



The team’s aim was for Betty and its content to reflect the community of women surfers behind it | Photo source [Deanna Alys](#)

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FEMALE-FOCUSED MAGAZINE WANTS TO BREAK SURFING'S PATRIARCHY

 SPORT & FITNESS

An inclusive platform that showcases women, the work that they do, the things they create, and the waves that they ride

Spotted: During New Zealand’s lockdown of 2020, a group of surfing ladies got together on their local surf Facebook group to try and channel their energy into something positive, creative and collaborative that would keep them occupied, and help them bond as a community.

The result was “Betty Zine”, an inclusive platform to empower female surfers and come together in their creative pursuits. A zine (pronounced zeen) is an independently or self-published booklet, that is typically produced in small, limited batches; or, as Betty told Springwise “A DIY grassroots publication”. The zine includes a collection of submitted art, photography, writing, poems, DIY projects and other inspiration about shared love of the ocean.

Betty is run by three ladies — Zofia Seymour, who spearheaded the project and is the chief curator and designer, Rachel Lewis the editor and Stephanie Brookes, who writes the words behind their social media. Initially, their hope was to make 50 copies that would keep the community entertained during lockdown. However, they ended up selling 250 copies of the first issue.

The team’s aim was for Betty and its content to reflect the community of women behind it. “We all have our own voices, stories and ways of engaging with the ocean and it is time we made a space to share these voices in the narrative of surf culture, for us to start telling our diverse stories around the ocean. And of course, riding more waves,” says Betty.

Steph added, “We have been a labour of love and passion to break free of the surfing patriarchy and provide an inclusive platform to include all wāhine shapes, forms, sizes, colours, styles and levels to share their stories in our pages.”

Since the launch of their first issue only a year ago, March saw the launch of their fourth issue, called “Gratitude”. Betty says Gratitude is “an expression of how grateful we are for our community of wāhine across Aotearoa.” (wāhine means a Maori or Polynesian woman and is also used to refer to female surfers).

All four issues are available to order as physical copies and also online as digital copies.

The Betty team aims to keep growing and reach out to women all across New Zealand to share their stories, favourite places and waves.

Written By: Katrina Lane

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Takeaway:

Professional female surfers have been advocating for decades for their rights, including equal pay, access to events, visibility and sponsorship. It wasn't until 2019 when the [World Surfing League](#) (WSL), which organises professional surfing internationally, announced that women surfers would receive equal pay at all events. However, female surfers are still vastly underrepresented in the media. Publications like Betty have the power to change the landscape, inspire and grow the demographic of women and girls in the water and stop the sexualisation of female surfers.