

SURVIVING SUMMER





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ABOUT

Format:

Season 1: 10 x 25' (available)

Season 2: 8 x 25' (available in 2024)

Genre / Subgenre:

Live-Action / Youth / Drama

Target Audience:

Tween / Teen 10+

[ZDF-STUDIOS-PRESENTS.COM/SURVIVINGSUMMER](https://zdf-studios-presents.com/survivingsummer)

IT'S GORGEOUS DAYS AT THE BEACH.
SALTY HAIR. SURFING ON PERFECT WAVES.

SYNOPSIS

It's beachside Australia, sun on the water, and your friends next to you!

After pushing her high-flying Australian mother to the brink, irrepressible Brooklyn teen Summer Torres is sent to live with family friends, the Gibsons, in the tiny town of Shorehaven on the Great Ocean Road. Supposedly she lived there until she was six but as far as she's concerned, this quirky Aussie family is a bunch of strangers. In a word: she's furious.

So is Ari Gibson, an introverted but ambitious young surfer coming back to competition after a life-threatening injury and months of rehab. He didn't ask for this impulsive and unpredictable American to steal his room and completely disrupt his plans. Those plans being: To make the Victorian Junior Surf Team and reconnect with his old buddies – Marlon, Bodhi and Poppy – who drifted away after the surfing accident that put Ari in hospital.

During Summer's eight-week exile, she'll be introduced to the fun and thrilling world of competitive surfing ... and discover a talent and a drive she never knew she had ... as well as an extended family to support her.

At the same time, as Ari competes against his friends and awesomely talented kids up and down the coast in an effort to make the State Team, he'll also battle a secret anxiety that threatens to derail his dreams. Polar opposites in so many ways, Ari and Summer will drive each other crazy, share amazing experiences, and change each others' lives.

In the 2nd season Summer returns to Shorehaven, having found her own passion for surfing and eager to reunite with Ari and her old friends. But when she makes the State Team, she makes a mortal enemy of the team captain – Ari's new girlfriend, Wren.



**DISCOVERING WHO YOU REALLY ARE
AND WHO YOU WANT TO BE.**



CHARACTERS

SUMMMER

Rebellious, fearless, wild, Summer is a force of nature. She does what she wants, when she wants and woe betide anyone who tries to stop her. Her attitude to life is to have as much fun as she can, push boundaries and live on the edge. She's easily distracted and easily bored, which means school has never been a good fit. Having said that, she's smart as hell and athletically gifted but just hasn't found anything to keep her attention for long. Skating has been the one thing she's kept up, and cruising around Brooklyn with her crew has been her preferred way of blowing off steam.

In her relationships with other people, Summer believes in total honesty, even if some mistake her 'truth' for outright rudeness. Any kind of game-playing or secrecy frustrates her bigtime. But she's not always the best at sticking to her own rules. She keeps the most vulnerable side to herself hidden. The side that suspects she's damaged somehow, that she's not worthy of love. Living in the shadow of a super-talented and successful mother – a top-level surfer turned award-winning photojournalist – hasn't always been easy. Deep down, Summer feels like she'll just never measure up... not that she would ever admit it.



TORRES

ARI

Thoughtful and introspective, Ari has always been a good kid. A sweet kid. Someone who always thought a lot about right and wrong, about how to act. He has a tendency to overthink things, to worry about things. He's not a big fan of surprises and works hard to be as prepared as possible, whether for an exam or a surf competition.

With new people he's shy and doesn't want to say much but when he's comfortable, in his element, he opens up, showing people how smart and funny he can be. He wishes he was one of those people who can fearlessly speak their mind but it seems he just wasn't built that way. Surprisingly, under that shyness is a fierce competitiveness and he's had his eye on a professional surf career for a long time.

A year ago, Ari was seriously injured in a surfing accident at a local big wave, and his recovery has been tough, often lonely. It was a big blow to his confidence – the one time he tried to do something really brave and impulsive, it ended in disaster. Even as he's keen to return to the surf, thoughts of the accident seem to be making his anxiety worse – as if being a teenager wasn't enough of a reason to feel anxious!



