



good things come TO THOSE WHO WAIT

BY JESS LLOYD-MOSTYN

Two years ago I stepped onto a bus and went into labour. It was the beginning of a huge journey, in more ways than one. Not only was it the start of a 6 hour drive across Mexico, from the Pacific coast to the city of Guadalajara, but it was the start of our new lives as parents and the learning of that great family lesson: expect the unexpected.

Unexpected because I was only 36 weeks and 6 days pregnant. Unexpected because our 'plan' had been to travel inland a few weeks ahead of time and then work out a plan. I didn't even have a baby bag packed for the birth centre, which was a thought that flashed across my brain once I had been reduced to lying on the floor of the bus aisle, on towels, with contractions every 3 minutes.

Fortunately, we were able to make it to the natural birth centre that we were aiming for, in spite of the driver being keen to drop us off at various standard hospitals en route. And then, 12 hours after leaving the station, in the early hours of the new day our little girl, Rocket, was born in the water, calmly, gently and at exactly 37 weeks.

Two years later and that little baby that rocked our world has grown and flourished into a bouncy and confident toddler. And here I was, pregnant again, and expecting a similar start for our new baby. This time we were in New Zealand, having sailed across the South Pacific with Rocket, and again we were seeking out a natural water birth.

New Zealand, unlike Mexico, has a midwife-led system of maternity care, similar to that of the UK. As it was our



Hey you! I'm a Pineapple Head, meet my family...

... we're an all natural hair and bath range.

So delicious you will want to eat us and best of all we are made right here in NZ!

Come say 'Hi' at pineappleheads.co.nz or our Facebook page. PM us **TNP + your address** for your free sample.

PINEAPPLE HEADS™

47



WELEDA
Since 1921

White Mallow Baby Derma range

soothes hypersensitive skin
100% certified natural & organic

The fragrance free Weleda White Mallow range is specifically designed for baby skin that is hypersensitive or prone to eczema

Accepted by the NATIONAL MIDWIFERY ASSOCIATION

Weleda - in harmony with nature and the human being

weleda.co.nz

second time around we'd begun to realise that our preferred type of pregnancy and delivery was something that we could make informed and engaged choices about. I think this is perhaps as a result of having our babies in foreign countries where our starting point was always outside of their normal medical system; enabling us to question what sort of setting and involvement we would ideally want from any maternity services. The national character of New Zealand's birthing strategies seemed very much what we were looking for; with the area we were based in, Northland, being particularly supportive and encouraging of natural, non-medicalised birth, which is a consequence of the rural environment here.

My second pregnancy was just as healthy, straightforward and easy as my first. It didn't alter any of our sailing plans and we were even able to go out on a big, 10 week camping trip, all around the country, only returning to the boat when I was over 7 months. However, this time we were ready, armed with the knowledge that our firstborn had chosen to make an early appearance. By 36 weeks I had done my due diligence: the 'baby bag' was packed and ready for the birth centre, the tiny infant clothes that Rocket had worn were freshly washed and organised, and all our newborn and small cloth nappies came out of storage, sat cheerfully next to their big sister's large ones on the shelves. Rocket was seeming entirely positive about her mamma's baby bump and was frequently kissing and cuddling my belly.

But, I had lost sight of that first lesson: expect the unexpected. Because as 36, 37, and 38 weeks came and went, as my due date loomed and then passed, we realised that our second boat baby was definitely on a different time schedule. Having never been heavily pregnant before or even getting that close to my due date I hadn't been prepared for the growing looks of concern from well-meaning friends, the flippant comments of "well, you must have got your dates mixed up" or the anxious questions of "so, what are you going to do?"

What was I going to do? Well, have a baby of course, was the only answer in our heads. The fact that the baby was still clearly moving, kicking and generally having a good old belly dance all the time, and that there was no reason to suggest that I was at risk of any complications, meant that we were the least worried of anyone around us. Sure, I was getting somewhat impatient to meet the new little bean, but I respected that each one takes a slightly different time. The weather had turned cold, there was even ice on the marina docks, and my reasoning was that my baby was simply choosing to stay in the cosiest place possible.

The change of season brought up other issues as the boat was getting colder and colder and also needed to have some work done on it. So our family of three welcomed the distraction and at 41 weeks and 1 day, we hauled the boat, our 42ft baby, out of the water for the first time since 2011. This did leave us with the issue of where to live while the boat was in the yard but, fortunately, we were able to secure looking after a friend's house and dog while they were away.

So my mid-wife visits switched location and she continued to reassure me with her regular checks, that all was fine with the baby. I have quite a small frame and the baby was also

clearly not massive so there was no concern over it getting too large for me to deliver easily. Given that I was in perfect health she was confident about there being no problems about me being overdue and said that she would only start to get concerned herself once I was over 43 weeks.

And then she asked us if we were still hoping to use the birth centre now that we were staying in a house. It had made sense as an alternative to the hospital, despite the extra driving distance (nothing would faze me after 6 hours on a bus!) while we were on the boat, but now? In England, James and I had only known a couple of people who had opted for home births and we'd always attached a slight stigma of kooky unconventionalism to the idea. Funny how drastically things change as the last four years has done nothing but encourage our own exploratory nature. And, as an idea, it made total sense; why wake a sleeping toddler to bundle her into a cold car in order for us all to drive for an hour to the birth centre when we could all be more comfortable staying at home.

At 42 weeks I went in for an additional ultrasound, to further confirm that all was well. Given that we had only been dealing with our midwife this was the first time we'd seen someone more part of the clinical system since my 20 week scan. She looked at my notes as we entered the room and uttered that worrying phrase again "what are you going to do?". The scan showed everything was fine and we left the office and the unspoken talk of induction hanging heavily in the air. There are certain instances where it is important to have the option of speeding things along, particularly if either mother or baby is no longer thriving but we were determined not to be pressured into an induction unnecessarily. In my case, there was absolutely no reason to think about medical induction at that point. If your baby is healthy, moving well, growing at a normal rate and both of you are showing all the signs of a healthy, happy and simple pregnancy then just being overdue itself is not a reason for an induction.

And, there was also no reason to think about it as, once I left the ultrasound room, I had my first contraction.

Two years and four days after getting on that bus I squatted in a bathtub in a house that wasn't ours, with my 2 year old sleeping sweetly in the room next door, with my husband and my midwife gently encouraging me, and I gave birth to our son, entirely naturally, at 42 weeks and 1 day. Indigo was born on July 16th 2015, here in New Zealand just four days after Rocket's 2nd birthday, weighing in at a not over-cooked 6lb 12oz / 3kgs.

.....
Jessica Lloyd-Mostyn and James left England in 2011 aboard Adamastor, a Crossbow 42, intending to circumnavigate in a couple of years. After crossing the Atlantic and cruising the Caribbean they reached Panama, where they decided to take longer over the trip and also to start a family. Their daughter, Rocket, was born in Mexico and logged her first sea miles on their Pacific crossing in 2014. They got married in Fiji and are currently in New Zealand where they just added to their crew list with their son, Indigo. Now, over 4 years, 18,000 miles and 32 countries since they set off you can follow their progress at www.water-log.com.