

LUKE MCKENZIE in

WHISKY TRAILS

A SPIRITED JOURNEY

10 X 30'4K



 ESCAPADEMEDIA

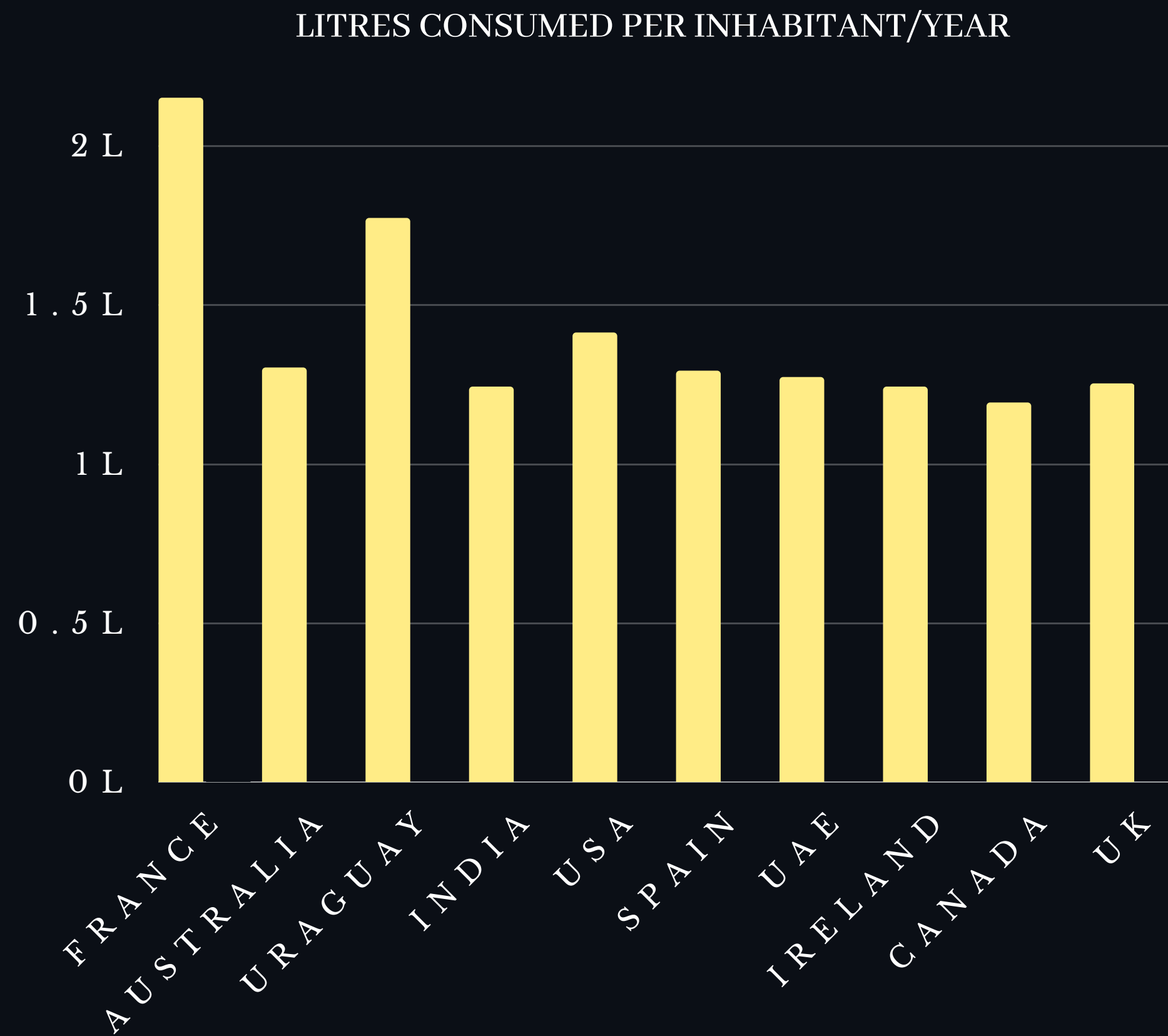
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*"TOO MUCH OF ANYTHING IS
BAD, BUT TOO MUCH GOOD
WHISKY IS BARELY ENOUGH"*

- MARK TWAIN

THE WORLD OF WHISKY

Whisky is a beloved drink all over the globe. To give some context, this graph represents the top ten whisky consumers in the world.



