

MAMMA MIA!

I HAVE A DREAM

PRESS PACK

EMBARGOED UNTIL MONDAY
16th OCTOBER AT 21:00

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MAMMA MIA!

I HAVE A DREAM

Pack your bags and get ready for an all singing, all dancing spectacular as MAMMA MIA! I Have a Dream lands on ITV1 and ITXV in October.

Filmed in some of the most stunning locations in Greece, where MAMMA MIA! is set, 14 of the nation's most talented musical theatre hopefuls, will compete to play the lead roles of Sophie and Sky, in the West End production of MAMMA MIA!

Hosted by the irrepressible Zoe Ball, each week our Sophies and Skys will be put through their paces by four superstar judges; Alan Carr, Jessie Ware, Samantha Barks and Amber Riley. They'll be tested on everything from singing and dancing, to acting and chemistry.

Creator and global producer of MAMMA MIA!, Judy Craymer, will be on hand to offer her expertise to the judges, who'll be tasked with making tough decisions, in their search to find the next West End superstars.

Each week contestants will be whittled down, culminating in a dazzling live grand-finale in London's West End where two winners will take it all!

Honey, honey, prepare to be THRILLED!

**ALL CONTENT IS EMBARGOED UNTIL MONDAY 16th OCTOBER AT 21:00.
PICTURES AND PREVIEWS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE VIA ITV SOON.**



JUDY CRAYMER

Creator and Producer of MAMMA MIA!

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JUDY CRAYMER

Why was now the right time to use a TV show to find the new stars of your stage show, MAMMA MIA!?

MAMMA MIA! the musical stage show is celebrating its 25th Anniversary on 6th April 2024 so it felt like the perfect time to commemorate this unique moment with a TV show to find musical theatre stars of the future. We really have something to celebrate. The stage show has been seen by over 65m people in 50 productions in 16 languages in over 450 cities around the world and I've produced two much-loved movies. The story of MAMMA MIA! is cross generational – about a mother and daughter. I thought the idea of a TV show to fill the young roles would make entertaining TV whilst finding new talent for musical theatre. MAMMA MIA! has always encouraged young actors and given opportunities to those making their stage debuts.

So complete with a stunning backdrop of an idyllic Greek location – where the original MAMMA MIA! is set – I sensed this was the most perfect TV format that will search out the next generation of musical theatre talent and hopefully inspire the generation after that. This will be a TV show bursting with all the sparkle and energy of the MAMMA MIA! stage show and movies, and an incredible opportunity to shine a light on the West End and theatre in general.

Did Benny and Bjorn give their seal of approval for this show?

I've had a long-term working relationship with Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus since I set up the company Littlestar with them to produce the stage show and subsequently the movies. They liked the idea of the TV show to celebrate 25 years of the stage show. And I think they will approve of the live band.

What is your role within the show?

I'm positioned within the show as the expert on MAMMA MIA!, guiding the judges and working with the MAMMA MIA! gold standard team that I've brought in;

the legendary choreographer Anthony Van Lasst, musical maestro Martin Lowe and casting supremo David Grindrod. It is they who are putting the contestants through their challenging paces. They have all worked on the show and the movies, can spot genuine talent a mile off and know exactly what it takes to be able to play these roles eight times a week in the West End show.

What do you think about the judging line-up?

What is great is that the judges are all incredibly experienced in their own line of work. They all have incredibly impressive careers in the entertainment industry and each one brings something different to the show. They all have a unique style and take on the contestants. They have brilliant, insightful comments, are encouraging and honest. They have all at some point been in a similar position to our talented contestants. Samantha Barks, who is top of her game in musical theatre brings the ultimate show experience having been on this journey herself. She knows what it takes both to be successful on a show like this and to have a topflight career in the West End.

Alan has great instincts and he's a pure performer. He loves the theatre, so he knows what resonates with audiences. To be a top comedian you must observe every tiny detail and he has this uncanny ability to help our Sophies and Skys unlock a new level to their ability.

Amber is another very laser-sharp eye. She's not only starred in a string of hit shows, she also has a voice that can break glass. She knows exactly what to say to push the contestants beyond what they thought they were capable of.

