**42. (re-release) Plants, Curiosities & The Natural World with Ines Stuart-Davidson**

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:00:00] Hello, lovely listeners. Plants and nature play an important role in my life. And especially this last year. How about you? Isn't there something magical about being amongst trees and green things? I'm incredibly grateful to live in a leafy part of London, close to Kew Gardens. You could say Kew has quickly become my happy place. The place I can most fully relax, switch off and enjoy the restorative beauty of nature. So, this feels like a good time to bring back an early episode of ALSO in PINK. I chat with Ines Stuart-Davidson about all things nature, and Kew.

**Intro** [00:00:43]

Hello and welcome to ALSO in PINK. The podcast all about lifestyle design. How we live, the clothes we choose and how we organise our space. I'm your host, Alexandria Lawrence, a certified KonMari consultant and personal stylist. I'm here to guide you on your journey to live a happy, fulfilled life.

Every Tuesday, you'll get new insight on what it means to live well, plus actionable tips.

Redefine what's possible and create your ideal life. Our guest today is designer photographer Ines Stuart-Davidson. Ines has a love of curiosities and the wonders of the natural world. In this episode, you'll hear her get down and dirty with plants as she talks about photography techniques. And you may even add some new lingo to your vocabulary. Ever heard of terpenes? Plants play an important role in her work life too. Ines designs a broad range of creative work for Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, otherwise known as the ever-amazing Kew Gardens.

**Interview Begins** [00:01:57]

So, Ines, welcome. It's so lovely to have you here and I'm delighted to welcome you to ALSO in PINK.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:02:03] Thank you for having me.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:02:04] Sure. So you are a designer and photographer at Kew Gardens. And how idyllic does that sound? For listeners perhaps not from the UK who aren't familiar with Kew Gardens, how would you describe it? What makes Kew unique and special?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:02:21] Well, it's the most biodiverse Botanic garden on the planet, really. It's got so many different types of plants. I mean, I've been going there since I was six years old, so I just I've always loved it. I just remember being able to run around as a child and now I just love the diversity of everything. So you've got like all the trees and the flowers, but then you've got the glass houses. At the moment I'm obviously working from home, so I'm hardly going there, which is a shame.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:02:50] Yes. So, how has Kew Gardens generally coped with the pandemic? It was closed for a while, wasn't it?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:02:56] Yeah, I think, I can't remember exactly when it reopened. I think it was maybe May or so, but I've been working from home the whole way through. Lots of projects were canceled. Lots of exhibitions. So we ended up having to do an exhibition called travel the world at Kew, which was using some of the artwork that I had created from home. I saw actually, uh, my artwork on a bus the other day in central London, I saw about four of them. And I was just like, yeah, this is amazing.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:03:25] That is amazing. Has that happened before? Was that the first time you've been on a bus?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:03:30] I've done some work for the exhibiton with Chihuly last year, that was on a bus. And I also did some work for Peter Rabbit a few years ago. That was on a bus as well. But this one was the one artwork that I actually had created solely. So it was quite different, but because it's blue and green and it sort of trails through all the different areas of Kew, focusing on different plants from around the world, the colors really stood well against the backdrop of the bus, like of the red. So it just was like, every time I saw it, I was like, Oh, there's another one. Oh, there's another one. Yeah. It was really nice.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:04:06] Oh, I hope you've taken lots of photos of the buses.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:04:09] I have. Yeah.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:04:10] Excellent. So how would you describe your role at Kew Gardens?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:04:15] I'm mainly a graphic designer. so I've recently just worked on state of the world's plants and fungi, which is a report that focuses a lot on what's happening in the world right now for biodiversity. And, I also do a lot of photography there. So I'm not always just doing design, which is nice. But I'm running around the gardens as well, taking photos. Because I've been taking photos of plants for really long time, every time they're short on photography, I've, I'm always being asked, can I help with this or find something, but usually I'm more interested in macro. So getting up close and they need a lot of pictures with like buildings in the background and that's not necessarily what I've always taken. So I'm having to expand a little bit.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:04:59] Oh, so was it a dream job for you as a child then? If Kew was already a part of your life then did you think, Oh, someday I'm going to work there... or did you think that far ahead?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:05:10] I'd always been creative. So I knew that I wanted to do something with, nature and sort of design to, inspire people. And I sort of really started photographing plants when I was about 17 at college. And then I thought, Oh, this would be a great way to actually be a designer for them. And then I did some work experience after university, I think it was in 2013 and I just loved it.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:05:37] Yeah, it seems like such a special place. There's been a big trend in recent years in, uh, interior design and urban life. And that's bringing the outdoors indoors. So how about you? Have you, have you been bringing the outdoors indoors in your home?