AN INTRODUCTION

TO THE SHOW & TO WHISKY

Whisky Trails takes us on a globe-trotting journey following our sagacious and ever-inquisitive guide, Luke McKenzie, on his adventure from the New World: Australia, Japan, India, and the USA, back to the Old World of Ireland and Scotland on a personal quest to taste all the colours of the whisky rainbow.

Whisky is romance. It is the world's beloved spirit, used to commemorate life's happiest moments and commiserate through the saddest. To share a dram is to share a memory; each sip expresses the provenance and passion of the people who made it. But, things are changing for whisky. Women are flocking to it, both as drinkers and distillers; consumer numbers in developing nations are fast on the rise; New World makers are setting traditions alight reinvigorating (or irritating) the Old World makers. The story of whisky could not be more timely, and exciting.

While each episode carries its own unique story, characters, and customs for Luke to discover, they are tightly bound together by a carefully plotted spine tracing the globe to seek the answers to: what makes a great whisky great, and: what makes whisky great? Whisky Trails is an uplifting, warm, and thought-provoking showcase of the kaleidoscopic people, places, and tastes of the Whisky Trail, one dram at a time.



A man and a woman are standing in a distillery, surrounded by rows of wooden whisky barrels. The woman, on the left, has long dreadlocks and is wearing a dark t-shirt with a circular logo that reads 'DISTILLING CO. CORONA' and '552 MGC'. She is also wearing dark shorts and boots. The man, on the right, is wearing a white button-down shirt and dark trousers. They are both holding glasses of whisky. The background shows a rustic, aged wall with a window on the right side.

\$124 BILLION WORTH OF
WHISKY IS CONSUMED
EACH YEAR.

IT IS EXPECTED TO HIT
\$149 BILLION BY 2025...

WHISKY IS THE MOST
CONSUMED SPIRIT BY
VALUE IN THE WORLD.

STYLE & TONE

THE WAY WE WORK

Whisky Trails boldly marries the jovial zest for life of Billy Conolly in 'Journey to the Edge of the World' with the candid philosophising of Anthony Bourdain in 'Parts Unknown'. It enjoys the meandering sense of discovery in 'Long Way Down/Up' with just a sprinkle of eccentric passion for flavour, seen in 'Somebody Feed Phil'.

While classic whisky drinkers (read: men) will tune in, we feel that our tone, sense of openness, and dynamic conversations will connect more prominently with women 30 - 50, similar to the shows aforementioned. Our story-driver is the journey from New World to Old World seeking to answer: what makes whisky great? Our emotional driver is candid, authentic, and joyful connections, getting to the heart of what makes people tick.

Using cinematic imagery to frame intimate and raw conversation, we develop each location as a character equal to those we meet along the way – and boldly break the 4th wall to introduce our spirited crew. A contemplative score, pacy when needed, will cradle the show and allow the space for our themes of time and place to naturally emerge.

While we know what we want, we feel that more importantly we know what we don't: minimal pieces-to-camera, voiceover should never tell our story, but rather add to it by counterpointing visuals with thematic, personal, and sensorial reflection. With these clear taste parameters we're emboldened to create the show we wish to watch, while paying homage to the shows that inspired us.



YOUR GUIDE

LUKE MCKENZIE

Luke is a screenwriter and actor who is known to audiences for his drama and comedy work on award-winning series such as *Wentworth*, *Conan O'Brien, Winners & Losers*, *Home & Away*, *Rescue Special Ops*, and recent films such as *Wormwood* and *The Flipside*. But, it's Luke's off-screen life which defines him as an adventurer with an insatiable curiosity for people – and whisky.

During a 2-year solo walkabout trip, riding a motorbike through India, trekking 22,000ft up Mt Everest, and hitch-hiking across North America, Luke landed in a whisky bar pouring drams to fund his onward travels, and it was here his love with the golden elixir began,

Though his itchy feet did return, taking him to South America to hitch-hike from Brazil to Chile – only to wind up flat broke living in the back of a chicken truck, his vagabond life has somewhat eased, but his adventuring has not. At forty years old, Luke will now ask the big questions around the meaning of maturation, both in spirit and in himself.

With a down-to-earth, curious, and comedic approach, Luke's passion for people will provide unique insights into not only the places, processes, and people along the way, but the man on *The Whisky Trail* himself.