And Jessie is an exceptional singer songwriter who knows what it takes to entertain crowds, connect with her audience, to engage them, and help to tell a story through a pop song. She also adores musical theatre, as is evident through her incredible live performances.

What can fans expect from the show?

This TV show is filmed on a sun-kissed Greek Island so the audience will immediately enter the magical world of MAMMA MIA! and be transported to this idyllic location with a backdrop of a beautiful villa where the TV creative team have painstakingly constructed the set with every amazing detail of the stage show and movies. The fans, I think, will appreciate the detail. Audiences can expect total escapism - this show looks and feels like no other entertainment show on television. It is high-energy, feel-good, all-singing, all-dancing. They will see the contestants mentored through workshops, challenges, bootcamps and master classes. They sing not only ABBA songs, but other pop and rock classics, and perform duets and solo with full choreography and an ensemble cast.

It's not just a talent show, it's a never-seen-before behind-the-scenes look at a world class musical theatre training programme. And that's important because it goes beyond the TV show – whoever wins will be working in the West End.

How would you rate the talent of the contestants you've got on the show?

We've got some amazing contestants. Thousands applied, and then it got down to 500, then 50, then they were whittled down to those we see on the show. There's an interesting mix of talent; some who'd been to drama school and others who had had no training at all.

Did you have any input into who was sent home during the competition?

I would discuss with the judges what I thought of the performances, but it was important that they made the final decision, and I know how tough it was. There was a lot of deliberation and lively discussion about who would have to go. I thought Alan was going to burst into tears when we had the first elimination. It often got quite emotional. There was a lot of lip trembling.



ZOE BALL

Host

EMBARGOED UNTIL MONDAY
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ZOE BALL

How would you describe this show and what you are trying to achieve?

Well, the search is on for the new Sophie and Sky to star in London's West End MAMMA MIA! musical. It is all about young Sophie, who is about to get married, has grown up on an island, been brought up by her fabulous mum, Donna, and she has discovered by reading her mum's diaries that she potentially had three dads and she invites them all to her wedding. That's where the story begins for MAMMA MIA!, and so we've gone to where the story is set, on a Greek island, here played beautifully by Corfu.

We have taken seven boys and seven girls, they made it to the last 14 out of thousands who auditioned, and they are then put through their paces by the MAMMA MIA! gods, Judy Craymer, Anthony Van Laast, the choreographer, Martin Lowe, he's the musical expert, and a panel of experts. They do singing and dancing and acting workshops and basically we are seeing who will become the next Sophie and Sky. It's whittled down, week-on-week, and each show opens with a fabulous song and dance routine set in the streets or the beaches of Greece. It looks very much like MAMMA MIA! the movie.

What impact do you think filming the show in Greece has on the format?

The setting is perfect. For our Sophies and Skys, they're already in the beating heart of the place where this story is set. The girls can get themselves in the head space of Sophie, who's been brought up on an island in Greece. She's not been brought up in a usual manner. She's a real hippie kid. She's quite free-spirited. She's just been brought up by her mum.

And there's Sky. When I think of Sky, I always think of all the boys I've fallen in love with on holiday who might have been some kind of ski instructor, water sports instructors, who are just hot and dynamic.

Everything looks so fabulous. Having said that, you fly out to Greece, and you think the weather's going to be amazing and it was absolutely awful the first few days. Initially, we had torrential rain and some of the sets were blowing away! We had the audience under umbrellas, but then the Gods of Olympus smiled at us, and the sunshine came out. Thank goodness for that! I think there was one show where I was wearing long flares and the water from the set was up to my knees by the end of the show. I had tide marks on my trousers!

The performances are in front of an audience in a beautiful villa setting. The creative team has done such an amazing job that you do feel at times that you are part of the story when you are watching the audience.

Why do you think we need a show like this on our screens right now?

It's fabulous escapism because it's going to go out when the nights have drawn in and we all wish we were away on holiday. Then you've got the drama of these fabulous 14 whose dream it is to be on the West End and they are all so gorgeous. I kind of fell in love with all of them really, and I'm hoping the audience will too.

It's a very empowering show, right?

Yeah. I think that comes from the story about an amazing mum, Donna, who brings up her daughter on her own and is supported by her two best friends - it's such a female-led story.