 **Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:05:53] Yes. I have a lot of succulents in my flat and the reason that I was attracted to the flat so much was because we have floor to ceiling windows, and I'm on the level of the trees. So when it's spring, you've just got this like green backdrop, and it's just so nice. I think there's so many variations of green more than probably any other color. It just makes you feel really good. I mean, I like going out and walking in nature. We're quite lucky that we've got a really nice stretch of the Thames here. So it's covered in lots of places, arms and everything. So I do really enjoy walking around that just makes me feel a lot better and more balanced.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:06:33] Yeah, has your love for nature really affected how you've been able to cope with the pandemic and lockdown, would you say?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:06:39] Oh, definitely. I think if I didn't have the ability to be in my parents' garden over lockdown, I think I would have really struggled. Also because I work at Kew, so that was sort of cut out. I've only been there maybe five times since it's opened up. We can't actually really get into the office because maintaining social distance is really difficult. It's nice to be able to be in such a green environment in this part of London. I think if I lived somewhere else, I would have gotten quite frustrated and I think I would have struggled a lot more.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:07:17] I can certainly relate to that. So what would you say the most important element is in nature photography? How can everyone listening up their nature photography game?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:07:27] I think that having a good camera is key, but I think that photography can make your life so much better as a hobby. It's a great stress reliever. So when you look around at the beauty surrounding you simply can't help, but understand how small you are when you realize how vast everything else is. focusing on detail, you can focus on form, texture, color seasonal. I mean, there's just so much.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:07:56] And how about in terms of equipment? Do you shoot with a DSLR or mobile phone or a combination of tools?

 **Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:08:03] When I don't take my DSLR out, I shoot with my Samsung phone, because sometimes I like to just get out and just be surrounded by nature without focusing on other things, like sort of just be there in the moment. So it really varies really between what I use, but both the good options. I can't go to Kew Gardens with just my phone. I would just regret it every single time. Cause I'm always like, oh, this is so amazing. And I like to focus on detail, using my macro lens a lot. So you're just focusing on details or like the little hairs that you get on the petals , yeah, I find it just amazing.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:08:42] Yes, you can see and appreciate what the naked eye can't really perceive as easily. I certainly find macro lenses rather magical as well. So, so do you think you need a macro lens to make the most out of plant photography?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:08:56] I don't think so, but I think it definitely helps to have something where you can frame your photo. I see a lot of people in Instagram that photograph plants in an entirely different way to me, and I'm always impressed. A couple of years ago, I'd actually joined like a photography meetup group. And we went to Richmond park and I saw people photographing things that I would not normally consider something that I would photograph. What was nice about it was we all shared our photos afterwards and then I could see how other people had framed their photography. And I just thought that was really great because you can look from a bird's eye view or, or what I tend to do is go onto the same level as the plant, so that you've got it right in front of you rather than looking down at it, for example. So it feels as though you are at one with it, rather than just observing, if that makes sense.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:09:50] That makes perfect sense. And, uh, puts me in mind if I think how some people relate to children maybe. You feel like you have to get down to their level to really engage with them. So maybe it's the same with plants. Meet them where they are.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:10:05] Yeah. Sometimes you just have to get a little bit dirty on your knees or something and bend down. The amount of times I've been lying on my stomach or something to photograph a mushroom, but I just get up, brush it off and go to the next one.

 **Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:10:17] And do you wear a particular clothing when you go nature photographing, getting down and dirty with the plants? Or are you not that fussed? You're sort of happy to brush off whatever you're wearing...

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:10:28] Yeah, I'm not that fussed. If it's raining, I'll prepare for the rain and I'll put on like a jacket or something, but the amount of times I've come back to the office and I've got wet knees because I've gone out and taken pictures on the ground while it's wet and just gone. Oh, whatever. It's fine.