*EPISODE
OVERVIEW*

THE PLAN FOR SEASON ONE

CHAPTER 1: AUSTRALIA

NEWEST WHISKY, OLDEST CONTINENT.



With Australian Whisky exploding in popularity and the accolades piling up, we start right here at home where some distillers honor Old World methods, and others radically innovate. At Whisky & Alement, Australia's best whisky bar, we begin by asking its owner, Julian, to explain the whisky family tree to us, and what makes a great whisky in his eyes? Sufficiently loaded (with knowledge), the next stop is a camping trip with Michael of Mountain distilling, who, despite his controversial aging process, won a World Silver medal. Then it's to Corowa, the birthplace of Australian federation. Only in a rural Aussie town could two mates off the footy field, Beau; a dreadlocked concreter-turned-distiller, and Dean; a 3rd generation grain farmer, start a distillery in an old flour mill and go on to receive a fairytale invitation from the Queen to create a whisky for her 70th anniversary. The Jeep then heads to the hills to sit down for a chat and a dram with Chantal & Sam, the young family behind Kinglake Distilling who decided to go 100% carbon neutral and do their bit for the future. Echoing through all the tales, trials, and tipples we keep hearing how many had their start in Tasmania at Lark Distilling...

CHAPTER 2: AUSTRALIA & NZ

WOMEN IN WHISKY AND A \$14,000 BOTTLE



The name 'Bill Lark' ringing in our ears, we follow the trail across the Tasman in search of the enigmatic Godfather of Australian whisky. But first, we take part in Tassie's finest: fresh oysters, ancient forests and pristine beaches – paired with Tasmanian Whisky, of course. Joining us is Scotch Malt Whisky Society ambassador, Tom Rofe. This charismatic Kiwi young-gun takes us to Killara Whisky where Kristy Lark-Booth (Bill's daughter), explains the challenges of being one of the only female owner/distillers in the world. Tom then guides us on a trip to his favourite NZ distilleries before returning to Waubs Harbour (Tasmania), located in an old oyster hatchery run by three siblings of Aboriginal heritage. After visiting a few of Tom's favourite bars, it's time to see Sullivan's Cove, the winners of multiple world gold medals, selling at auction for up to \$14,000 a bottle! But, no trip to Tassie is complete without seeing MONA, the private art gallery founded by a rogue Aussie gambler. Lark Whisky being a partner of their Dark Mofo festival, it's the perfect opportunity to finally sit down with Bill, the trailblazing titan who changed legislation and kickstarted the entire Aussie whisky scene which now flourishes in his footsteps.

CHAPTER 3: JAPAN

THE RITUAL OF IT ALL...



The Whisky Trail heads north, crossing the equator to the land of the rising sun. If the Japanese do something they do it well, and Whisky is no exception. The history of distilling in this ancient and modern land goes back 100 years when a young sake maker, Masataka Taketsuru, travelled to Scotland to apprentice under the single malt master distillers of his day. Beginning in Tokyo, we connect with one of Japan's best (and coolest) bartenders. She takes us inside a nomikai (drinking party) where we get to understand the culture of Japan today. After contemplation (of our hangover) at the gardens of Osaka Castle, it's time to visit the famous Hibiki Distillery where we take part in a traditional smoking ceremony. Then we make the pilgrimage to the Nikka distillery, founded in 1940 by Taketsuru, the father of Japanese Whisky, to understand how his legacy led Japan to being among the rarest, most expensive, and revered in the world.

CHAPTER 4: INDIA

INCREDIBLE. AND EVERYTHING AT ONCE



From serene ritual, we're plunged into chaos. A cacophony of colours, scents, foods, religions, and climates where a tolerant society co-exists in this grand soup of sensory overload. Serving one billion humans is a tall order, but producing more than three times the volume than the rest of the world COMBINED, Indian Whisky is up to the task. Made from molasses, it isn't considered true whisky by European standards, but ambitious distillers are now focusing on single malt. From the palm-fringed beaches of Goa, we visit a young distillery, Paul John, which dominates the domestic market. We then retrace a motorcycle trip Luke made in 2005 to the foothills of the Himalayas where India's oldest distillery, Rampur, has been in operation since 1943. Then it's a pilgrimage to where Luke's grandfather and great-grandfather, Colonel of the British East India Company, were born: Shimla. Contemplating the legacy of empires, we take a rickety train trip to Varanasi, the holy city, to celebrate the Holi festival, and sign off with a smile, covered in colour on the banks of the Ganges.