POPPY

Chatty, funny, outgoing, with two surfing-obsessed older brothers, Poppy has always been a bit of a tomboy – strong, athletic, and pretends not to care how she looks. She knows how talented she is on a surfboard – even better than her brothers – and has always been fiercely competitive.

There's a more sensitive side underneath but she tends to keep it hidden, especially since tragedy rocked the family. Six months ago, Poppy's Mum Laynah – a legend in local surfing circles – passed away after a long fight with cancer. Poppy's world was blown apart and she and the family are still trying to pick up the pieces. She's been pretty good at maintaining that sunny disposition of hers... but some days it's just really, really hard. In some ways Poppy had to grow up really fast but she's still the baby of the family and sometimes wants to act like it. Which might explain why she and her eldest brother (and new coach) Manu are constantly tearing strips off each other.

Instead of using her grief as a reason to ease up, Poppy has thrown herself back into competitive surfing, more determined than ever to achieve her dream of one day becoming world champion. But in her pursuit of excellence, Poppy will have to rediscover what drew her to surfing in the first place, find the joy in it again... or risk burning out.



MARLON

On the surface, Marlon is easy-going, confident and fun-loving. He never takes anything too seriously and has a wisecrack for every situation, though sometimes this is his way of covering disappointment. He fell in love with surfing when he moved to Australia from Brazil at the age of ten and on competition day can often be seen kicking back, strumming his ukulele and cracking jokes. Out in the water he's a showman, talented and flashy. But under the surface there's a strong competitive streak and when things don't go his way he tends to blame anyone and anything but himself.

Marlon's mother Luciana calls him Meu Principe – “My Prince” and tends to spoil him – which might explain the overconfidence – but she's not afraid to steer him straight when necessary and ultimately Marlon loves and trusts her more than anyone else in the world. But he also feels the weight of her expectation and part of his drive comes from never wanting to let her down, making good on the sacrifices she made for him.



SOUSA

BODHI

Empathetic, generous, a little bit spiritual, Bodhi is the calming centre of her often loud and boisterous group of friends. She's thoughtful, an introvert, with a goofy sense of humour that sneaks up on you. And from day one, she's always been a water baby, drawn to the ocean. Whenever she's feeling low, she gets on her board or puts on goggles and flippers and explores the world under the surface.

Since getting sponsored by a major surf company at the age of 12, Bodhi has been cultivating her social media profile, 'building her brand' as many surfers do. To her followers – and her friends – she projects optimism, gratitude, and a social conscience. But that image is a cover for a lot of self-doubt. Despite her talent, she doesn't think of herself as a winner and worries she's too 'nice' to make it all the way. For the last couple of years, she's been taking care of her Dad who's been a shell since Bodhi's mum ran off with another surf Dad. At heart Bodhi's a people pleaser, determined to put everyone's else's needs before her own. But that attitude isn't the greatest asset in the heat of competition.



MERGER



EPISODES

S01 | EPISODE 1

Exile

by Josh Mapleston

Rebellious teen Summer Torres is exiled from New York to the sleepy coastal town of Shorehaven on the Great Ocean Road in Australia. There she reluctantly moves in with family-friends the Gibsons, and immediately rubs the locals the wrong way. This invasion is the last thing the surf-obsessed Ari needs, while already recovering from a horrific injury and trying to get back onto his board. Desperate to escape, Summer begins to learn that Shorehaven isn't just waves and sand...



S01 | EPISODE 2

Big Plans

by Josh Mapleston

Having hatched a scheme to escape back to New York, Summer has a run-in with Sheridan, the tough leader of a local surf crew. Meanwhile, tensions old and new between Ari and Marlon threaten to boil over during the Shorehaven Pro Junior comp. Summer manages to help Ari in an unexpected way, before finding herself grounded – in more ways than one.

