

# Small screen

## Home & away

Adelady's Hayley and Lauren say yes to taking SA to the world, writes Watch Editor LISA WOOLFORD

IT'S certainly been a jam-packed off-season for the Adeladies Lauren De Cesare and Hayley Pearson and not just planning for the bumper fourth instalment of their lifestyle show on Nine.

One half of the bubbly and vivacious duo, Lauren said "I do" to a big fat Greek-Italian wedding with her partner Ryan "Burgo" Burgess.

With Hayley hiding in a boodie in the bushes, ready to film her best friend and business partner's romantic moment, the proposal went off without a hitch – well, almost. Lauren, in her eagerness to say yes, knocking the ring (which was originally her beloved Nanna's, Lauren's mum giving it to Burgo a few months prior) into the sand. There was a mad panic and frantic search before the two-carat marquis diamond ring was found.

It's fitting the romantic, and well-planned proposal took place at Glenelg's Seawall Apartments. It's become a special place for Hayley and Lauren. An escape from the challenges they've faced. It's no exaggeration when they say the serenity of the beachside spot saved their lives.

"When we first started *Adelady*, my former partner passed away," Lauren tells *Watch*. "We'd just broken up. He had a brain aneurysm. I couldn't sleep at night. It was really traumatic."

"I thought I was never going to be happy again. I thought 'I'm 28 and I'm never going to find love again'."

Thankfully, some four years down the track she has, but Lauren admits it was hard to let go of the guilt that she had found happiness.

"I went through a bit of guilt for a couple of weeks, you know 'I'm happy but am I allowed to be happy?' but Hayley's a great one at bringing me back, telling me 'you deserve to be happy, you need to be happy'."

So will it be *Adelady The Wedding* in Season 5?

"Yes," Lauren laughs "and then Season 6 the baby, Season 7 – the divorce ..."

Hopefully not, and as Hayley reminds her, she really does want her big day to be small and intimate. And private.

"I say I don't want a big wedding, and then I catch myself saying to my Mum 'how about fireworks?'" Lauren says.

While she's putting off setting a date and planning (especially after just starting a guest list for that "small" wedding and numbers were already at 250), planning for this latest *Adelady* adventure started some time ago, with the pair hinting to *Watch* in 2017 they wanted to take it overseas.

They have indeed spread their wings and taken flight in this fourth series. Instead of just sharing the best of Adelaide, they're taking the best of Adelaide to the world – well, South-East Asia at least.

Kicking off their 14-part Season 4 with a double episode in Thailand, the duo were pinching themselves and immersing themselves in a different Thai experience.

"One of our favourite parts was the Elephant Nature Park," Hayley says.

"They rescue elephants that have been abused and they rehabilitate them and then they live this dream life."

"The lady that runs it has 600 dogs and knows all their names, she knows all the elephants' names, all the cats' names."

This fantastic sanctuary is located in Baan Lao, north of Chiang Mai where Lek Chailert – the founder spent her childhood. While she's not particularly loved by locals – elephant rides attract tourists and mean money, Lauren says she's trying



to change people's thinking. "She's managed to transform an elephant tourist park into a nice safe sanctuary," she says. "You can still make money from people seeing elephants, you don't need to ride them."

Hayley adds: "I want to go back there and volunteer for a week – live without my phone and just immerse myself there."

There's also weird and wonderful foods – including the girls trying silkworms. They baulked at another local delicacy though – a scorpion proving to be too much of a sting in the tail.

Food is very much part of Season 4 with local creative cook and author Leah Itsines joining the girls, bringing her delicious – but quick and simple – brand of home cooking.

And there's plenty of adventures through South Australia, from revisiting favourite spots in the Barossa to the Fleurieu. Not to mention a cross country trip on The Ghan.

"We had previously been on the Indian Pacific to Perth through the Nullarbor and we loved it so much," Hayley says. "We wanted to show train travel isn't just for old people. You can have the

most awesome adventure. If I told my kids it was a *Harry Potter* train that we were going on, they'd be so excited."

The Adeladies loved eating dinner under the stars and hope to replicate that when they have their first TV trip to the Flinders Ranges, with a visit to Rawnsley Park Station. And there's a return trip to the Riverland.

"There's so much to explore – we're just drawn there," Lauren says.

"We were in a jacuzzi on the second level of a houseboat going down the Murray and thinking 'nothing beats this'. Honest to God, we can go anywhere around the world, but this is the best holiday. Family and friends and a six-bedroom houseboat."

*Adelady* started as a website in June 2015 – born out of conversations over banana bread and, ironically, watermelon juice, not pineapple which is their eye-catching brand. Hayley had left radio to have one of her sons, Lauren had just returned from overseas. And the girls haven't looked back. Do they ever worry they'll run out of places?

"Never," Hayley laughs, "People always ask us



**SA'S SO GREAT:** Lauren De Cesare and Hayley Pearson relax at Seawall Apartments, top, at Elephant Nature Park in Thailand and, above, soaking in the sunset on a houseboat on the Murray River. Main Picture: MATT TURNER

that but it's never-ending because (SA) is evolving all the time. New businesses are popping up all the time."

And putting a call out to the vast social media network helps too. But the girls stress they really have to be into the experience. So don't expect any roughing-it, camping-type trips any time soon.

"We're not going to go do a swag somewhere in the desert, unless there's air conditioning in the swag and a spa ... we're not doing that," Hayley says.

Lauren adds: "And a fan. And someone to drop grapes in our mouths."

Despite how that sounds, there's truly no divas here with Lauren and Hayley eschewing the usual giant showbiz entourage. They still do their own hair and makeup on the road.

"We still get changed in carparks. I still go to the toilet on the side of the road," Hayley confesses.

Lauren laughs, cheekily adding: "You follow us around while we're filming, you will see our butts at some stage."

That down-to-earthiness and sense of fun emanates from our screens and is the key to the girls' success. The dynamic duo already have big plans for season five – taking *Adelady* overseas again and further selling their beloved state to the world.

"I want to go to Lauren's family's hometowns in Italy and Greece, that would be so bloody good," Hayley says.

But first, there's more living as a tourist in their own city. "Season 4 has been such a crazy adventure and I get to do it every day with my best friend," Lauren says. "It's like a marriage – we have our ups and downs, and we do have to work at it."

They also want to work on remembering to celebrate their wins.

"You know, we're boarding a plane to Thailand and we're like 'we're on a plane to Thailand filming for our show'," Lauren says. "It's so exciting taking Adelaide and SA out to the world and then bringing it back. Sometimes we forget to stop and smell that. We need to do that more."

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