CHAPTER 5: NORTH AMERICA BLUE JAYS, BOURBON & BOOTLEGGERS!



The trail turns west to the US of A! Luke lived here for many years working, playing in bands, seeing over 30 states and most national parks, but he's not yet visited the home of the infamous Bourbon Trail: Kentucky! We load the RV and hit the road to seek out America's finest whiskies – and the moonshine, bluegrass hoedowns, and horse races that go with it. We take a side trip to Tennessee, home of sour mash, to see our good friend, Jack Daniels. Then, after an attempt at rodeo-riding on a rowdy night out in Nashville, the trail takes us north. Canada is home of the sweetest malt of all: Rye. In picture-perfect Whistler BC, Luke revisits Black's Pub, the whisky bar he managed at the base of the slopes. He's served up a range of the best Ryes on offer, and reminded how his whisky love affair began. We finish down in NY for a chat with whisky writer and distiller, David Haskel, who regales us with tales of the upstarts and outlaws that made American spirits.

CHAPTER 6: JOURNEY DRUNK HISTORY



The trail takes a breather. From the Italian-Irish shores of Boston, we take the audience on a captivating history lesson with a Harvard professor to unpack the complex cultural and anthropological beginnings of America, and how whisky and the whisky-making immigrants helped shape the nation. Parts of our conversation play over a high seas sailing adventure where we retrace those immigrants' journey back over the Atlantic to Europe.

CHAPTER 7: FRANCE

WHAT DON'T THEY CONSUME?



The French: wine drinkers, sexy talkers, cheese fanatics – and the world's biggest whisky drinkers by volume! Maybe it's due to their appreciation of terroir? Maybe their refined palettes? To find out, Luke reconnects with his old flatmate, Sophie, a French culinary guide for a walking tour throughout Paris to find out how, why, and where this quiet French love-affair with single malt began. We then follow the trail to Eddu Distilling, producing a gorgeous award-winning buckwheat whisky. We then explore the gastronomic Brittany Peninsula en route to another award-winning distillery: Kornog, who present their peated single malt. By the end, we will have dug well below the clichés to understand a deeper side to French culture.

CHAPTER 8: IRELAND

WHAT'S THE CRAIC??



Home to one his favorite whiskies in RedBreast 12, Europe's highest cliffs, cobblestone streets, bright buildings, trad music, possibly the friendliest people – and definitely the best craic. This green paradise is a feast for the soul. Prohibition decimated Ireland's whisky industry down to just two distilleries, but at one time Irish Whisky was the world's most popular spirit. It has made a huge comeback, now boasting 35 distilleries in operation! We circle the Emerald Isle seeking out the best pubs, distilleries and stories on offer with Luke's old friend and ex-pat producer of the country's top TV show, Sam Atwell.

CHAPTER 9: SCOTLAND WE'RE HERE.



We're here. The home of single malt. Where it all started: Scotland. Traversing the grand halls of the Edinburgh castle one can't help but be humbled by the abundant beauty and history. After exploring the city and taking in the modern coffee spots, cocktail bars and restaurants, it's time to turn back the clock. First stop: Speyside, the home of single malt, and the behemoth producers. We visit Glenlivet, Balvenie, Macallan, and the Dufftown whisky shop, run by a woman who knows every dram – and drama, of the region. The trail becomes a candy store as Luke bounces from Oban to Bruichladdich, Kilchomen to Talisker, Lagavulin to Highland Park, and Bowmore, guided by the world's foremost voice on single malt, the man who has forgotten more than he knows on the subject, Jim 'the cask whisperer' McKewan. We settle in for a fireside dram and storytime with Jim, and get the lowdown on what this Old World master thinks of us New World upstarts...

CHAPTER 10: SCOTLAND, THEN HOME CASTLES & A CLOSEOUT



Armed with Jim's tips, the trail continues. Luke uncovers Scotland's captivating history through its castles, ancient roads, and Lochs, taking the opportunity to spend a few days in his own ancestral home of Castle Leod, the seat of Clan McKenzie. Luke meets the McKenzie Clan leaders to understand the very trail his own DNA took, while reflecting on the Whisky Trail. After a regal dinner and dram celebrating New and Old world whiskies alike, Luke heads home for a sit-down with those rogueish Aussie distillers we met at the start of our journey. For a young nation shucking its adolescence and reconciling its past, Australia can take humble pride in what it's creating. While there is nothing quite like an Old World Whisky, the future looks incredibly bright for the New World, but especially for the down-under distillers forging a new path. Signing off with a hearty invocation for our audience to explore more than they did before, to get out the door, to cross the shores (*10 points if you can add to our rhyme) - one Aussie in particular realises his journey his only begun...

