

## An Unusual and Adventurous Life

Long hours. Endless meetings. Time away from family. Alison Tilley is no stranger to the demands of a successful businessperson. In addition to creating and running companies, Tilley has learned the importance of leisure. More specifically, “Leisure in Luxury.”

“I believe the answer to a happier, healthier, more balanced life is to take more time off,” said Tilley, CEO and founder of [www.TropicalLiving.com](http://www.TropicalLiving.com). “Travel. Take a vacation. And, once you arrive at your destination, give yourself permission to do nothing for the first few days. Or, at the most, enjoy a three-hour massage.”

Tilley arrived at her formula for success at an early age. After a lucrative modeling gig throughout her teen years, Tilley turned down a modeling contract and a business school scholarship and opted to travel the world for one year.

That one year of travel was extended and resulted in 10 trips around the world. Instead of returning home at 19, Tilley created an import/export business in Bali, Indonesia, and named it “Alison Wonderland.” She employed 12 people in Bali and three international sales reps sold her homeware at markets around the world. At 20, Tilley moved to Kathmandu, Nepal, and started a second business: an international knitwear company that employed 65 people. At 22, she wrote, self-published and sold 250,000 copies of a book on travel tips to travel agents. That spawned a series of television and radio appearances that led to offers to host two travel television shows, both of which Tilley turned down because of the poor pay and cold locations. Then, at the young age of 23, Tilley succumbed to burnout. She was exhausted, overworked and overstressed.

That’s when Tilley made what she now calls a “mid-course correction.” She escaped to an island in the Kingdom of Tonga where she walked along the beach, wrote lists and made “talk tapes” as part of her plan to re-design her life.

The re-design included searching for the most beautiful islands on Earth.

Tilley grew up in a traveling family. “I have been traveling to remote tropical islands since the time I was in my mother’s womb,” Tilley said. As a young child, Tilley traveled with her family to tropical island nations that were well off the beaten path. “While my friends’ parents took them to Disneyland for family vacations, my parents chose to charter sailing yachts and explored remote islands in the Caribbean and Central America. I’m certain these early sailing adventures to tropical islands sparked my relentless curiosity and desire to travel.”

After a few years of travel, though, the family business in Toronto, Canada, beckoned. At the age of 27, Tilley joined her father in business, introducing and setting up the company’s international hat and travel clothing business, Tilley Endurables, in Australia, New Zealand and San Francisco.

Tilley Endurables designs and manufactures some of the finest outdoor hats and travel and adventure clothing in the world. The business began over 25 years ago in the basement of the family’s home and now employs over 265 people worldwide, includes four family-owned retail stores, a mail order division, an online presence ([www.Tilley.com](http://www.Tilley.com)) and a wholesale operation that puts Tilley hats and clothing in over 2,100 stores in 19 countries worldwide. Tilley’s smiling face along with her father’s graces the hangtag of every Tilley Hat sold. Tilley is also the voice of Tilley for all of the company’s radio commercials.

During Tilley’s tenure at the family business, she helped re-structure, re-brand and re-launch the family’s hat and clothing company. She went on a national media tour with her father Alex to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the business.

While in Toronto, Tilley remembered the words of a wise old man she had met in Nepal years before. “He looked me straight in the eyes and with a soft twinkle said, ‘Life is just time passing. We must enjoy the time as it passes.’”

Those words stuck with Tilley. She started examining the concept of time in relation to life. Eventually, she calculated the number of days in the average life and determined she had approximately 13,870 days left. That’s when she decided to return to tropical island living.

“I wrote a list of what was important to me,” said Tilley. “I discovered that what I really love is tropical living.”

So, at 30, Tilley left Toronto for an island in the middle of the Pacific. Soon, she fell in love and was married on the beach. Then, two weeks after her 35<sup>th</sup> birthday, she woke at 2:37 a.m. “I stared at the clock and knew in that moment that my life had changed forever. I could feel it in my bones. A flicker of an idea sparked my life’s passion.”

Tilley spent the next four years turning that dream into a reality.

Travel is a time-honored tradition that was embodied by many ancient cultures in walkabouts, vision quests and pilgrimages. But slowing down to enjoy and see life through new eyes is a notion many North Americans tend to forget in our overworked, overstressed, overscheduled lives.

“With all of the islands, villas, spas and tropical homeware I have enjoyed in my life, ‘Alison Tilley’s Tropical Living’ was the obvious solution. I have traveled around the world 10 times. I have a wealth of travel expertise and an extensive Rolodex of hard-to-find havens,” said Tilley. “And, of course, I know first-hand how time on certain tropical islands can transform and rebalance lives in the most wonderful of ways.”

Having traveled the world 10 times over searching for the most spectacular tropical islands and spas on earth—from Bora Bora to Bali, Thailand to Fiji—Alison Tilley is an island, spa and tropical lifestyle expert and is available for interviews and appearances. She sells and rents entire tropical islands, rents some of the finest tropical spas and villas worldwide and offers an international collection of tropical homeware.

Alison Tilley’s Tropical Living is an unusual tropical travel, homeware and lifestyle company that advocates slowing down, reconnecting and enjoying more “Leisure in Luxury.” It offers practical solutions for a happier, healthier, more balanced life. Visit Tropical Living on the World Wide Web at [www.TropicalLiving.com](http://www.TropicalLiving.com).

Combining luxury tropical travel, homeware, philosophy and philanthropy has never been done like this before. Tropical Living—An Oasis Online. It’s Upscale that’s Uplifting.