

kan-do girl

Adventure travel opened up the world for TLC channel's bubbly new presenter, Angela Kan

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SHOT ON LOCATION: HEBE HAVEN YACHT CLUB

It started with a bucket list. When Angela Kan, presenter of TLC's *Beach Life*, discovered her sister was stricken with cancer, they made a pact: to live the lives they both truly wanted. "It was all to do with this notion of time and how short life can be," Angela says.

For the zippy and self-confessed hippie chick, this meant becoming a global traveller. It meant wandering off the beaten track. It meant diving into each new experience "with both feet and an open mind". And it meant embracing the beauty of a location, as well as some horrors. Hong Kong-based Angela may have washed up on TV hosting a show about beaches, but her travels have taken her far beyond sand and sea. She has visited Germany's war museums, dived Australia's Great Barrier Reef and trekked India's Ladakh mountainous region.

It was then that she got herself a TV show.

Having conceived and pitched *Beach Life*, she never once dreamed about

presenting it too. The first day on set, she recalls, was intimidating but she soon forgot about the crew and focused on the people she met and the events happening around her. "I was so immersed I forgot I was filming," she says.

This May, she appears as a guest on another TLC show, *Fun Taiwan All-Stars*, alongside the always-chirpy Janet Hsieh. Each week, the show brings together the channel's big names, welcoming a fellow TLC host to Taiwan. For Angela, it was a chance to meet her childhood heroes. "It was like being invited to the coolest club in the world. I'd always watched Ian Wright and Samantha Brown," she says.

In her episode, Angela joins Janet for some rafting, tree climbing and foraging for food. They started out challenging each other but ended in friendly camaraderie — an idea Angela proposed. "I want

to show girls empowering each other. I wanted to support her even if I was totally failing,"

"It was all to do with this notion of TIME and how SHORT life can be"

Haltermack swimsuit: TED BAKER Earrings and flower hair accessories: H&M



little clams and they had these huge shells," she says. "I wouldn't survive there long."

It's such experiences that she seeks on the road and for her show. On each trip she dives headfirst into the sub-cultures that shape a place, and in particular for *Beach Life*, the communities that sprout up around beach towns. During her travels, these tribes, whether ancient or modern, are those she looks to learn from. "I think this is where change and transformation happens. That's why they get tattoos, or dye their hair. They are on the cusp of discovery. That's the place you get new ideas, values and belief systems to take home," she says. "People are the ones who bring magic to the trip, and a lot of magic happens when you walk into the unexpected."

Since she draws so much from every new experience, she is also keen to give back. Describing herself as an avid storyteller across mediums as varied as writing, photography and social media, of which she was an early adopter (find her on Instagram at Angelakantravel), Angela is also a regular volunteer. She has worked with children on photography projects in Mumbai's slums and with a reading charity in Nepal. She'd like to do aid work in Africa, another destination on her ever-expanding bucket list.

On the day of this photoshoot, the sun beams down over candy-coloured sails at the Hebe Haven yacht club. Arriving early, with a smile almost as bright as the weather, Angela quick-changes into her first bikini and strikes an effortless pose. She gets really animated when she talks about Sailability, the charity she works with here which gives youngsters with learning difficulties the chance to learn how to sail.

PEOPLE and their CONNECTIONS are important to Angela

she says. Audiences might be surprised to see her more giggly side as a result, Angela says.

People and their connections are important to the presenter, who says the highlight of her episode was hunting and gathering clams with Taiwan's indigenous Ami tribe. She didn't fare too well finding her own food though. "I had all these tiny



Top left inset photo: Red swimsuit as top: PAPEETE Wide leg pants: MAX&CO. Necklace & bangles: H&M. ZARA nautica stripe top and blue shorts Straw hat: H&M

Angela in shorts



THREE CARRY-ON ESSENTIALS:
A theft-proof Pacsafe bag, Nin Jiom herbal throat candies, and a Bobble filter water bottle. Put even bottled water through it and you won't get sick.



TOP TRAVEL READS:
Pico Iyer's travel essays and Jack Kerouac's *The Dharma Bums*.



NEXT DESTINATION?
I'd like to travel the seven seas like Sinbad, or do the Silk Road. I'd also love to go back to green festival Boom in Portugal.



"I'm constantly telling myself: 'Angela Kan-do anything'"

"They actually taught me how to sail," she says of the kids, who have a range of disabilities. "I went out on a boat with a girl who had lost a leg," she explains. "It's impossible to think you can't do something when someone like that is saying they can," she says. The "Kan" in her own name has become something of a mantra. "I'm constantly telling myself 'Angela Kan-do anything,'" she says, laughing.

Her as-yet-untitled next show is currently in production and sees the presenter embarking on a maritime adventure that takes her sailing all the way to the Equator — one of her biggest challenges to date. "It was one heck of an experience," she says, recalling the ex-marines and pirate ship crew that put her through her sailing paces.

During the Neptune Regatta, whose course begins in Singapore and extends into Indonesian waters, around 40 ships sail into "the doldrums", sections of the ocean that are notoriously difficult to navigate. Once the Equator is crossed, a sailor earns the prestigious "shellback" title — though not before enduring a raucous rite of passage. Angela's included being hoisted 40 feet up on a mast.

For the vivacious adventure seeker, it was one more life experience and one more travel mission accomplished. ■