FUTURE SEASONS

We've only started our explorations. Meet: The Trails Anthology



Tequila Trail: Deep dive into Mexico.

Rum Trail: Carribean, QLD, South America.

National Spirits Trail: Grappa, Absinthe, Cava.

Beer Trail: Everywhere!

Wine Trail: France, Argentina, Italy, US

Gin Trail: Holland, UK, Australia, South Africa.

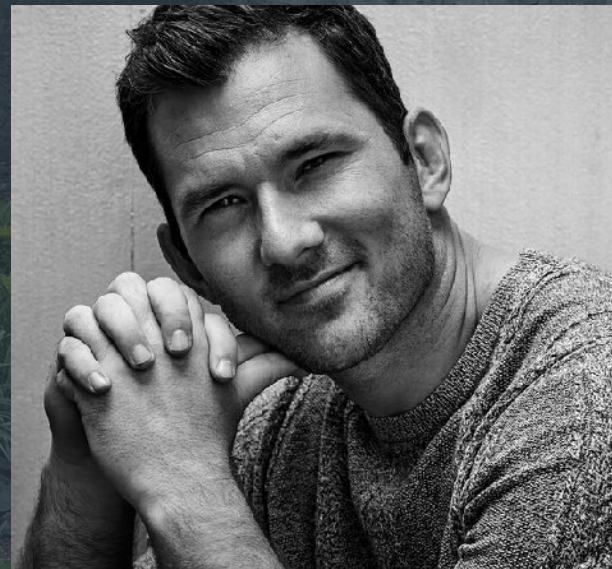
THE CREATORS

MARC VECCHIO
PRODUCER



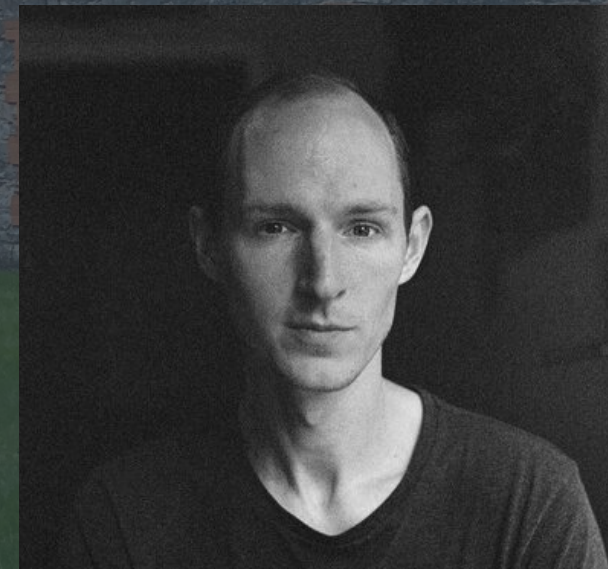
Marc has worked in the film industry in many facets over the past six years. With experience on both sides of the camera, he has an understanding of how to communicate on and off set whilst managing projects from beginning to end. For the past two and a half years Marc has been working as a producer and AD with Mazda Australia. What guides him is his passion and vast knowledge of all things film.

LUKE MCKENZIE
HOST / DIRECTOR



Luke is a talented filmmaker who has sold film scripts to international producers, and written for premium Australian television, along with feature rewriting work for major projects. In addition to hosting, he will be pairing up with Dean Lusk as the co-directors either side of the camera.

DEAN LUSK
DIRECTOR/DOP



Dean is an experienced Cinematographer and Director with over 6 years behind the camera. Working across the board in narrative, commercial and documentary. With a versatile visual style and strong work ethic, Dean is a professional with a Bachelor's Degree focused in Film - Writing & Directing from Victorian College of the Arts.

NIC BUTLER
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



Founder of Britestar Productions - Nic has always been passionate about film. Even while establishing a thriving business enterprise over the past 35 years, he has still had an ongoing involvement in film and documentary making. With award winning documentaries under his belt and more of a focus on film-making than ever, he can apply his business acumen to the projects he seeks to undertake.

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