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# Hey

# baby,

# hey!

THERE'S NO DOUBT: GWEN STEFANI IS ONE COOL CHICK. SHE GAVE COSMO THE GOSS ON HER NEW FIANCE, HER EX-LOVER AND THAT WARDROBE. BY NEDAHL STELIO

**P**rincess, goddess, legend, temptress, siren, vamp, minx. A creature to be admired, stared at, in awe of. Femme fatale, sex kitten, enchantress. So not a diva. Gwen Stefani – men love her and women want to be her. Why? She's just so ... cool. She's all of the above, without ever losing her tomboy edge. She's super-feminine, but can still jump around on stage, shake her booty and sweat with the best of them. She's peroxided her hair, but you just know that she'd be more comfy hanging out with the boys at the pub than clinking glasses with high society at a swanky bar. She's a girl's girl and a boy's girl. *Cosmo* caught up with Gwen just two weeks after she announced her engagement to long-time boyfriend Gavin Rossdale (lead singer of British band Bush), and boy was she excited!

**So, are you flashing your new engagement ring around to everyone you see?** "I would be, but it's off at the jeweller getting re-sized [sounds disappointed]. So I, like, had it for a week before I had to send it off. Being engaged totally feels crazy; it's totally different. I don't think you can explain it. It's so exciting. Two of my best friends are engaged at the same time, which is pretty gnarly. I've got two people who are just as excited as me."

**Was it a big surprise when he asked you?** "Umm [doesn't want to give it all away], I knew it was coming, but I didn't know it was gonna be right then on New Year's Day – after a wild, wild night."

072 When we first started seeing each other, the intention was for us to spend time together and, yeah, eventually get married. But it was a long, hard road. We had an incredible year together last year. Generally, last year was a really great year for me. Creatively, making this album [*Rock Steady*] was amazing, and personally, I got to spend a lot of time with my boyfriend. I always get embarrassed talking about him but now that he's going to be my husband it's kind of like well, that's it, you know, *this is it*. I'm a typical girl – I've fantasised about being married since I was little."

**Do you think it was harder for you to find someone 'cause you're famous?** "I think it's hard for anybody to find anybody and have a relationship. Being in our industry does make it hard, but I think everybody finds it hard. Life is hard and relationships are hard and you have to work at them. We've worked hard at ours and we feel like we've really earned being at this point, so we feel really proud of ourselves [laughs]. I'm stoked. I always wanted to have a husband and a family and I started getting a little worried, 'cause my career really sucks up a lot of my passion and energy and time. I had a lot of confusion about that on the last record and I wrote a lot about it. But this time, I didn't feel like that. If you listen to this CD, you just know that I'm in a pretty good mood. I'm really happy."

**The new album is a lot sexier than your other stuff ...** "Well, yeah, I think so. I think that we wanted to make a record that we could dance to, that would come on when we were in a club – we were sick of our song not coming on! [Laughs.] We wanted to make simple, sexy songs. That was one goal. When we started the band 15 years ago, it was because we found this music called ska. And now, there's this music called dancehall, which is what ska has turned into, and that's the beat you hear on *Hey Baby* and pretty much throughout the album. I think it's extremely sexy music. It's ►

