



FREE WITH THE SUNDAY PEOPLE

JULY 21 2013

## FASHION

Riviera Chic

## BEAUTY

Magic mascara

## COOKERY

Stuffed vine leaves

# Julia Bradbury

From Countryfile welly wearer to quizmaster!

## Mummy blogging army

Are they a help or a hindrance?

## Youth on a plate

Foods that make you look younger

## Do you love yourself?

How to feel good enough



Active TV presenter Julia Bradbury, 42, well known for presenting BBC1's *Countryfile*, *Wainwright's Walks and Coast to Coast*, steps out of her comfort zone from tomorrow to present a brand new ITV game show, *Take on the Twisters*. Here she talks to us about being quizmaster, the miracle baby she had at 41 and the importance of eating healthily...

# From wellies to twisters

**Tell us about your new role as a quizmaster.** It's great fun. You need a good format, great contestants and a clever hook in a quiz show and I think this one has those three ingredients. Contestants need a cool head and good general knowledge, enough to get to the stage when they *Take on the Twisters*. I ask questions while the twisters are turning and they have to try and keep as many in play as you possibly can. At the end of the time, your money is underneath one of the twisters. People win life-changing amounts of cash. I really admire those who can answer general knowledge under pressure. I'd just crumble.

**Game show presenting is a first for you. How was it being out of your comfort zone?** Good. I'm testing myself and it's a bit scary. I have always wanted to do a 'shiny floor show'. I am in awe of good game show hosts and quizmasters like Chris Tarrant and Noel Edmonds, I'd always wanted to try it. And there aren't that many female quizmasters so I'm in uncharted territory. Viewers will hear me singing too – there are a few song questions and I couldn't resist singing the song if they didn't know it, just to jog their memories. But basically I murdered the tunes.

**Is it a pleasant change to be out of the wellies and cagoule?** Yes. I'm wearing lovely suits, shirts and dresses. Not ridiculously glam. It's good to be out of the wellies and not standing in a field. I am wearing a few flowery shirts on the show too as a nod and a wink to Noel! I love putting on the glam – like most women, *Countryfile*, my walks, and the outdoor stuff is one side of me and that's appropriate to that activity but it doesn't mean I dress like that all the time.

**What about your poor partner Gerard Cunningham?** (Laughs) It's true but it's a different kind of love. Other parents and mothers do tell you when you have your first child, it changes you. It's love on a completely different level. I think being an older mum is a good thing for me – I enjoy the pregnancy as I thought it was never going to happen. For lots of reasons, him coming along at this point of my life was completely life-changing in a very wonderful way. I'm loving being a mummy! I can honestly say the love of my life is the little man.

**You've not married, are you happy as you are?** I was once misquoted saying that I don't believe in marriage – it's not that I don't – I do – it's a beautiful institution. It's just that I've never wanted to do it myself. Zeph's nearly two and I've never thought, 'We need to get married now.' Our worlds revolve around him, he couldn't be more secure.

**So, could you be leaving *Countryfile*?** Absolutely not. I've just taken a few weeks off to do my game show but I will be going back. *Countryfile* is a constant in my life and it's one of those things I'm squeezing in around everything. It's such a great programme and I love working with Matt Baker. It's celebrating its 25th anniversary soon.

**So how is the new little man in your life?** My son Zephyr? Amazing! He's named after a Greek god and he's living up to his name. He's such a breath of fresh air. Zeph has changed everything for the better for me. I'm such a sofie as a mum, with a slightly strict underbelly. We love our cuddles and he's a very sweet-natured little boy. He's very sensitive, and he is definitely an outdoorsy boy too. He needs to be outside for part of the day, every day, or he gets very grumpy and goes a bit stir crazy.

**You came late to motherhood at 41, does that make him extra special?** Absolutely. I've said it a million times but it was such a miracle for us after I suffered endometriosis which can affect fertility. I enjoyed the pregnancy as I thought it was never going to happen. For lots of reasons, him coming along at this point of my life was completely life-changing in a very wonderful way. I'm loving being a mummy! I can honestly say the love of my life is the little man.

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**We never see your partner Gerard in the limelight. Is that the way he prefers it?** He's happy staying under the radar. I don't really talk about him and he doesn't like to be photographed. It's not his job – he's not on telly, he works in property – and that's the way he wants to keep it. He's very supportive of me and I'm very supportive of him. I'd known him for 20 years. I knew he was good father material. He's an amazing dad.

**So is that it... or do you think you will add to your family?** I'd love to but I don't think it's possible. Zeph was a miracle baby and I think I'm too old now. The fact that he did come along at all was incredible so I'm counting my blessings.

**You have had a difficult few years with your parents both being ill with cancer. So, how did you cope?** It was a really tough time for us as a family and obviously my pregnancy was a focal point and a positive among a lot of negatives and helped both of my parents, especially my mum Christi – the loving Greek yia yia that she is! She was thrilled that I was pregnant as it happened right in the middle of her darkest time with her bowel cancer and helped her through it. And the same with my dad. They've both been brilliant and come through the other side. They are amazing grandparents.

**Did *Countryfile* co-host Matt Baker give you any tips on parenthood?** Aaaaah, Uncle Matt is brilliant and gives me loads of good advice. Matt and Nicola are dedicated parents to their two children – a fantastic example to follow. She's a great mum and he's such a hands on dad. I laugh at him sometimes at the stuff he does, he just enjoys everything about fatherhood – running around the garden, getting his hands dirty.

**You look great and lost your baby weight really quickly. How did you do it?** I put on a couple of stone but I lost it pretty quick. Maybe breastfeeding helped but my lifestyle is quite fast-paced and I burn off a lot of energy through work. I walk, do yoga and I'm always on the go. I'm the type of person who'll run up the stairs and not take the lift.

**You are a self-confessed adrenalin junkie, but are you more cautious now you are a parent?** So far I haven't been offered anything seriously dangerous since Zeph's birth. But I certainly wouldn't want to go away and leave him for six weeks – I just couldn't do that physically or emotionally. Would I skydive again? Probably! Because I'd still love to do it but I'd be thinking, 'You have responsibilities and someone to take care of.'

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*Countryfile* co-hosts Julia Bradbury and Matt Baker hit the walking trail

call to arms for men, women and children to come and see if they were at risk of type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease and liver disease. They're the three secret killers in Britain. With early diagnosis you can revert symptoms and save yourself. I am regularly checked up and I keep a careful eye on things.

**Do you eat healthily then?** Definitely. I'm more aware of food now and eating healthily, I really do try and seek out the vegetables, cut down on the red meat and eat my fruit and nuts. It makes a tremendous difference to your well-being as you get older. I don't do masses of exercise but I do love to dance – dancing is one of the happiest things in the world!

● Julia Bradbury co-hosts *Long Live Britain*, BBC1, Monday, 9pm, and *Take on the Twisters*, ITV, weekdays, 5pm

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