S01 | EPISODE 3

Training Day

by Magda Wozniak & Josh Mapleston

Banned by his parents from attending the next round of competition, Ari's coach Manu finds a loophole to get him back in the waves. To make matters worse, Ari discovers he's a long way off the pack surf-wise; and tensions continue with Marlon. Poppy grows frustrated at having her teaching duties put ahead of her own surf practice, and has to contend with the un-ignorable presence of Summer. Yet the two bond after Summer catches her first wave.





S01 | EPISODE 4

Shame

by Josh Mapleston

The Shorehaven crew take a road trip to Jackson Bay for the next round of the State Titles. Summer surprises everyone when she enters the comp, but the single wave she rides does more damage than good. Marlon's mum Luciana encourages the boys to put aside their differences; but her words fall on deaf ears. Summer tries to help clear the air within the group with a game of 'Shame', but only increases the tension as secrets are revealed and relationships are pushed to the brink.

S01 | EPISODE 5

Keep the Sponsors Happy

by Gemma Crofts and Josh Mapleston

Bodhi makes a splash with a potential sponsor and photo-shoot, but problems with boyfriend Marlon and Dad at home threaten to drag her under the rising swell. A late-night 'training session' for Poppy and Ari sparks a new romance. Summer goes on the warpath when she discovers why Bodhi has missed her heat. Ari wins the Wildcard against the odds, and snags a chance to compete at the pro event, the Subtropix 360.



S01 | EPISODE 6

No Pressure

by Keir Wilkins

Rebellious teen Summer Torres is exiled from New York to the sleepy coastal town of Shorehaven on the Great Ocean Road in Australia. There she reluctantly moves in with family-friends the Gibsons, and immediately rubs the locals the wrong way. This invasion is the last thing the surf-obsessed Ari needs, while already recovering from a horrific injury and trying to get back onto his board. Desperate to escape, Summer begins to learn that Shorehaven isn't just waves and sand...



S01 | EPISODE 7

For Laynah

by Kirsty Fisher

The Shorehaven Crew prepare for the BoardRiders Battle – a head-to-head team event against clubs from around the State; including their rival Anchor Cove. Poppy leads the team as captain of the Shorehaven Crew, and is desperate to honour her mum’s memory. Manu tries to help Ari with his anxiety issues, and an underwater training session causes Marlon to freak out. A big secret threatens to sink the Shorehaven team during the BoardRiders Battle, and it falls to Summer to save the day – this time on a board!



S01 | EPISODE 8

Stairway

by Josh Mapleston

After jumping ship and seeking to join the rival Anchor Cove Crew, Marlon wants to impress them by surfing the treacherous Stairway to Heaven break. Ari also feels a need to prove himself at Stairway – the same site he seriously injured himself at over a year ago, and the source of his increasing anxiety. When it’s revealed that Summer will be staying in Shorehaven for another 3 months, she threatens to go off the deep end.

S01 | EPISODE 9

Go

by Keir Wilkins

Bodhi, Poppy and Manu travel to Jarrah Island for the State team deciding event. Summer and Ari – banned from attending – begin to realise how much they mean to each other while smuggling themselves onto the island. Griff’s flirtation stuns Poppy, and causes Marlon to question his new teammates. Ari and Summer share a celebratory and romantic moment after he wins his semi-final – but are cut short by the arrival of their unimpressed mothers.



S01 | EPISODE 10

Stay

by Keir Wilkins & Josh Mapleston

Bodhi looks set to storm home in her semi-final, until a freak accident threatens to drown her. The Shorehaven gang share a bittersweet moment in hospital, and it falls to Poppy to see the comp through for the team. An overnight stay in a motel turns disastrous for Ari, Summer, Margot and Abbie. Bodhi hauls herself out of hospital and works with Poppy to surf the Final and have a shot at the State Team. Ari is unwittingly forced to choose between his surfing dreams and chasing Summer.





GALLERY











CREDITS

Creator:

Joanna Werner, Josh Mapleston

Executive Producers:

Joanna Werner, Stuart Menzies

Directors:

Ben Chessell, Sian Davies, Charlotte George

Writers:

Josh Mapleston, Keir Wilkins, Kirsty Fisher,
Magda Wozniak and Gemma Crofts

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