



MEET ALISON FOLEY WHO IS ON A MISSION TO SAVE

THE

OCEAN!

I hope you are having a wonderful festive season on this final day of 2019! We are sitting in a very snowy winter wonderland right now so I thought it was the perfect time to introduce you to Alison Foley who is making it her mission to save the oceans! Check out this quick interview with Alison ahead of her very exciting **eXXpedition** around the world in May 2020.

Hey Alison, thanks so much for joining us! Tell us a little bit about yourself.

From a young age, I held a deep respect for the ocean growing up in Tasmania, **Australia**'s island state. I always wondered what adventures lay over the horizon. I supported myself through university working in some of the finest restaurants and wineries

surrounding Hobart and as soon as I finished, I gave in to wanderlust and completed my STCW95 to join my first boat cruising the Great Barrier Reef. One thing naturally led to another, and I spent the next eight years onboard superyachts travelling the globe and a year training entry-level interior crew with Isobel Odendaal at Super Yachting South Africa in Cape Town. On returning to Australia, I was fortunate to be able to combine my academic and onboard experience working with Superyacht Operating Systems, a comprehensive onboard management system covering all aspects of administration, safety, compliance and efficiency. My love for the ocean continues and addressing the impact of plastic pollution on them is now a core concern.



What made you want to create Ten Little Pieces?

Ten Little Pieces is an empowerment movement for ordinary folks to make a big difference to the places they love by collecting ten little pieces of rubbish, anytime, anywhere, especially with children involved. This opens conversations around environmental impact and stewardship, rethinking our concept of waste, and regenerative concepts.

It came about one beautiful summer's day on Noosa Main Beach when I had my kids, hot, tired and cranky whinging for the long-promised ice-cream. So while I packed up the beach kit, I said to my kids that an ice-cream would cost them ten little pieces of rubbish. To my astonishment, within 20m or so of the beach, they returned to me with 3 bags full of cans, bottles, straws, food wrappers and cigarette butts. We washed our hands, got the ice-creams and in an effort to think globally by acting locally, Ten Little Pieces was born. I realize how fortunate I've been to see some of the world's most beautiful places, both above and below the water. I also realize that my three young sons will not have the same privilege

You have some exciting developments coming up with the platform next year – can you share a bit about the projects planned?

Ten Little Pieces is a 5 Gyres Ambassador, a community ally of Clean Up Australia and we've just been welcomed into the United Nations Environment Program – The Global Partnership on Marine Litter. What started as a Facebook group two years ago, has evolved into a Not For Profit Organization delivering education programs to our region's schools with a growing global following. And we're just getting started!

I've just been selected to join eXXpedition Round The World 2019-2021. eXXpedition is a pioneering two-year ocean sailing mission onboard 70' S/V TravelEdge to circumnavigate the globe to research, raise awareness of and advocate solutions to the devastating environmental and health impacts of plastics and toxins in our oceans. As our mission director, Emily Penn says "there isn't one silver bullet solution to plastic pollution, but the beauty of it is that there are hundreds of solutions". The mission will be crewed by 300 women scientists, artists, activists, educators, media experts, mothers and change-makers from all over the world, connected by a

passion to protect our shared oceans from plastic pollution. Each of the 30 voyages will engage in cutting edge research through documenting and sampling ocean plastics and each landfall will involve local outreach through beach cleans and education activities encouraging networking, environmental awareness and collaboration on solutions-based thinking. I'll be joining the crew for Leg 11, Tonga to Fiji in May 2020, covering 500 nautical miles through waters and islands afflicted by the debris that's accumulating in the Southern Pacific Gyre.



I know that this experience will be life-changing for me and I'll return to my role as director of Ten Little Pieces with a focus and clarity on using my skills and knowledge as a catalyst for cultural and societal shifts in consumption patterns and the encouragement of closed-loop systems. Our oceans and all that live there are in peril, as are we, but there's still hope. And I'm so excited to be part of it. You can follow the voyage through www.exxpedition.com and of course through Ten Little Pieces social channels.

How can others get involved in their day to day lives – what tiny steps can people take now to create a larger movement?

Any change starts with awareness, and we need to rethink our own consumption patterns and environmental impact. But that awareness means little without action. It's easy to think that making small changes might not significantly influence the larger picture, but every single-use plastic item you find an alternative to, from

bamboo toothbrushes to refillable water bottles for crew and guests, starts a chain reaction of awareness in others.

As an administrator of the hugely popular FB group Yacht Stewardess and Steward Tips, we've seen the steward/ess community make significant shifts in exercising their purchasing power to earth-friendly choices from organic wellness supplies and eco-friendly cleaning supplies to operational adjustments like reducing washing rosters and the installation of microfibre filters on washing machines. The forum has been brilliant for sharing successes. This is how cultural shift begins.

As crew we have the privilege of working on and playing by the oceans, and I think we have a duty to step up to protect them. Avoid single-use plastic at every opportunity and start conversations with your crewmates about reducing your impact and waste. We need to turn off the tap when it comes to using items that have a life span hundreds of years beyond their usefulness and if you see plastic and debris in the places you visit, on your dock or beach, please pick it up. Just Ten Little Pieces, anytime, anywhere, can make a huge difference to the health of our oceans.

Thanks so much to Alison for her time! Check out more on her [Instagram](#) and [website](#)!