best or the kindest.

I managed to change some of my behaviours and I have kept that going now that I have returned.

It's been a complete life change.

# Additional Biographies: Women





## The Women



Abby,  
Hotel Spa Owner

Abby, 48, from Lincoln, works for her family's hotel business as a spa manager, but wanted to experience life beyond the safety net of her family.

Beki,  
Camerawoman

Beki, 29, is a camerawoman from London, who was keen to enjoy one last big adventure before getting married .



Belinda,  
Doctor

Belinda, 32, is a doctor from London. After witnessing life and death on a daily basis at work, Belinda wanted to make the most of her life.





## Fran, PhD Student

Fran, 24, from Harrogate, is completing her PhD on freedom of speech through social media in Iran, inspired by growing up in Britain with Iranian parents.

## Georgie, Camerawoman

Georgie, 46, from London has spent all her life 'working in a man's world', observing others from the safety of behind the camera.



## Georgina, Camerawoman

Camerawoman Georgina, 34, from Manchester, lives constantly on the road and wants to live life to the full.





## Kate, Furniture Maker

Kate, 34, a furniture maker and former marketing executive from Swindon, was made redundant for the fourth time in a row and applied as she wanted to achieve something amazing.



## Jaime Salon Owner

Jamie, 30 a beauty salon owner is a Scot living in Newcastle Upon Tyne, is fiercely independent and is the only vegetarian on the island.



## Jayde, Hairdresser

Jayde, 25, works for her mothers business as a hairdresser in Neath, Wales.



# The Men





## Piers, 28, Doctor West London

Piers, 28, a doctor from West London, loves the outdoors and is a big fan of water sports, tennis, kite-surfing, and hitting the gym. He believed he would take a leadership role as that is what he does in his career.

### Why did you want to take part in The Island?

I watched the last episode and at the time I was in a pretty boring job, so I thought it would be nice to do something different for a change.

I've never done anything like it before. There's something attractive about seeing if you can live off the land and just purely survive.

### How did you get along with the rest of the group?

Surprisingly well. You always feel there will be at least one or two annoying people who don't want to play ball. But that wasn't the case. Everyone was a great bloke and were useful in their own way.

We're all in contact and we're going to meet up soon. Sharing an experience like that with another person is going to bond you for a long time.

### What makes The Island different from other survival shows?

I think the main thing is that all the cameramen are part of the show. All the filming is done by the team.

It wouldn't have worked if you'd had a lovely fresh smelling, full bellied crew coming in every day. That would have felt very 'us' and 'them'.

It's a TV programme so of course you have to change batteries and that kind of thing, but we didn't see anybody even when we had to do those things, as they would just leave us the new batteries in a designated place.



## What have you learned about yourself?

I think it's hard to compare the experience to normal life. If I have challenges in real life now, I do find them incomparable to surviving for six weeks on an island.

It puts things into perspective a bit and you definitely don't whine about being hungry any more. And I feel I have strength of character that maybe I wasn't aware of before.

It was refreshing on the island, not having a phone, not having a computer, not having those stresses of modern life. I'd love to say I'd given those things up since I came home but sadly it's not the way the world works, really. When you come home, you do have to commute in rush hour traffic and you do have to check emails, but perhaps next time I go away, that'll be the time to ditch the phone.

## Will Hutchinson, 36, Cameraman Colchester

Will has been a cameraman for nearly 20 years. He is married with two children, and is known as 'Mr Nice Guy' at work.

### Why did you want to take part in The Island?

For me, you watch it and think, 'I could do that, how hard can it be?' - I watched the first series and decided I fancied a piece of that.

You're totally by yourself, trying to survive. But you know that if anything goes wrong, somebody would come in and save the day.

### What was the hardest part?

Being away from the family was the hardest thing. It's not just being away from them, because I'm away all the time for work, but I talk to them every day.

My wife and I have been together for a very long time, nearly 18 years, and not having even a brief stolen minute or two on the phone was very hard.

