

**'It's my 18th consecutive Glastonbury -  
and this year we're doing it as a three  
generation family'**



**Jill Ratoff, from West Sussex, has attended every Glastonbury Festival since 2002 - and this year, three generations aged from one to 60 will be joining in the fun**

"At 60 years old, 2024 will see me attending my 18th Glastonbury. It's hard to put into words how important the festival has become to me and my family, because we've gathered so many incredible memories from our experiences on Worthy Farm.

"The first time I went was back in 2002, along with my brother and his family, who lived locally, my then-husband and our daughter Abigail, who was three. I wasn't too sure about it at first - things like using the infamous 'long-drop' loos take some getting used to - but on my last night, I remember looking back across the campsite at the twinkling lights and realising that I absolutely had to go back.

"The next year I returned with Abigail, my daughter Kate, who was 15, and my six-week-old son Will, and I'm lucky enough to have attended every single festival since - there were five years when it didn't happen, including two over Covid. This year, I'm going with Abigail - known as Abba - who is now 25, Kate, 36, and Will, 21. Kate's bringing her husband, Jamie, and their two young sons. Then there's Abba's boyfriend, Jamie's sister Isi and her fiance, who'll also be at the festival. For us, it really is a case of the more the merrier.

"Because we've got so many festivals under our belts, we have plenty of family traditions that we're looking forward to passing down to our newest members. Abba brings a notebook for everyone in the group to write memories in and sign, and we make sure we buy Glastonbury T-shirts as souvenirs - which means that Kate's boys will be wearing vintage tops we bought in the early 2000s at this year's festival. We also camp in the queue overnight before the gates open to bag a spot at the front of Row Mead for our hot pink gazebo - another tradition being a game of 'spot the tent' when the aerial photos are released.





📷 Abba, Will and Jill at Glastonbury 2017. Composite: Jill Ratoff

"This year, three of us are volunteering or working at the festival: Abba is a freelance illustrator and is on the bin-painting team, Will is building tipis, while I'll be working with the wristbanding team. This is my eighth year on the gates, and we're more than happy to give something back to such a wonderful event. When people get their wristbands they're so happy, and the atmosphere is electric, so I think I have the best job. Last year, Abba had painted a beautiful mural at the entrance where I was working, and I was so incredibly proud, I kept bursting into tears.

"Over the years, we've survived apocalyptic weather, flooded tents, wellies lost at the worst possible time, and being towed out of the car park in acres of mud – but I still wouldn't miss it for the world. I'd like to say I know the festival inside out, but I'm not sure you can ever really say that, because there's always something new to discover.

"With three generations, members of every branch of our family and various friends all attending at some point, it can get pretty hectic – one year, we realised that a man who'd joined our group, enjoyed our huge morning fry-ups and even

posed for our end-of-festival group photo, was actually a stranger. We all assumed he'd come with one of the other families!

"We generally break off and explore the festival in smaller groups, and use the official app, which is powered by Vodafone, to plan which acts we're going to see and when. It's ideal for working out any clashes between sets you want to see, and also pings you an alert before the acts you've highlighted are about to start. It's a lot easier than poring over a brochure with a highlighter pen, which is what we used to have to do. There's also an in-app map, which pinpoints your location - I know the site pretty well by now, but as this is Isi's first time at the festival it'll be really useful for helping her to find her way around.

"This year, I'm looking forward to seeing Coldplay headlining for the fifth time - they're a wonderful band to watch live and you can tell they really love playing the festival. I also never miss the circus area and the Green Fields, although I've long since learned that at Glastonbury, you'll make plans that never happen, and enjoy plenty of unexpected moments.

"One of the best acts we've ever seen was Florence + the Machine in 2010 - Florence is such a mesmerising performer, and after her set we ran to the Pyramid Stage to see Dizzee Rascal, only for her to reappear for a duet with him. Will still has the drumstick the drummer threw out to the crowd - just one of his many Glasto treasures.

"I feel incredibly privileged that we've been able to share these moments of pure joy with so many different members of our family, and to make so many memories together. It feels incredible that 22 years on, my grandchildren are coming with me now, and I'm excited about Kate sharing all those traditions we've built up with the next generation. Glastonbury really has given us some of the happiest times of our lives."

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