 **Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:10:44] Brilliant. So the photography you've done at Kew. I think you were saying the focus there is less on that macro photography and having a wider perspective. Has that pushed you to photograph in a very different way? Or how has that helped you up your photography game, or has it?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:11:03] So I think I've had to about it more. So it's not just for me, it's more to advertise the gardens to people. Before, it was just for myself now it's to like bring people in and inspire people. So it's showing what, you know, the architecture is like in the background, because the Palm house, for example, is just beautiful architecture in itself or the, or the temporary house. So I guess, yeah, it's sort of widened my perspective, yeah, of shooting from a bit further back as well.

 **Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:11:35] And then shooting with your audience in mind as well.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:11:38] Yeah, definitely. It helps to have a brief, I think if I don't have a brief, then I don't really necessarily know what I'm going to photograph. I mostly do the architectural photos if I'm at work, but this year we're going to have much less photography because we've not really been able to go as often. I mean, the weather, the weather has been so good this summer that actually, it's too difficult to photograph when it's that bright. Because everything just glows. You can't get the actual colors of a plant. You need to go really early in the morning, for example. And sometimes I'm just way too busy with design to focus on photography.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:12:13] Yes. I've certainly heard that early in the morning, when it's overcast, when there are clouds or golden hour...

 **Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:12:20] Yes, or even later on in the evening, but because I start usually around half past nine at work here, I don't always like to rush it. If I go out and I've got to rush, I just get more stressed.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:12:34] Is there a particular time of year that you really love photographing, or a season?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:12:39] I think spring and autumn are my favorites just for different reasons spring, you've got everything just bursting out after it's been grey for so long and autumn, you can really focus on like the textures and detail. I like going out a lot in the rain because you've got all the raindrops on the leaves, and I really enjoy photographing that and then turning it black and white and, you know, changing the contrast. Or when you've got frost early in the morning and you can see it creeping along over the plants. I just love that.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:13:10] Oh, yes. And I can just visualize the macro lens opportunities with the bits of frost and yeah almost looks otherworldly probably if you get that up close.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:13:21] Yeah, definitely. And I don't really edit the colors that much, but I find the editing process also really stress relieving too, because you sit there and you can just experiment a little bit.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:13:31] Yes. And how do you edit photos? Do you use Photoshop? Do you use, sort of, high-end software to do that? Or do you ever edit on your phone?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:13:41] So if I'm on the computer, I use Lightroom and I use Photoshop depending on what I actually need to do to edit the photo, but I also have, an app on my phone, which is for mirroring. It's called Mirror Lab and I just find that great, because you've got so many different options to mirror all the photos, whether it's just reflecting it or you can zoom in and out and change different aspects of the photos. So you can bring in more of the plant or less of the plant and you can spin it, which I just, I think that's quite fun.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:14:11] So many creative possibilities. Do you think having a brief with what you're doing, uh, really helps to spark a different level of creativity?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:14:20] I think when you have a brief, you know exactly what the client wants. You're fitting it to that, but then when you go out by yourself, you can expand a little bit more. I think sometimes when I go to Kew on my own times, I just tend to photograph everything. Whereas when you set yourself a theme for that one day and say, Oh, I'm only going to do texture today, you get some amazing results that you probably would have missed normally. So I think it's actually good sometimes to set yourself a goal for that day.

For example, about a year ago I set up a photography club at Kew Gardens for staff, and I thought that was really nice because once every two weeks we went out and set themes. We tried to find fungi or something one week. Another week we were just focusing on the detail of something or, you know, doing seasonal work. And I think I've got about 12 people coming along with me and it was actually really nice. It was nice to actually meet other people across Kew Gardens as well cause there's about 700 people that work at Kew. So just try to meet people from science, you know, when we're all really busy doing our own different things. Like taking an hour out to go and do something specific was actually really nice.