How did the panel cope having to send people home?

It was really tough. There were some nights where the decision took hours because it's so brutal, and they don't always agree. But I think they have to take so many things into consideration. In the stage show, you've got to do eight shows a week, you've got to have the strength, your voice has to have that strength. You've got to pick up dance moves, but you've also got to have

the charisma of Sophie and Sky. Some of the guys are in the industry so they know how it works, but it is heartbreaking when they don't get through - they leave having learned a hell of a lot about themselves though.

Some of them have had experience and some of them are just fresh out of college. Some of them have done very little actually on stage so it's quite amazing to see how well they do considering the level that they're all at. But there's a few of them where I can already see them on the West End. There's something you look and think, "Oh, if she doesn't get this part, she'd be a great part in this, or he'd be amazing in that". I think a lot of them we will get to see on stage at some point. I'm really excited for them all.

What's important in finding the next Sophie and Sky?

People who've seen the stage show know that very different people can play those roles, which is great. It leaves it quite open.

A big part is the chemistry. They've got to have that chemistry. They've got to show strength on their own, they've got to show strength performing with Donna, with their mum, and then the acting skills. And some of them are great actors, some of them great dancers, some of them are the triple threat, and a lot of them pick stuff up so quickly, it's fabulous. I have to say they all, at some point, put in a performance that is unforgettable.

There's a couple of performances that I will never forget. I just was so proud of them.



ALAN CARR

Judge

EMBARGOED UNTIL MONDAY
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ALAN CARR

Why do you think we need a show like this on our TV screens at the moment?

I just think it's so colourful, it's so fabulous, it's so fun. The show is like a Berocca for me. I think being in Corfu really helps. I liked that we decided who went home. The performances were key. The show is just joyful fun on one of the most beautiful islands you'll see. So yeah, what's not to love? It's lovely.

Do you think the fact that you filmed on location in Greece gives the show that extra wow factor?

I'm glad you said that because what I loved about it was that we were in a stunning villa on top of this hillside. It felt like a James Bond lair, right on top of the island. I thought some of the performances of ABBA songs, or other popular classics, with that fabulous setting in the background was just absolutely amazing. It makes it more interesting to watch, more exciting and more adventurous. Everyone can sing, everyone is super talented, so you get a whole load of entertainment as well.

Judy Craymer is part of the show as well, what impact do you think she has on the show?

She's such a legend in the industry, it just gives it an authenticity. And for our performers - who are all fantastic actors, singers and dancers - even if they don't ultimately win that role in MAMMA MIA!, they are spending time with this team of showbiz legends, they have been able to showcase their talents in-front of them. I feel like this show is one massive audition, not just for the roles of Sophie and Sky. Judy would chat to us about what she saw, who she'd like to see as Sky and Sophie. It is really interesting because she lives and breathes MAMMA MIA!, the movies and everything.

This woman who's watching you perform, she chats to Cher, Meryl Streep, Julie Walters. She has a lot of power and it's OK you're performing to us four judges sitting there.

But then you look slightly to your right, and you've got the woman who could make you an absolute superstar. She's a game changer on our show.

What do you think you bring to the panel?

Listen, I've said all along, and I'm sure some people will moan and go, "What's he done? He's never done the West End." I'm a standup performer. I do a little bit of this, a little bit of that. But also I go to the theatre a lot, I love it. I know what entertains me, so in a way I am just your average punter that these performers are going to need to connect with. The other three really know their stuff. Between them, I think they've performed on every stage going, from the West End, Broadway, Coachella, Wembley Arena.

There's not a stage those three have not been on and they know the technical side, but there has to be a space for the people at home. You know what I mean? And that's me! I'm Fred and Vera sitting on the sofa at home. I'm basically Gogglebox! I'm them just sitting there going, "I thought that was rubbish... Oh, you hit that note... I don't think you've got it", because it's that special star quality you're looking for and anyone can sense that, you don't just have to be a singer to know when something - or someone - is special.

You're the only man on the panel, how do you feel being surrounded by all these amazing women?

I got a bit worried when I first signed up for it and I saw who I was with because I thought, 'Oh no, they're not going to do one of those medleys that they do at the beginning of The Voice when everyone has to sing, are they?!' I was genuinely thinking that, 'I do not want to have to sing a big old ballad with Jessie, Samantha and Amber because there's going to be some bum notes' - but thankfully that wasn't the case!

