



An adventure of the soul

A 10-day retreat in Pyhäjärvi, Finland, is captured by moments of intimacy, creative expression and a sense of adventure — both behind the lens and in front of it.

Words & photography BEN HARRIS

For my entire life, adventure has conjured up images of vast mountain ranges and the depths of the jungle — wild and unexplored places that require dangerous and arduous journeys to reach and activities that push you to the edge of your physicality and endurance. The word adventure has taken me all over the world. It's had me skiing in the mountains of California, hitchhiking through rural New Zealand and breaking down in the Canadian wilderness.

Recently, my definition of adventure has begun to shift. After being introduced to meditation and self-exploration three years ago, my sense of adventure has now broadened. Mountains and jungles still feature, and I still find myself in far-flung places having incredible and tough experiences, but alongside these more traditional ideas, I find adventure in the exploration of myself and the people around me. In particular, by examining my own barriers to intimacy, the limits of my comfort zone and how I can push and break these. This adventure into my own mind and the minds of others was my focus when shooting this photo story. I wanted to capture moments of intimacy, differences between genuine and posed expression and, of course, a sense of self-adventure.

Peace

Towards the end of my time in Finland, I decided I wanted more adventure, whether that was meditating in different situations or environments, on different things, cooking mindfully with more ingredients, or looking for those deeper human connections.

Ben Harris is a UK-based wildlife cameraman and photojournalist. He's currently enjoying the power of connection and self-improvement by deconstructing and rebuilding his world view. W: thatbharris.com



Togetherness

Expressive Adventure

Building relationships with animals, or “non-human persons”, throughout my life has taught me about the power of connection. After a few years working with fleeting glimpses of wild animals, meeting Ruska and Rout reminded me of this.

Practised Beauty

In front of a camera, most people have to push the boundaries of their comfort. Being the subject of a photograph is not the norm for most. My personal adventure began when working with a person who is used to being photographed; I had to direct over connect.



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Improvised Beauty

In contrast, connecting and generating an uncontrolled reaction within a model is an adventure for them. It's not often that a moment of emotion caused by a loved one can be captured. Here, I was comfortable, and helping Sara to adventure.



Intertwined

Letting yourself completely fall into caring about someone is one of the most terrifying and beautiful adventures we can embark upon in our human lives. Being allowed the privilege of photographing this connection caused a realisation that I hadn't had this adventure in a long time.