 **Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:15:37] Yeah. It seems that when people in all walks of life think of their happy place, they often picture something in nature, something that takes them away from feelings of anxiety or overwhelm that they might experience in daily life. What would you say your happy place is? Do you have one?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:15:56] Definitely being at Kew. Because I've got so many memories of it as a kid, like in the snow, in the rain. One of my earliest memories of it is walking into the Marianne North gallery and just loving all of it, all the organized, like photos next to each other, beauty and science, like perfectly blended in. I don't remember saying this, but a family friend said that when I walked out, I went, I want to be a botanist. So I've got it wrong. I mean, I'm not a botanist, but I'm a graphic designer and I like working with nature. So I think that's really good as well, but you know, it's never too late to like go and learn something different. So I want to go and work with plants one day, I'll go and change that.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:16:39] Yes, for sure. And that's something that, um, a pandemic really brings into perspective. Not being afraid to try something new or to yeah, go for it and explore the possibilities that are out there.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:16:53] The world has so much to offer and even London as a city has so much to offer as well in terms of museums and the inspiration that you can get from there. And we're very lucky.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:17:07] Yes. And, was design something that had a big impact in your home life when you were a child, um, interior design, or just having fun decorating the house? Is that something that was meaningful for you then?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:17:21] My mom is a jeweler, so she's always inspired me to look at things on a deeper level. My dad's a web designer. My brother's also just graduated from university, doing 3D design. So we're all creative in our own way. What I love about my parents' house is that they have just so many curiosities and things collected from around the world. I love their house a lot because it's just like its own mini museum.

And so I guess I've adopted that in my own flat. Like I've got an old letterpress drawer that I've basically hung up on the wall and all my little curiosities hang in there. So I've kind of, blended from what I've learned at home, into my own flat. And a lot of my furniture is repurposed. I didn't want it to all just look like it come from the same place. I've just been, always interested in little wonders basically, which is probably why I really enjoy going to museums. Cause I'd get personal connections to things and I take a photograph of it. And then I think, oh, one day I could use that in a drawing or something.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:18:24] Yes. I love that little wonders in your own cabinet of curiosities at home. I think that's a lovely approach to curating your beautiful creative little world. Would you say that you have a, a lifestyle philosophy or a mantra or something that helps you live your best life?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:18:43] So for the last few years I've been following stoicism, which helps me not to hide having an emotional response because I've had to improve my outlook on life and minimize my negative emotional responses. So I've had to realize that I can't really control outside influences, which is inherently really unproductive. I follow it because it's based on a sort of system of logic and its views on the natural world. And because it's quite an old philosophy, it's helped me to understand that people have gone through that for many thousands of years. I sort of like look inward and what I can change about myself rather than changing about other people. I definitely need to find harmony in disharmony. And my favorite quote is from the Addams Family, which is normal, is not an illusion. What is normal for the spider is chaos for the fly. And it just means that context is everything.

**Promo** [00:19:43]

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:19:43] Imagine... if you lived the life you really want. You know, your dream life.

Have you ever taken time to picture what it would look like? I mean, what it would really look like?

We're not talking about the life you feel you should have, but, deep down, the life you secretly want. Your ideal life. Maybe you already have a vision.

 Picture an iconic VW Camper Van... pootling down the coastal path. Maybe you're in Cornwall, the Amalfi Coast or alongside a fjord in Norway. Yes, the scenery is stunning and you're getting ready to stop for a picnic. There's a perfectly ripe, oozy cheese waiting for you, a selection of your favorite treats, and there may, or may not, be vintage vinyl and a portable gramophone to complete the picture. But. That's never going to happen, right? Wouldn't it be nice to take a step back, sweep aside all your worries... and imagine...

That's where I come in.

 I'm your host, Alexandria Lawrence, and I've developed an exclusive questionnaire for the ALSO in PINK community to help you create a vision of your ideal life.

Simply join the ALSO in PINK email list and you'll get instant access to our Ideal Lifestyle Vision Questionnaire. Go on then, make a cup of your favorite tea, or whatever floats your boat... Go to alsoinpink.com and click Start Now. Redefine what's possible & Create your ideal life.

