

JULIA 'I nearly left it too late to start a family'

TV presenter Julia Bradbury, 43, on her latest TV project and why women shouldn't wait to have a baby...

You're hosting a new game show, *Take On The Twisters* – was it fun to film?

It was great. It's a fast-paced quiz show with big money to be won. Viewers will be on the edge of their seats, screaming at their telly.

Do you think you'd be a good contestant?

No! You could ask me the colour of traffic lights and I'd crack under the pressure.

Do you still like *Countryfile*?

I love it. We're about to celebrate 25 years on air so we're having a *Countryfile* knees-up with 250 viewers. **You've had Prince Charles and JB from JLS on the show – who's next?**

I'm gunning for Prince Harry now. I've put it out there, so

now it's a case of the slow drip feed getting a result. We haven't had a formal response yet, but I'll keep on going.

Are you close to your *Countryfile* co-presenter, Matt Baker?

We're great friends. We're both busy with our families, but we talk all the time. He's also a great dad, so he gives me parenting tips, which is wonderful, as he's been doing it longer than me!

You're so busy, how do you fit everything in?

I have to admit, it's a real juggling act. I've just had to become really effective at spinning plates. The good thing about *Take On The Twisters* is it's based in one place and didn't involve me

running up and down the country. That's meant I've been able to have breakfast with my son Zephyr in the morning and still be home in time for his bath.

Has motherhood changed your career?

Being a mum alters just about everything. I'm still ambitious and love my job, but if I got a call asking me to go to Indonesia I'd say no, whereas three years ago, I'd definitely have been on the next plane. I've had to turn down a few things because I try not to be away from home too much – one night a week is enough. Zeph's only little at

the moment and he changes so much every day that I want to be there with him.

Is it easier to leave him, though, as he does get that bit older?

Actually, the more he grows up, the harder it is to leave. Now that he's talking and always wants a cuddle, it's much more emotional. I'm secretive when I leave now – I just give him a big kiss and don't come back. I feel slightly traumatised by the whole thing, so I don't need both of us being traumatised.

Would you like to have any more children?

I would love more, but I count my blessings and feel lucky to have Zeph. All things considered, I left it a bit late to start a family and if I'd begun earlier, I'd definitely have had a bigger brood. My advice to any career woman who's just approaching the danger age is do it now – don't wait – because it's not easy after a certain age and it might not even happen for you.

How do you and your partner Gerard find time for each other?
We just juggle and balance everything really well. Gerard is a fantastic dad, who's full of love and patience. Zeph's

'I count my blessings – I feel lucky to have my son'

lucky to have such an adoring daddy in his life.

You lost your baby weight quickly – do you feel under pressure to stay trim?

I don't feel pressure, but I watch what I eat. You can't have deep-fried fish and chips every day, but a treat now and then is fine. I breast-fed, too, which helped me spring back into shape.

What's next for you in your career?

There are more documentaries and consumer shows I want to do, on things I'm passionate about. But it's hard to say everything you want to do because, in this industry, you can never be sure what's around the corner.

● Julia hosts *Take On The Twisters*, weekdays, 5pm, ITV and co-hosts *Long Live Britain*, Monday 29 July, 9pm, BBC1

THE MAIN MEN IN JULIA'S LIFE



TV 'HUBBY' She calls co-host Matt Baker one of her closest friends.



REAL 'HUBBY' Friends and lovers Julia and Gerard fell in love after 20 years!



SON She's a devoted mother to little Zeph, who was born in August 2011.

'I love working on Countryfile – I want Prince Harry to be a guest!'

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