Fans can expect lots of great contestants taking to the stage, can't they?

Yeah, it's that perfect mix of professionals and novices. There's someone who works in a factory, there's someone who works in a coffee shop. There are people who are trained, they've been to drama school for three years. There are people from all over. We've give people from all walks of life a chance.

Could you tell the difference between those who had training and those who didn't?

It's really interesting because you'd think people with training would be the most confident but actually, in some ways, they felt they had more to lose because they'd trained for it. But when they were on that stage you cannot bet who is going to sing the best. That's the joy of it. But also as Judy says, she wants the triple threat. If you're going to get those lead roles, you need to not only sing, you've got to dance, you've got to act as well. Some of the singers weren't as strong actors. So we as judges, it was a jigsaw puzzle, because we want them to be able to belt out these big numbers but that's no good if they're walking into the furniture and can't act.



AMBER RILEY

Judge

**EMBARGOED UNTIL MONDAY
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AMBER RILEY

What impact do you think filming in Greece has on the show?

It just felt more authentic. It kind of puts you more in the mind and the soul of MAMMA MIA! Looking out and seeing how beautiful Greece is, and then actually hearing that music, it was such a treat. I feel like people are going to watch and just be transported. It's going to get them even more involved in that story, and make them want to go watch the show over and over again.

What was it that you were looking for in your Sophie and Sky?

I think speaking to Judy Craymer was so informative for me, because I honestly didn't know until I really got there to see what it was that she was looking for, and who she believed Sophie and Sky were. Then I had to also think - as an audience member, somebody that would go and watch the show - about what I wanted to see, personally, and then my experience just being in the West End. Can you handle eight shows a week? Are you equipped for that kind of pressure being a leading woman? Are you a team player? There are so many elements that I felt like I wanted to look for, but it was mainly just that charm that Sky kind of has, and the triple threat: you have to be able to sing, dance and act.

What does it actually take to handle the pressure of eight shows a week?

I think it's literally different for everyone, but a good frame of mind, a lot of focus, a lot of rest, a lot of water. You definitely sacrifice more of a social life when you have to do something like that, because you can't do a lot of talking. You can't be drinking all the time. You have to get sleep. Your voice has to be rested. Your body has to be rested to dance. It really does take a lot of discipline and focus, anyone working in the theatre is an athlete, and I could see that every contestant that was there was just hungry and ready for that.

What do you think you bring to the panel?

I really just went in to be myself. I always go in with good intentions to be encouraging, and also to give really great constructive criticism. I love competition shows, I love watching them. I feel like it was important to me to not only let them know how amazing they are, but also where they can improve and use some of my experiences, whether good or bad experiences that I've had, and things that I've learned, to help them maybe start on their journey, and make it a little bit easier for them so they don't have to run into the same pitfalls I did.

What did you think about the contestants?

I thought that it was amazing that they were from all walks of life. Some have got training, others haven't. The thing is, once you get bit by the theatre bug, you're bit. It definitely opens up a different part of you. It's a very different feeling than doing film or television. I feel like it's the rawest, most open that you can be on stage. Seeing and knowing that there were a couple of them that have never really experienced that, have never really been on stage in front of large groups of people at all, I was just so excited for them to have that feeling. It's going to keep them coming back for more. That was exciting.

How do you think experience, or lack of, impacted their confidence during their performances?

Honestly, I think that it may have been on some people's minds but I wasn't trained, nor was Samantha. Neither one of us were. We kept making that point to them. We didn't have the kind of training that a lot of people have, and that doesn't matter. What matters is your discipline, your drive and your talent. Honestly, all of them kind of stepped up and sang, I wouldn't have been able to pick who had extensive theatre training sometimes and who didn't. They're all that good. We definitely tried to encourage and make it a point that you're here because you're good, and it's not really because of your degree. Not saying that having a theatre degree isn't important and doesn't help, but if you've got talent, you've got it, no matter where you've come from.

The contestants were put through a series of masterclasses run by the judges and some of the stars currently in the West End production of MAMMA MIA!. What was that like?