### How did your time on The Island affect you physically?

It was interesting because I lost a spectacular amount of weight - 12 kilos in ten days, more than anyone else. It levelled off then, everyone else caught me up! It was quite a challenge being hungry, and thirsty, and tired. You had to plod everywhere. The smallest incline would wipe you out completely.



## Barney Strange, 30, Paramedic North Leicestershire

Barney is used to working within a team and although he lacks outdoor skills, believed he would work tirelessly to gather food, fuel and water.

### Why did you want to take part in The Island?

A culmination of things. I wasn't particularly settled in my life, I'd recently split up with my girlfriend, and I wasn't very happy in my job at the time.



Doing The Island looked like an ultimate challenge. I wanted to test myself and find out what I'd be like. I've done triathlons and travelled a bit so it wasn't completely alien to me. I don't want it sound like too much of a cliché, but I do feel like it was a real journey.

### How did you get along with the rest of the group?

I'm the kind of person who gets on with everybody so I wasn't really worried about it. I know for some people their biggest fear was whether they'd get on with everybody, but that wasn't a challenge for me, really.

I am quite un-confident in life in general, and not particularly proud of my own achievements.

I was genuinely proud coming off that island. I felt like I'd gained a lot of confidence.

### What was the hardest part?

Missing my family, definitely. I'm a Mummy's boy!

It's also amazing to realise how weak you become without food. For me, the biggest challenges were about coping with starvation, and being away from home. It wasn't just the people I was home sick for, but the home comforts. I'm quite a simple guy.

I struggled with the notion of killing animals, too. I knew I wouldn't be glory-hunting and going in for 'the kill'. We're so disjointed from the slaughter process in real life. We just buy meat at a supermarket and we don't think about where it's come from. Killing something with your bare hands makes you think about it a lot more. I was always into the high welfare food anyway and I am even more so now, definitely.

## What makes The Island different from other survival shows?

I think it is really different. It couldn't be more real. It does stand out because it's got the cameramen embedded in with us who know as little as we do. We all live the same experience, we are truly marooned.

It's very nice having medics 20 minutes away but it felt far more dangerous than I expected it to. There were moments where I genuinely felt in danger, even though I knew we weren't.

**It looked different in  
the brochure**





## Vic, 47, Cleaning Facilities Manager Yorkshire



Vic wanted to prove to his sons he could still be an action hero.

### Why did you want to take part in The Island?

I did a bit of hunting and fishing as a kid. We love Bear Grylls in my house, everyone watches it, my three boys are all into outdoor stuff and our house is full of testosterone.

And this is such a challenge. What man wouldn't want to know they could do this? It's Boy Scout stuff!

I'm 47, it feels like my last hurrah before I hang up my boots with all this physical stuff. After my last holiday with my wife, I said, 'I don't really want to sit around a swimming pool next time, I want an adventure'. And then a few days later, this came along. Isn't that weird? I wanted my boys to think I was a hero before they all leave home.

### How did your time on The Island affect you physically?

I cut my thumb with a knife, trying to set a trap. And I broke my toe on a rock. I've got welts on my legs, scratches, bruises, everything. And I got something in my eye that the doctor had to pluck out with tweezers when we got back to London. Before I went, my wife told me there were three things I wasn't allowed to do: no religion, no politics, and I wasn't to put myself in any danger because I had three kids at home. My wife's going to kill me when she sees it!

### What were your highlights?

They were all best bits! There was one moment that got me.

I'm not normally an emotional person, and I don't like people telling me I'm good at something. But at one point ten other men were saying I was a great bloke and I shouldn't put myself down all the time, and that was quite a moment for me.

That got me very emotional! I did shed a tear, I must admit.

## What have you learned about yourself?

Perhaps I had a chip on my shoulder before. I put myself down a lot.

And then everyone told me I was quite a decent bloke and quite good at doing things, and that made me think.

I've also changed my job, which I was thinking about doing before I did The Island but when I got home I was more decisive about it because of my experiences.

On the island, they kept asking me to be leader and I didn't want to be. I did find that strange. But I learned that I'm quite good at speaking my mind and telling people not to do stuff!

