



#### SAILING NORFOLK'S SALT MARSHES

##### WHERE

Wells-next-the-Sea,  
North Norfolk

##### WHAT

An excursion in a traditional sailing boat across one of the UK's last wildernesses, the protected salt marshes of Norfolk.  
[coastalexplorationcompany.co.uk](http://coastalexplorationcompany.co.uk)

## Island *of* Adventure

One advantage of being an island nation? You're never too far from the coast. Traversing the UK in search of achievable expeditions, the duo behind The Travel Project inspire us to seek out salty adventures close to home

Words by LUCY KEHOE

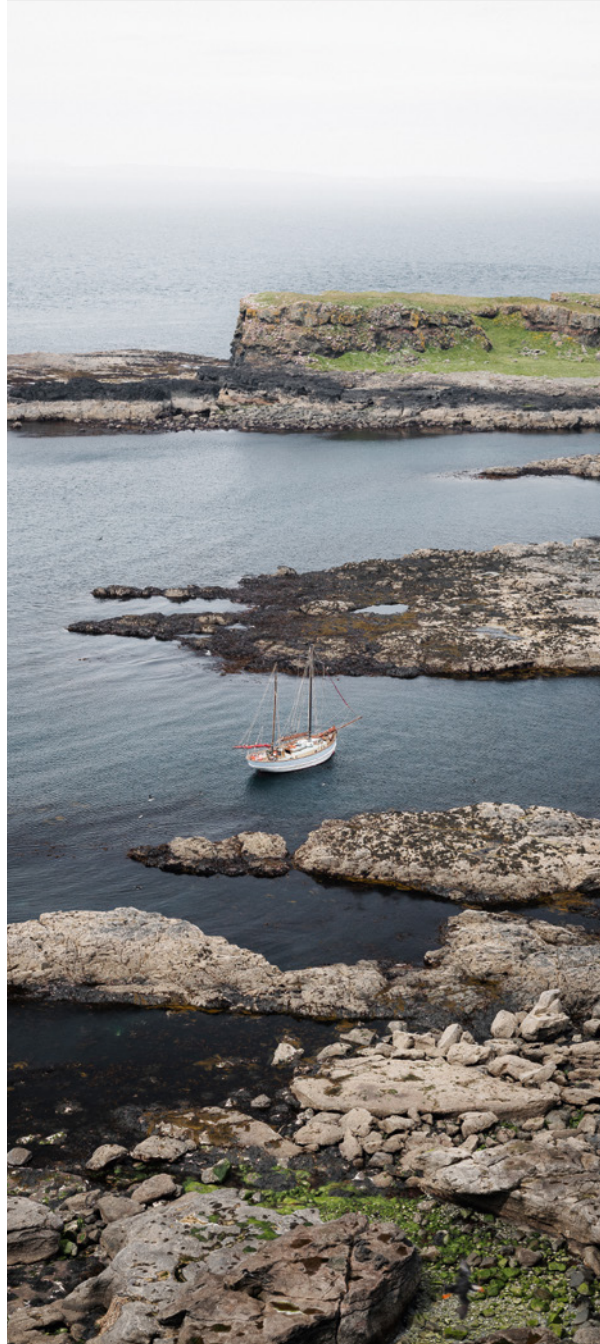
Photos by CHARLIE WILD and JESSICA LAST

Scrolling through the photography of Charlie Wild and Jessica Last on their Instagram account, @the.travel.project, a photo stands out. It's an image cut from the same cloth as Swallows and Amazons tale. A red-sailed wooden boat glides across Norfolk fenland, the jaunty angle of the oxblood oilcloth piercing a J.M.W. Turner sky; the water is glossed, rippling even in stasis. Last sits in the bow, her smile visible across the water.

"Our definition of an adventure is a trip that's personal," says Wild, talking from the couple's east London home. "It should break a routine and push you out of your comfort zone," adds Last, sitting next to him. Six years ago, the pair quit their careers in the advertising industry to caper across the globe, seeking off-beat escapades to photograph and share on Instagram. The pandemic restricted their map but presented a new fork in the road: how could they build the fulfilment they'd found traversing far-flung shores into a regular lifestyle?

"There was a lot of advice on adventuring in the UK for what we call 'the walking-boot brigade', but none of it felt relevant to us," says Last. The duo's remedy was a challenge. In May last year, they set out to find 52 achievable adventures in 52 weeks – all accessible escapades within the UK – to show that such experiences weren't exclusive to explorers. You can, they insist, find the breathless excitement of discovery in your own backyard. >>





#### ISLAND-HOPPING IN THE HEBRIDES

##### WHERE

Iona and the Treshnish Isles, north-west Scotland

##### WHAT

Iona local Mark Jardine and his family provide day trips aboard Birthe Marie, his lovingly restored 1933 Danish fishing boat. You'll navigate the archipelago and, from April to August, meet the gorgeous puffins of Lunga. [boattripsiona.com](http://boattripsiona.com)



#### FORAGING IN WALES

##### WHERE

Tenby, Pembrokeshire

##### WHAT

An afternoon spent with Welsh foraging expert Craig Evans, traversing the pebbly coast in search of edible treasures, before cooking up a beach feast of fresh seafood – think mussels and crabs – on an open fire. [coastalforaging.co.uk](http://coastalforaging.co.uk)



## ESCAPING THE CITY

### WHERE

Isle of Sheppey, *Kent*

### WHAT

Located just 65km from London, the Isle of Sheppey is the closest island to London. It's also home to the incredible Elmley Nature Reserve, a 1,335-hectare protected area where you can take your pick from accommodation that ranges from cosy cottages, shepherd's huts and tents to beautiful wooden cabins, all nestled amid the wild landscape. [elmleynaturereserve.co.uk](http://elmleynaturereserve.co.uk)





Some of their 52/52 expeditions are small and unshowy, like jumping into the Thames on a heat-hazed summer's morning. Others fulfil the brief of a more traditional adventure: scaling the Lake District's windy ridges; a weekend on Dartmoor's tousled expanse; an afternoon hiking Northumberland's vast, empty western fringes.

Can they sum up what's needed for a successful trip? "It's about creating a structure for what you want to achieve on the adventure, but, crucially, not being too wedded to that structure," says Wild. "Things are going to change at the last minute. It's going to rain. Things aren't going to line up. Embrace the element of unpredictability."

Their Insta feed may be awash with the soothing tones of this sceptred isle – damp green, deep blue, the bronze of autumn bracken – but it's the characters Wild and Last meet who act as lodestars, rather than the scenic shots. "We're both interested in talking to people," says Wild. "You might be uncomfortable interacting with strangers, but that's another way of stepping outside your comfort zone."

The pair have found that talking enriches their experience. The owner of a handsome 1933 Danish boat in which they coasted along the Hebridean coast left an impression when he told them that sailing allowed for the "slow drinking in of the landscape".

Picking an adventure, they say, relies on curiosity. "It might seem a little slapdash, but just ask yourself which corner you've not been to," says Last. "The UK is made up of more than 6,000 islands. When you look at it on a map, you realise how little you know of it."

It's these overlooked UK landscapes – captured in their images – that become the backdrop to a small-scale, achievable odyssey.

[achievableadventure.com](http://achievableadventure.com)



#### DRIVING THE CAUSEWAY COAST

##### WHERE

Belfast to Derry,  
*Northern Ireland*

##### WHAT

A 212km stretch of road running along some of Northern Ireland's most spectacular coast. Surf endless breaks, drive across vast beaches, picnic on the dunes of Runkerry and take in the Giant's Causeway. [visitcausewaycoastandglens.com](http://visitcausewaycoastandglens.com)