Oh, man. I love acting so much and singing so much, and I got to do an acting workshop, along with Samantha, with the girls. I wish I had more time with each and every one of them individually, because that's something that I really, really love to do, mentoring and helping. That was probably one of the most exciting days that we got. We had multiple days, but we had one specific day where we really got to work with the girls, and give them notes, and play with them. We got to actually do the scene, be in the scene with them. Being able to actually be hands-on with them was probably one of my most favourite days that we had during the whole entire series.

How did they cope with the pressure working with you and Samantha?

I'm sure that they were nervous, but we really tried our best to let them know, "Hey, we're on your team. We're here to help you be the best that you can." Unfortunately, it's a competition, and everyone can't win, but you can win by taking away something from this experience, and helping yourself in your own career. It's a great opportunity. I think that they knew that, and I hope that they kept that in mind. Leaving this show isn't the end. It's not the end of your career, because maybe you weren't exactly right for Sophie and Sky, but there have been things that I've auditioned for that I wasn't right for. Then there have been things that I've auditioned for that I got right away. We were very adamant in letting them know what's for you is for you. That doesn't negate how talented or special you are, it's just right time, right place.

Did any of them give you goosebumps during their performances?

A lot of them did! There's a specific number where all the girls sing, and it just stands out in my mind how every girl kind of took their moment and sang so beautifully. Really, it was a moment where we were all confused about who would be Sophie, because everyone kind of embodied her in that moment. I really enjoyed that performance.



SAMANTHA BARKS

Judge

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SAMANTHA BARKS

How excited were you to be a part of this show?

Well, MAMMA MIA! is the most feel good, happy show there is. Sometimes I just throw on the film in the winter because it makes me feel like I've been on holiday. I feel like this series is that, it's the beautiful setting of being in Greece and celebrating the amazing music of ABBA. It's such feel good TV. It feels like such a huge honour to get to be a part of finding the new Sophie and Sky. The contestants are all such incredibly talented performers, so it feels like I have a big responsibility, but it was just a joy to get to see them develop and grow and all those good things, it was amazing.

You've come full circle having started your career on a show like this and now you're a judge, how did that feel?

It was incredible for me. It brought back so many memories of being 17 and throwing myself into this process. And it brought back a lot of nostalgia. I took the responsibility really seriously because it's their lives and they've worked really hard to get to here. I don't take it for granted that I've got to be a part of choosing who gets the role.

Before you started filming did you have any nerves about taking on this role?

I think that the way I would say it would be that I knew what a big responsibility it was, and I took it seriously. I didn't know if I was necessarily nervous. I was more excited. Something I really loved about what we did was getting to be a little bit more hands-on than the traditional judge might be. I got to do workshops and really get in there and help them and work with them. I want to be there for them and work with them because I've been in that position before. You want them to know that you want the best out of everybody. That was my biggest thing. I wanted everybody who auditioned for that show to be able to be proud of what they've done because they're all so incredibly talented.

It's not about one being better than another, it's about who's more suited to the role and you want them to be able to leave with their heads held high. And they all can say that they did that for sure.

Why do you think being on a show like this is such a great platform for a young performer starting out?

It's a big platform to get to be on TV and it's so exciting because I'm obviously very passionate about musical theatre and having come from a show like this, it is such an exciting thing for musical theatre to be showcased on a primetime TV show, where we're celebrating all things musical theatre because it's a glorious, amazing, incredible industry. I'm just so excited that it's on the TV in this way and giving these incredibly talented performers this platform which means so many people are getting to see them.

What impact do you think filming on location has on the show and the performances that we're going to see?

I think it's a huge part of it because in MAMMA MIA! the film or the stage show, Greece is one of the characters, in my opinion. This show really showcased that. It's all about the sun and the sea and the sand, and all the characters are falling in love or falling out of love. I think to have it on location really takes people away and makes them feel like they've just had a little dose of that holiday magic.

What do you think you bring to the panel?

Well, I hope that I can bring my experience of having been through this exact process. I know what it's like being on that stage, eight shows a week. I do it currently and that's been my whole life, that's what I know. I hope that I can be a help, a guide.