So I have decided to become a facilities manager for health and safety and say, 'Ooh, no, you don't want to do that, put that down', because I'm good at that.

## Kyle, 28, Website consultant Reigate

Kyle loves clothes and beauty products and goes to the gym four times a week. Before heading to The Island he had never been anywhere more remote than a rented villa on Ibiza.

### Why did you want to take part in The Island?

I wanted to see if I would be useful outside of my two computer screens and my office. It was a crazy moment when I signed up!

### What was the hardest part?

I felt like I had my own little personal challenge to overcome out there. Out of everyone, I really got attacked by the sand flies out there. I'd wake up every day with 50 fresh bites.

It brought me close to leaving. I still have the scars up and down my legs. My ankles were so swollen I couldn't even get my boots on. I never thought something so small could affect me so much.

### What have you learned about yourself?

In a weird way, since I've been back, I actually felt a little bit lost. I'm around people and things that are familiar to me but I almost feel like a foreigner or tourist.

Even going back into work, the same things are happening, but I'm a bit different. It doesn't feel exciting to me anymore. I'm still trying to adjust and shake myself back into that. But it's been difficult.

The thing I learned most about myself was to see if I could translate my problem solving skills to a different environment, and I do feel I did that.

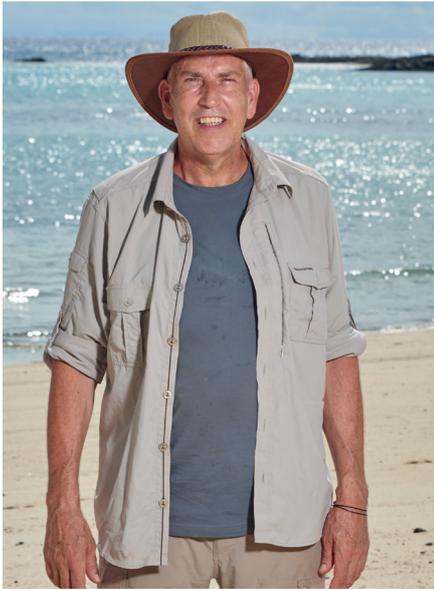




**Additional  
Biographies: Men**



## The Men



### Andy, Builder

Andy, 51, a site agent from Milton Keynes, has spent his life working in places like Lanzarote, France and Tenerife. Because of his job in the building trade, he believed he should be able to turn his hand to most things on the island.

### Charlie, Farmer

Charlie, 33, from Taunton, has returned to the UK to run the family farm after four years working in recruitment in Singapore. He wanted one last adventure before becoming a dad.



### Daniel, Oil Rig Engineer

Daniel, 29, a project engineer from Aberdeen, is used to spending weeks away from home working on oil rigs. He turns 30 next year so was keen to have an adventure - and use his beer brewing skills to make moonshine.





## Joe, Graphic Designer

Joe, 22, a graphic designer from Harrogate, was the youngest on the male island and has never been travelling. He had not gone more than 24 hours without speaking to his girlfriend since the day they met.

## Paul, Building Site Manager

Paul, 36, a building contracts manager from Surrey, left his girlfriend and baby daughter behind to go on his own personal journey. He wanted to get away from day to day life and challenge himself.



## Philip, Car Sales

Philip, 58, is a car buyer from London who never stops: he works six days a week, runs, dances, learns Mandarin, and looks after his six children. He believed he would be fitter than some of the younger men on the island.





## Ross, Cameraman

Ross, 34, a producer and director from London, loves chatting to people and thought he would be a mediator within the group. He had never been camping before, but is a keen chef and was keen to try hunting.



## Sam B, Cameraman

Sam, 30, a producer and director from Belfast, was looking forward to the ultimate boys adventure.



## Sam F, Cameraman

Sam, 37, from London, is a reporter, director and producer who has always enjoyed adventures, from climbing trees as a child to working for an emergency medical team during the civil war in Southern Sudan.





For further information [channel4.com/theisland](https://www.channel4.com/theisland)



