

Mike Horn: Making a career out of adventure

Chris Brinlee Jr, a budding adventurer and photographer, along with [The Red Bulletin](#) joined explorer Mike Horn on his sail to Antarctica and discovered that overcoming the impossible requires nothing more than taking the first step.



Mike Horn. Image: Chris Brinlee Jr

Little steps

Two years ago, Brinlee Jr had a desk job at an advertising agency, and dreamt of another life – a life like Horn’s, in fact. The South African explorer has built a career out of adventure. Brinlee Jr hadn’t yet met Horn, in fact, he hadn’t even heard of him. All he knew was that the day job wasn’t going to cut it anymore. He sold all his belongings and went backpacking through Europe, climbed the Himalayas and much more. Soon, he was making a living on the road with his camera and a savvy Instagram strategy. “Even taking little steps, anything that pushes you out of your comfort zone, can give you the courage to do more.”

“I think a lot of people – especially millennials – feel trapped and under this pressure where they have ideas of things they want to do, but not necessarily the courage,” he says. “Even taking little steps, anything that pushes you out of your comfort zone, can give you the courage to do more.”

Those little steps eventually led Brinlee Jr to an ice-climbing expedition in Alberta, Canada with Horn. Six months later, he flew to Cape Town to meet Horn and tagged along for the explorer’s three-week voyage to

Antarctica where he would attempt to be the first man to cross the continent unassisted.

Pole2Pole

“Pole2Pole is simply everything I’ve done in my life as an explorer, in one expedition,” says Horn. “I always wanted to cross Antarctica solo and without support.”

Horn grew up in Johannesburg, and spent much of his youth outdoors; he later joined the military and then studied sports science at university. At 24, bored with what was shaping up to be too conventional a life, he decamped to Switzerland where he learned to ski and paraglide and committed to a life of adventure.

The list of Horn’s subsequent accomplishments is simply jaw dropping. It includes travelling the length of the Amazon in 1997, and there was that 20,000km solo circumnavigation of the Arctic Circle five years later. He’s also trekked to the North Pole with a Norwegian explorer, using nothing more than skis in the Arctic winter in 2006 - that was a first.

In his most ambitious venture yet, Mike set out to Pangaea in a 35m-long, ice-floe-proof sailing boat. After this was Cape Town on 19 November, when Brinlee Jr joined Horn to document the explorer’s Pole2Pole trek.

“ *It’s that unknown that we’re all afraid of. And it’s the unknown that motivates me.* ”

By the time, you read this, he will have completed his solo, kite powered crossing of the Antarctic – a distance of 5,000km. He’ll be the only person ever to have accomplished that feat. “There’s a chance of failure... that’s what excites me,” he

says. “It’s that unknown that we’re all afraid of. And it’s the unknown that motivates me.”

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