I've seen all kinds of people who have played Sophie in MAMMA MIA! that I know from my own experiences, so I hope that I can be helpful to the contestants and helpful to the panel too by sharing what I know.

How did you find the process of sending people home?

It's very difficult and obviously I have empathy for it because I've been there. But something I did say to them, and I remember someone saying this to me when I did the show, "Don't think about it as the end. Don't think my career's over, my life is over, I'm never going to work again. Think of it as the very beginning of your career. And as long as you're showcasing yourself to the best of your ability, you'll go on and work in other jobs and this is your platform to showcase what you can do." And that's what I would try and say to them, when you have your final moment, take it. Take that microphone and show the world what you're going to give to this industry and what you're going to go out there and achieve because it's exciting. I talk a lot about reframing those thoughts in terms of I know it's sad in the moment, but just think about the exciting future ahead because I care about these contestants and I want them all to have great careers and I think they will.

Did it impact you emotionally?

Yeah, I know the feeling. I've been there, I've been in those shoes. So, I don't make any decisions flippantly. I cared a lot. And me and Jessie sometimes would meet for breakfast and we'd be like, "Well I've been thinking about it all night. What do you think about this?" So I'm not somebody who can just rock up on the day and be like, "Oh that person's gone. Oh well." I think about it deeply. I feel things deeply when we're sending someone home because I've been there and I know it's real people's lives. So it was definitely emotional.



JESSIE WARE

Judge

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JESSIE WARE

How would you describe this show?

MAMMA MIA! is celebrating 25 years on the West End which is a huge feat. MAMMA MIA! I Have a Dream is about finding new cast to play the role of Sophie and Sky the West End. Myself, Alan, Amber and Samantha were lucky enough to be judges and mentors to help guide the way with contestants and whittle down performers before a public vote will determine the winners, later this year.

The TV show is filmed in Greece, where MAMMA MIA!, of course, is set! The show is a total feast for the eyes. It's gorgeous, it's uplifting, it's entertaining, and it's for the entire family. I think that's what is so special about it. My kids are six, four, and two and when I told them what I was doing for a month, I got them to watch MAMMA MIA! with me - my son is now completely obsessed, I mean he requests Lay All Your Love On Me every day. The power of ABBA and MAMMA MIA! is completely contagious & totally feel-good.

Do you think filming in Greece gives the show the wow factor?

I think it does, yeah. It was a joy, but I also think it's going to be really fun for people when they're watching at home as well. I think filming where MAMMA MIA was set offers a totally unique point of view.

Were you nervous when you said yes to being a judge or were you just so excited to take on the challenge?

I wouldn't say I wasn't nervous. I was so busy before flying out to Greece because my album had just come out, I didn't really have the time to overthink. I was just so excited. I felt like it was my time to do something in TV and this felt right. I said to one of the producers, "I know I can do this and I really would love it." I think because of the aspects of musical theatre, my love of MAMMA MIA!, Greece being a very special place to me; where I got married, where I go on holiday and the fact that I'm really loving and feeling most confident about being a musician - this was just a great chance for me to do something different and to experience something new. And I absolutely adored it.

What do ABBA mean to you?

ABBA are such an important part of, I think, everyone's growing up. There's such nostalgia with ABBA and I have such respect for them and their skills as songwriters. 25 years on the West End shows how these songs stand up to the test of time and just how brilliant they are. I was enamoured by Judy Craymer and the magic of MAMMA MIA! and everything around it. I just felt like it was this club that I wanted to be part of. I think we all had MAMMA MIA! fever when we were there, which is totally right. It's contagious. It's so fun. And I think the big opening numbers on the show are something that's just going to make everyone's hair stand up on end and give them goosebumps. It's exciting. It's a show that's got all the wonderful bells and whistles that you want in musical theatre, but with this amazing location.

How did you get on together?

We totally bounced off each other, we got on so well. We would go back after an elimination and have a debrief because we were so invested in the Sophies and Skys, and this show. It shows how much we care about it and also respect each other as judges. We also couldn't stay away from each other. We were quite co-dependent on each other in that month, whether it was me coming back from doing Pride in Los Angeles and being like, "Who wants to go and get a Greek salad with me?" We spent so much time together and it was wonderful. I really made some new friends and that's fab.

Who would you say was the toughest to impress on the judging panel?

