



Sophie developed a craving to sniff lavender with her third baby



The singer models her collaboration with Seraphine to raise money for baby charity Tommy's



The mother says nine-month-old Jesse is a 'smiley baby'



Friday night vibes

Sophie with husband Richard

# MY ESSENTIALS

## SOPHIE ELLIS-BEXTOR

### Sophie, how are you finding life as a mum of four?

It's chaos but happy chaos! Going from three to four is definitely a tipping point. I feel like we're now part of a 'silly big family' club. I wouldn't have it any other way, though. It's like a little community – something is always happening.

### Are Sonny, Kit and Ray enjoying having a baby brother around?

Yep, they are all slightly obsessed! It also helps that Jesse is a very smiley baby.

### The singer/songwriter and mother-of-four reveals all about pregnancy, motherhood and making music

#### Did you find it easier or more difficult being pregnant this time around?

I'd say it was one of the easier ones. The hardest was the first, when I developed quite bad pre-eclampsia.

#### Did you have any weird cravings in any of your pregnancies?

When I was pregnant with my four year old, Ray, I developed a craving to smell lavender. That's weird, isn't it? I carried a little lavender bath oil around in my bag. Then I got diagnosed with low iron, had that sorted and the craving went away. The human body is really quite strange sometimes!

#### You've always managed to look stylish throughout pregnancy. Do you have any tips?

I think the options for what to wear are getting better and better. When I was 24 and pregnant with Sonny, I couldn't find anything cool for young pregnant mums. This time, I actually enjoyed finding bits. My advice would be to experiment with what you already have, and don't despair because the high street has some good things to keep you feeling a bit more like yourself.

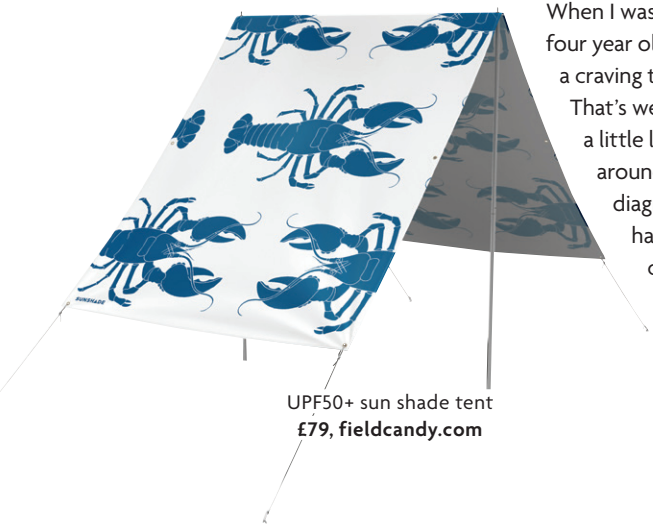
#### What essential items could you not live without?

Apart from just having baby things around that I actually like, like a nice changing bag, cot or buggy,

I'm actually finding that I need less and less essentials with every baby. In my experience, the less stuff you rely on, the more chilled the baby. That being said, we're about to take Jesse on holiday and I'm so thankful for all that brilliant UV50 swim stuff and those little baby tents. I used to burn all the time when I was a kid.

#### So, has your approach to motherhood changed over the years?

Yes and no. I think a lot was set from what Sonny taught us but then again, each baby I've had has turned into a very different person, so what works on one baby doesn't necessarily work on another! The things that are constant are my hopes to keep lines of communication open at all times, to give them boundaries but try not to shout, and the fact I try to relax – I'm not going to always get it right but my intentions are good.



UPF50+ sun shade tent £79, fieldcandy.com





New album *Familia* is inspired by Latin America and cowboys



The singer pictured with her mum, former *Blue Peter* presenter, Janet Ellis



The family enjoying a "proper Sunday"

## IN MY EXPERIENCE, THE LESS STUFF YOU RELY ON, THE MORE CHILLED THE BABY

### Who has inspired you as a parent?

My own parents, for sure, and my husband's, too. Both our folks gave us lots of support when it came to following our passions. That's a great gift. I also have my mum's trait for talking things over probably more than the kids would like, and my dad's ability to tell bad jokes.

### Music is obviously important to you as a family [Sophie's husband is *The Feeling* bassist, Richard Jones], do any of your children show signs of following in you or your husband's footsteps?

I would love the kids to be fans of music. If I had to make a guess, I'd say Ray might be the one to want to make music but he's only four, so who knows. They are all pretty creative children, but I don't know if becoming a musician will be their 'thing'.

### You've kept your career going through motherhood – how do you manage the balance?

Well, I've had the majority of my career as a mum now. It's quite tricky with four but there's a lot of working mums out there. I sometimes spread myself quite

thin but I think if you love all the things you do, it's easier to have the energy to deal with it all.

### What can we expect from your new album and what's the inspiration behind it?

It's called *Familia* and it's the

bolshy little sister to my last album, *Wanderlust*. It's inspired by Latin America, disco, cowboys and tequila!

### What do you love most about living in London?

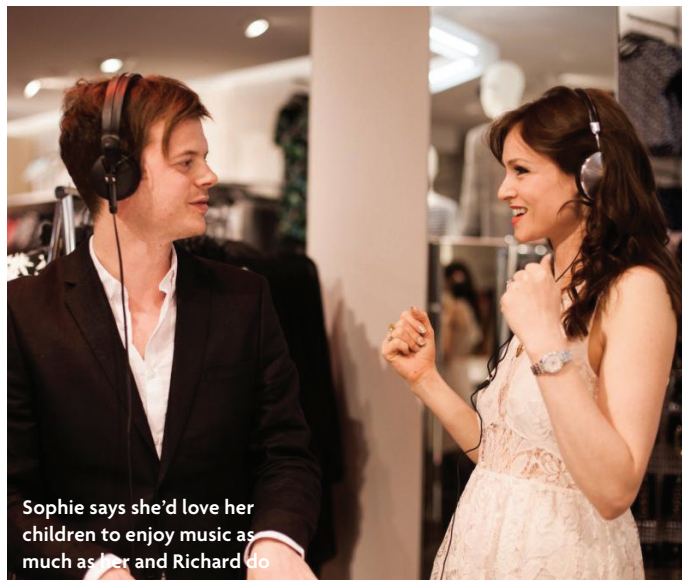
Everything. It's the best city in the world. So much to do and so many interesting people. I'm never leaving. I know some of my friends don't feel the same but for me it's an ongoing love affair.

### What do you do when you need a break?

Go on a date with Richard. It's important.

### What does next year have in store? Any more children?

I'm following the album where it takes me and as for babies, I have no idea. I'm just going to enjoy the kids I have for now and decide later. I might be done... but then again, maybe not! I'm probably mad enough. **b**



Sophie says she'd love her children to enjoy music as much as her and Richard do

*Familia* is available from 2 September. The album launch show will take place on 8 September at Bush Hall, Shepherd's Bush.

PHOTOGRAPHY: IAN WEST/PA ARCHIVE/PRES ASSOCIATION IMAGES; ISTOCK; INSTAGRAM.COM/SOPHELUSBEXTOR