Zwela

The why, not the where

Raising kids who notice the world

A conversation about why we take our children to wild, unfamiliar places, what it does to the way a family sees, and what comes home with you afterwards.



Meeting the meerkats, Makgadikgadi, Botswana

Zwela Journals is a small studio in Barcelona making travel journals for children, founded by illustrator and designer Kat and writer and photographer Misché: two South Africans brought together by a shared heritage and a shared habit of packing the kids into a 4x4 and heading somewhere with no reception.

Travel is not just about where you go, but how deeply you experience it, and what a child brings home: a wider sense of the world, the habit of noticing, and the understanding that people live differently, and that this is interesting rather than strange. Those are the conversations we would love to have on your show.



Misché



Kat

Misché
Co-founder, writer and photographer. A former river and safari guide who has passed a love of sunrises on to her kids, and now chases adventure and beauty near and far with a camera and a journal.

Kat
Co-founder, illustrator and designer. Grew up in South Africa and has doodled her way across the world since, pens and paper always in a pocket in case inspiration strikes.

WHAT WE BRING TO THE MIC

- Rooftop-tent and campervan adventures with kids: Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Spain and beyond
- The art of looking, packed for every trip: Misché's lens telling the story, Kat's paintbrush filling the sketchbook
- Three children's travel journals sold worldwide, and journalling workshops for kids
- We collaborate with women in conservation and champion their stories in each of our journals, teaching and inspiring kids to make a difference
- Real stories, told honestly, including the ones that went wrong

Campfire Conversations

1 Travelling with intention and gratitude

How making travel journals for kids changed the way we travel

We started making journals for kids to tell their own story, to record their memories, to slow down, notice and appreciate both the big and small moments. The journals become a place for them to practise gratitude and a chance for parents to experience the world through their eyes. It opens up discussions for the whole family.



Journalling as the sun goes down

STORIES WE CAN TELL

- Camping under the stars in the Pyrenees and getting woken up by cows coming down the mountain, bells ringing at 3am!
- Journalling under two ancient baobabs at Nxai Pan, at a campsite booked a year ahead for a bucket shower that did not work
- Things we never travel without, a ball, a fishing rod and a journal

ASK US

- ? *Did the journals come out of the way you travel, or did they change it?*
- ? *What does intention look like with a nine year old in the back seat?*
- ? *How do you do gratitude with children without it feeling forced?*

2 Changed perspectives

How travel makes you see, and notice, differently

Sit down with a family of meerkats in Botswana and you discover a hidden world of scorpions a few digs beneath you. Travel teaches you that there is always more going on than you first see.



A secretary bird on the road into Nxai Pan

STORIES WE CAN TELL

- The scorpion buffet: an hour on the ground with the meerkats, and what it showed us about looking beneath the surface
- A pin-tailed sandgrouse vanishing into the Spanish desert in front of us, and how one child's bird list got the whole family scanning the horizon
- How a scavenger hunt for cats made a hike to the Acropolis in Athens a breeze!

ASK US

- ? *When did you first notice your children seeing something you had missed?*
- ? *Can noticing be taught, or do you just have to make room for it?*
- ? *How do you keep a child looking up when there is a screen in their pocket?*

3 Bringing the adventure home

What comes back with you, and what it does to an ordinary Tuesday

The most important part of a trip might be the weeks after it. A child who has slept under twenty billion stars, or watched a Little Owl on a shepherd's hut at sunrise, comes home looking at their own street differently. The weekend walk turns into an expedition, the balcony gets a bird list, and the same question keeps being asked at the dinner table. This is the real why of adventurous travel: not the places, but the child you come home with. Curious about people who live differently. Comfortable with difference. Able to find adventure in their own backyard.



Home on wheels, Bardenas Reales, Spain

STORIES WE CAN TELL

- Turning where we live into a place of discovery: the legends of Barcelona's Gothic Quarter, explored the way we would explore anywhere new
- Why our journals are built for a weekend walk at home as much as for a safari
- Safari in the city. The bus window is your game drive. A gargoyle on a roofline, a lion on a shop sign, a fox that owns the car park: make a checklist and start ticking

ASK US

? *What is the first thing you notice has changed when you get home?*

? *How do you keep the noticing going once school starts again?*

? *Does travelling adventurously make everyday life feel smaller, or bigger?*

#veryzwela

Two threads that matter a great deal to us. They can run through any of the three conversations, or stand on their own.

When the plan falls apart

Why the wobbly bits are where the growing happens

Travel with children almost never goes to plan, and that is a big part of why we do it. A perfect wild-camping spot at dusk that turned into a mosquito apocalypse (we had parked beside a rice paddy). The sandiest road in Botswana. A famous waterfall with no water in it, and the frogs, newts and Egyptian vulture we found because we walked in anyway. Children watch how the adults respond to those moments, and what they take from it is flexibility, humour and the knowledge that their family is a team that figures things out. The places that go wrong become the stories you tell most, and they get the best journal entries.

I am because we are

Raising children who understand their place in a bigger world

Ubuntu runs through everything we make. We travel with our children to foster understanding: of places, of the people who live in them and of the wild things that share them. Our journals put the voices of women in conservation, from the Black Mambas anti-poaching unit to the Sloth Conservation Foundation, into children's hands, and a portion of every book sold supports conservation and education. The point of adventurous travel is who your children become, not where they have been.

> *"Sunny with a chance of goat poop!"*
>
> CRETE BEACHES, NOT FOR THE FAINT-HEARTED



Sunset at Spitzkoppe, Namibia



Breakfast with the Baines Baobabs

ALSO HAPPY TO TALK ABOUT

- Getting kids to write and draw without forcing them
- What children actually remember from family trips
- Self-drive, rooftop tents and camping with kids in Southern Africa
- Women in conservation and the Local Experts in our journals
- Two South Africans building a small publishing studio in Barcelona

GOOD TO KNOW

- Barcelona, Central European Time. We record remotely at a time that suits your show, or in person in Barcelona
- One of us or both of us; interview, conversation or listener questions
- Bios, high-resolution images and links ready for your show notes, and review copies for the host
- We record with our own microphone and headphones, from a quiet room

THE JOURNALS



Kids Worldwide Adventure Journal
For every trip, anywhere. Ages 7 to 12.



Kids South African Travel Journal
Safari, coast and city, for a trip to South Africa.



Kids African Safari Journal
For safaris across Southern and East Africa.

Let's talk

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Reply to this email or drop us a line and we will find a date.

Why Zwela?

Travel is more interesting when you notice more. Knowing a little more makes you look a little closer. And when you record what you discover, the experience stays with you.