I don't know! I'm scared it's me, but I'm not sure! I didn't hold back, I don't think. But that was just because I cared about them improving and reaching their potential. We were all looking for different things - it was quite interesting.

Who was the naughtiest on the panel?

Well, I'm slightly worried that's me again! Me and Alan. I'm pulling Alan into this one!

We were like giggling school children, I just have too much of a hoot with him. He's so hysterical. We have to remind ourselves that we are judging a competition, this is serious. Sometimes it was too much fun having Alan there. He's so wonderful and brilliant.

Was it important to you that the show was open to everyone regardless of their experience or training?

Yeah, absolutely. I'm a pop star who doesn't have the training but has a passion and love for musical theatre, so I was always kind of rooting for the people that maybe were less trained, because I wanted to find that magic. I think it's really important. It shows that it can be for anybody and it's about talent. You have to consider though that you have to have the stamina to cope with this career and that was something that came up a lot. It's about who is going to be able to do eight shows a week in the West End. I feel like everybody on this show is going to have a career in either music, musical theatre, or acting; they were all brilliant.

The talent's that good?

Yeah, it's really good. I say kids like I'm an old woman, I'm not an old woman, but they were great kids! They were so enthusiastic, and they had so much thrown at them. It was so intense. They weren't just doing the song for us at the end of the night, they were doing workshops with big professionals in the field. They were having to learn dances; they were having to do partner work, chemistry work. They were having to do all of it & I have real respect for that.

Did you have any really emotional reactions to any of the performances?

I was really determined to not stand up too many times, because then I feel like it kind of takes the impact away. You don't want to give away your standing ovation too early in the competition, but there was one that, I think it was on the second show and I was like, "come on!" It was just so exciting. And then one of the boys got me so emotional. I had lots of frustrations with one boy, who I was rooting for a lot. I was moved to tears, particularly when we had to send people home.

MAMMA MIA! I HAVE A DREAM DIGITAL

You can dance, you can jive...

From Greece to the West End, the MAMMA MIA! I Have a Dream social channels will be there every step of the way, giving viewers backstage access to our future musical theatre stars, judges and host.

On YouTube and Facebook, you will find every stunning performance from our Sophies and Skys, along with big, movie-style opening numbers, workshops and rehearsals. Here you will also find 'Knowing Me, Knowing You', an insightful (and often hilarious) Q&A series with Amber Riley, Samantha Barks, Alan Carr, Jessie Ware and Zoe Ball.

On TikTok and Instagram Reels you'll discover our contestants playing games on their downtime, as well as revealing their innermost thoughts on the competition in their 'When All is Said and Done' vlogs.

Across the series there'll also be glossy picture galleries, Judge quizzes and on X (formerly Twitter) you can join in with the conversation, using #MammaMiaDream, during every episode.

Have the time of your life and follow, like and subscribe to MAMMA MIA! I have A Dream here:

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Jet2holidays, the UK's largest tour operator, is the official partner of MAMMA MIA! I Have a Dream, a new entertainment show to find the next stars of the West End theatre production of MAMMA MIA!

The package holiday specialist will use the partnership to raise brand awareness and reinforce its position as the UK's number one tour operator to Greece, as well as enabling it to target a key family audience.

As part of the partnership, **Jet2holidays** will feature 30-second TV adverts and idents at the opening, during the ad breaks and at the end of the show. **Jet2holidays** will also integrate product placement into the show and launch a range of exclusive competitions. These include a weekly competition giving away a 7-night holiday to Greece, and the opportunity to win a pair of tickets to the MAMMA MIA! I Have a Dream series finale.



Gavin Forth, Marketing and Digital Director of **Jet2holidays**, said:

"As we are the UK's leading tour operator to Greece, this makes **Jet2holidays** the perfect fit to be the official partner of ITV's MAMMA MIA! I Have A Dream. We know this exciting new show will be a huge hit, particularly with families, which makes the partnership a fantastic way for us to showcase the many award-winning benefits of booking and travelling on a package holiday with **Jet2holidays**. We will be supporting the partnership with a fun, heavyweight campaign including bespoke adverts, activities and exclusive competitions, and we are absolutely thrilled to be announcing this partnership today."