**Interview Resumes** [00:21:20]

Would you say you have a daily habit or ritual that brings you joy?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:21:31] I've been thinking about this for a long time. And I think that even though I'm a really organized person, I have not organized like a very good routine at all. I think if I go back to the office, it might sort of create a bit of a better balance again. But the one thing that I really picked up on was when I was listening to Radio 6 and it was a Monday. And they sometimes do these sorts of sessions for like 10 minutes or something where they tell you to stop doing what you're actually doing and just listen to what they're playing to you. And that was one which was a crystal sound bowl and sound healing. That just, it hit me on another level. I'm desperate to find a crystal singing bowl for myself. I want to be able to try it for myself and see what notes I want, but I find it hard to know where to go and find one. I think I found a shop in London, but based on the pictures. It's different to a Tibetan singing bowl. I think the crystal has the kind of different chord. And so I'd really like to find one of those and do that when I wake up and before I go to bed. And I think that would just be a good routine for me.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:22:41] That reminds me a bit of Marie Kondo actually. She has a version of that I think with crystals and tuning forks. So I don't know how similar that is, but getting that sort of resonance from the crystal somehow.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:22:53] I'll check that out. That sounds really interesting. Yeah.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:22:56] Sure. and Ines, would you say that you have a vision for what your ideal life looks like for you?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:23:03] So last year, I worked on something which is a Japanese concept called ikigai. And, uh, found my sort of reason for being like why I like to get out of bed in the morning. So I listed my values things I like to do what I'm good at and realized I should just pursue my curiosities and don't stop questioning and explore life with a wider perspective. So I think for me, that's quite important. I think I sometimes feel trapped a little bit in this sort of modern lifestyle of having to do things quickly. And I think I just also need to realize when I'm a bit burned out and say no to things that I don't really want to do. And for sure, don't try to fit in with others. Own your individuality. I'm learning that people come and go and the right ones stay. I think that's really important, especially after lockdown.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:23:58] And also surrounding yourself with the right kind of energy. People often say that you are sort of the five people who are closest to you in terms of energetically, how you feel and, um, maybe your approach to how big you think, your goals and dreams.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:24:15] Definitely. I mean the beauty of nature and all of its effects upon the senses. I mean now that's pretty much what I live for. . . Like, I love feelings of awe, wonder and amazement. Things are just bigger than myself, like being in the mountains and just breathing in the air, or b My mom and I went to La Palma in January and we just went to a, a pine forest and just soaking in all the terpenes and everything was just so nice. it was just so wild with plants. There were so many plants everywhere. I was actually really overwhelmed. I hardly took any pictures, but it was just really nice to just soak it all in.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:24:53] Yes, nature puts everything into perspective, doesn't it? So, Do you have a favorite plant, would you say? Is there something that you just think, oh my gosh, that's just the most amazing plant ever?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:25:04] So I really love aeoniums. So aeonos in Latin means ageless. And I really like the term. My tattoos on either side of my arms are two aeoniums and I got them done when I was 18. And they were actually So for me, definitely those. I think because they just grow in the most in the driest landscapes. I just, I really, really, really liked them.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:25:32] Oh, how lovely. How would you describe an aeonium for people who don't know it is?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:25:37] It kind of looks like a rose. Just the leaves are a lot thicker. I mean there's so many different types. They're all pretty much amazing. There's this great website called surreal succulents and they're based in Cornwall. And I just love looking at it just to get ideas I have quite a lot of succulents. I don't need any more. Cause I found that a bit difficult during lockdown was like having to come back here and making sure they were all alive. And I do find it quite hard when one of them dies off. But my mom always tells me, you know, sometimes it's just not the right environment. Which is the same for people. If you don't have the right environment, it's sort of how you fix the surroundings rather than, you know, just making yourself feel worse.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:26:15] Very good point. So, yeah. Do you have a, a lifestyle tip, like a top tip for living well?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:26:22] Limit your time on your phone and go outside and get in touch with nature in a more meaningful way. It's really the most important thing I think. With all this negative news about loss of biodiversity, and, we've lost so much knowledge of nature and we're losing tribes that have that knowledge. We really need to connect on a different level. A good artist to go and research it is Andy Goldsworthy. He uses mediums that he finds a nature and starts to create patterns and everything. And he's just really amazing. Like he it's really inspirational. And I think even just going out and going to the park and collecting things together and making. Even if you don't think you're creative, you definitely are creative just, you haven't found the right thing maybe for you yet.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:27:11] Exactly. And you can always change your narrative as well. You don't have to be the person you feel like you were in the past. You can evolve if you want to.

 **Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:27:22] That's definitely I think something that I've had to learn a lot is don't look back on the past so much. Look to what you are now and into the future of what you want to do. The past is already gone. There's nothing you can change about that. You can always start afresh.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:27:37] That's a really good point. Define yourself by the person you want to be.

