

**01 TELL US ABOUT YOUR SENSE OF STYLE.**

I'm very experimental, dramatic and versatile in my dressing. I go out of my way to look good, especially at theme parties! One of my most extreme outfits was for a surrealist-themed party where I wore a tuxedo suit with a teacup as a hat, a teapot as a handbag, and brooches made of biscuits and teaspoons.

My friends say they never see me repeat an outfit. I do wear the same outfit more than once, but never to meet the same person!

The most casual get-up you'll see me in is my gym outfit - with no makeup and my hair tied back in a ponytail. However, I'll still have on a cute baseball cap, a stylish T-shirt, Stella McCartney shorts and trendy sneakers.

Even when I go to the beach, I won't just wear a bikini - I'll have on a few nice bangles or cuffs, a sunhat, necklaces, a scarf and Chanel sandals. Even my beach towel has to match.

I do own a pair of flip-flops. But those are strictly for running downstairs to pick up my mail. I'd never leave my apartment building in them.

**02 WHY IS DRESSING UP SO IMPORTANT?**

On a personal level, dressing up and looking

good gives me a lot of joy, opportunities and confidence.

Every one of my past boyfriends has been totally intrigued by my sense of style, and has looked forward to seeing me every day. That's how you keep a man! There are lots of beautiful women out there, but it's style that wins out at the end of the day.

My advice to women who say that brains and personality are more important is this: Of course, they're important, but having great style makes you stand out from the crowd. It draws people to you, makes them notice you, remember you and want to approach you.

I spend a five-figure sum shopping for myself every month, but this investment brings returns worth so much more, opening doors to work, romance and friendships. How you portray yourself affects how people treat you.

I've even had strangers approach me to offer compliments. Once, I was in New York, browsing in a store. A complete stranger, who must have been observing me for a while, came up to me and gave me a Christian Dior scarf that he'd just bought, saying: "I just wanted you to have this because you're so beautiful

# VANITY FAIR

Considered one of the most influential women, the ever-glamorous stylist Karen Ng is a fixture at Mandarin Gallery, getting her fashion

Tracy Lee-Elnick finds out more about her passion for

Fearless Fashionista

and this will look great on you." I tried turning him down, but he refused to take it back.

Put me in a room full of famous actresses and models, and I'm perfectly at ease. That's the kind of confidence my fashion sense gives me.

**03 "I'VE NOTHING TO WEAR" SYNDROME?**

That happens when you don't do your homework and are not organised, and is a sign you need help to detox your wardrobe. My walk-to-wall closet is very full, but everything's organised in categories such as tops, bottoms, dresses, accessories and coats, as well as light to dark colours. Clothes that I don't wear anymore are stacked up and if I don't need them after five years, they are given away to friends and relatives.

I have in mind what's needed to create different looks, such as classic, sexy, sultry, bohemian, feminine, rocker and casual chic.

Every fashion season, I'm either at the shows in Europe or the US, or I'll log on to Style.com to see each designer's collections, where

I'll note the key looks of the

season. I'm usually able to reference the latest trends based on what I already own. Then, I identify key pieces that I want, which have a beautiful standout detail, mull over my choices, prune the list, then go shopping.

So many women make the mistake of not planning. They suddenly feel the urge to shop, and head to Orchard Road to waste money on something they hardly wear, or that resembles what they already own.

**04 ANY PET FASHION PEEVES?**

Being stuck in a rut. The world is constantly evolving, and so should your style! I hate bouffant hair from the '80s, sticking to a "uniform" (for example, I know a group of tai tais who are usually spotted in long-sleeved silk floral printed shirts and trousers), not bothering with your hair (which can make or break your look) and sticking to the same makeup. Even I always get tips from other stylists, and make a lot of effort to increase my knowledge by reading magazines, watching Fashion TV, observing street style and even going to museums for designer retrospectives.

**05 WHO DO YOU CONSIDER STYLISH?**

Madonna, Kate Moss, Rosamund Kwan, Maggie Cheung and Fann Wong.

**06 WHICH ARE THE MOST PRECIOUS ITEMS IN YOUR WARDROBE?**

My diamond studs, of which I have several pairs in different shapes; pieces from the late Alexander McQueen's last collection; my crocodile Hermes Birkin and my Fendi fur coats. If my apartment caught fire and I could only save one thing, it would be my pair of diamond studs as they're the most valuable and portable items in my wardrobe!

**07 WHAT ARE 10 STYLE ITEMS THAT WILL LAST A WOMAN FOR LIFE?**

- 1 Diamond stud earrings
- 2 A fitted single-breasted black blazer
- 3 A little black dress
- 4 Leggings in PVC or leather, as those in sturdier materials help slim your legs.
- 5 A nice high-collared white long-sleeved shirt
- 6 A statement bag, such as an Hermes Birkin or Chanel 2.55
- 7 Platform shoes to give you height. Especially if they're by Christian Louboutin or Nicholas Kirkwood.
- 8 A white dress
- 9 A neutral-coloured jumpsuit, over which you can drape a scarf, or throw on a jacket.
- 10 Accessories - cuffs, scarves, necklaces and belts - are essential for creating a unique, polished look.