 **Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:27:41] Definitely keep moving forward.

 **Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:27:44] Moving forward, indeed. And with that in mind, we've come to the finale. To end with, I have a few quick-fire questions for you. So Ines, what's your most treasured possession, and there's no judgment here.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:27:56] So my most treasured possession is only something that I've actually had for about a month. And it's a Desert Rose Selenite that my parents bought me for my 30th birthday. It's a rock formation. This one came from the Sahara and there's not likely you'll find that, something like that in the wild again. And the moment I unpacked it, I was just like, oh my God, I've always wanted one of these. And I've even Googled it. And it says that it does give good energy. So I think sometimes you receive things for a reason.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:28:29] Bring good energy into your home. And what's your favorite article of clothing or accessory in your current wardrobe?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:28:38] So, um, all pieces of jewelry that my mum has gifted me and made and because each piece is unique and actually really means a lot. And she used to take me to the natural history museum all the time to look at different gems and minerals. And I think that's probably where I'm just getting all these curiosities and things I love.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:28:58] That makes complete sense that your relationship with yeah, interesting curiosities ties in well with jewelry I think. And where do you go to get inspired?

 **Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:29:09] Oh, I go to the woods. I go into nature, museums. I go home to speak to my parents because they're always challenging different ideas of things. My dad is really clever, so he always comes to things from a neutral angle. And I remember him always just going, why as a kid. Like asking him, why is it like this? Why is it like that? I think for me, my parents are really inspiring people. And also my brother, I think what he's managed to do, I just like being around them a lot.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:29:40] That's beautiful. And what's one book or resource that you'd recommend for everyone?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:29:47] Oh, definitely a camera and have the right vision.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:29:52] How perfect is that a vision and a camera. And, and what would you say that you're grateful for in your life?

 **Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:30:00] Definitely my family.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:30:03] Yes. Yeah. I think, uh, the lockdown and pandemic has brought that into perspective for a lot of us really, hasn't it?

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:30:10] Yeah, I definitely have realized that I can't spend six months away from my parents. If it means that I have to go out to Italy to see them. I'm not bothered about that. I've said to myself that I'm only going to give myself a flight to, and from somewhere once a year. And the rest of the time I need to get there by boat, train or some kind of public transport. So to also challenge myself a little bit.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:30:36] Yes, but it really is possible to explore close to where you live. I mean, even in the small country we live in here, there's so much variety and on foot, public transport or in a car, there are many possibilities, different places to see, opportunities to explore nature.

**Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:30:54] Yeah, a good resource also is a bike. And if I could say any book for anybody to read is read something by Alexander von Humboldt, because he is very inspiring. I mean, there are so many things that are named after him. Like the Humboldt current, the Humboldt squid. He's yeah, he's an inspiring man. He's no longer alive, but the one book that I read by him just made me realize that everything's just so much bigger than humans really.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:31:18] Very true. Finally, what do you love most about life?

 **Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:31:25] Definitely the beauty of nature and the variety that it provides.

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:31:30] Thank you so much, Ines. It's been a real pleasure having you here and chatting about nature, creativity, and all of these inspiring things. So thank you.

 **Ines Stuart-Davidson:** [00:31:39] Yeah, it's been really fun. Thanks very much for having me.

**Key Takeaways** [00:31:43]

**Alexandria Lawrence:** [00:31:43] Well, hope you enjoyed that chat with designer/photographer Ines Stuart-Davidson. Be sure to check out her gorgeous plant photography on Instagram @idlondon. So here are some key takeaways from our conversation. For plant photography, make sure the light is just right. On a bright day, everything glows and you can't really capture the actual colors of a plant. So, take your photos early in the morning or when it's cloudy. Golden hour and later in the evening are also good times too. And don't be afraid to get down and dirty. Try shooting on the same level as those plants. Or experiment with something new. See if you can develop your own style of plant photography.

And sometimes it helps to have a brief. Next time you go out for some nature photography, try shooting with a theme. Creative limitation can inspire all sorts of innovative, unexpected results. And here's an idea. Limit your time on your phone. Go outside and get in touch with nature in a more meaningful way. Whatever else you do, be sure to take some time for yourself today, and every day. Remember self-care is not selfish.

That's our show then. Thank you so much for listening. I'm Alexandria, and this is ALSO in PINK. The podcast, all about lifestyle design. If you enjoyed the show, please subscribe to ALSO in PINK, wherever you get your podcasts. And the absolute best way to show your support is to write a review on Apple Podcasts or iTunes. This really helps more than anything to promote the show. And, of course, tell all your friends. Thank you so much for your support. Until next time, have a wonderful week. Redefine what's possible and create your ideal life.