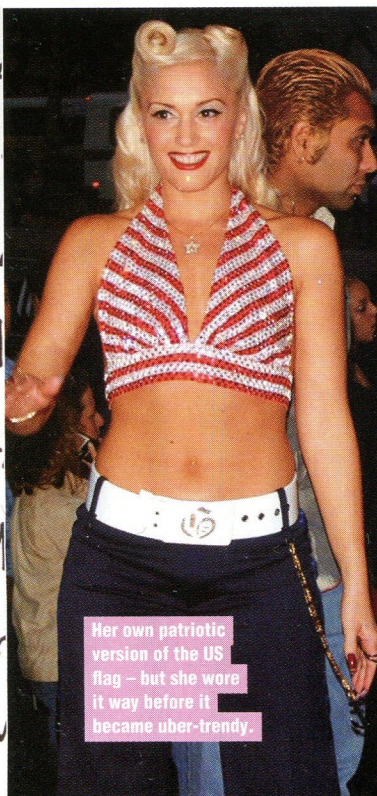


CHRISTOPHER PATRICK

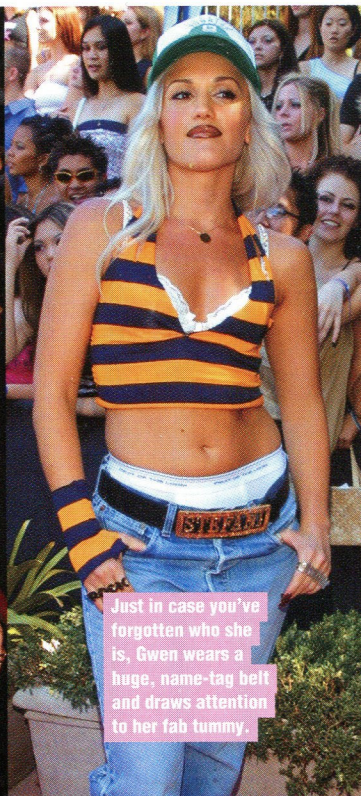
Gwen strikes a pose for the new album with fellow band members (from left): Adrian Young, Tony Kanal and Tom Dumont.



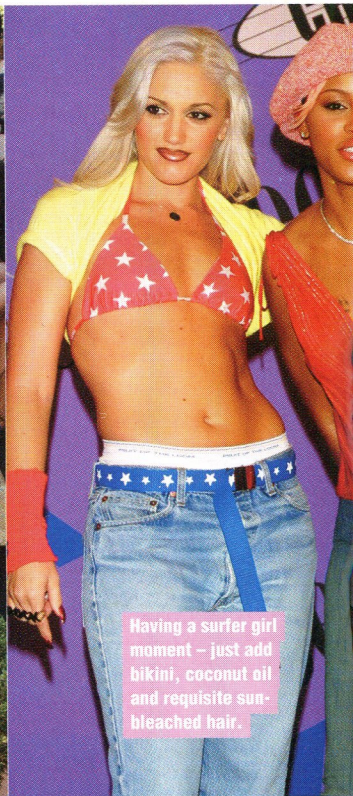
Thought that David Jones fabric was strictly for grandmas only? Gwen proves you wrong with added cut-out chic.



Her own patriotic version of the US flag – but she wore it way before it became uber-trendy.



Just in case you've forgotten who she is, Gwen wears a huge, name-tag belt and draws attention to her fab tummy.



Having a surfer girl moment – just add bikini, coconut oil and requisite sun-bleached hair.

## MIDRIFF APLENTY!

◀ great to have this record out. We had the funnest year ever; it was probably the funnest and easiest record to make for us."

**Why was it such a breeze?** "When we came off the *Tragic Kingdom* tour, we started to make a new record called *Return of Saturn*, and that record was a real painstaking, kind of growing-pains process. We had a lot to prove to ourselves – maybe that we deserved the success of the previous album or were good songwriters or whatever. We took the opportunity to make another record really seriously and we were drenched in that for two years. When we finally finished it, we went on tour and had a blast. It felt like everything was lifted off our shoulders, so we went out and had fun. Every night we were having these dancehall parties and it was just unreal. Then, after that, we started making a new record where there were no rules. We were all in a really great mood. It was so easy. We started writing and the next thing we knew, we had four tracks. It was an incredible way to start the album."

**074** **What makes you feel sexy?** "I think, in the past, as a lead girl of a band, I never really indulged that side of me. I was always getting on stage and getting sweaty, rocking out, you know? It didn't matter, I'm not girl nor guy. And I think maybe in the last few years I've become a

woman and I wear high heels. I think heels are the key to feeling sexy – as soon as I put them on it's like, 'Mmm, I think I feel pretty hot right now' [laughing]. I was never comfortable in heels before."

**Is that a part of growing older?** "I think music and sexy and sex all go together and I think the music has become a little sexier, and you do grow up a bit. I'm in a different phase. I'm definitely a woman now. Sometimes I wish I wasn't, sometimes I don't act like one, but I feel like I've earned it at this point."

**Who do you find sexy?** "Well, seeing as I just got *engaged*, I think I'd have to pick my future husband as the sexiest guy alive."

**Are you living the life you've always dreamed?** "My life is the opposite of what I thought it'd be. I don't think any of us [No Doubt] thought we'd be doing what we're doing right now, and so successfully. It's just weird. It was never the intention. We just did it 'cause that's what we did on Thursdays and Sundays when we weren't at work or at school."

**How do you cope with the long-distance relationship thing?** "Um, it sucks. But one thing with the band, one thing that I've always said is that it takes a lot of time and passion and creativity, it's not one of those things you can

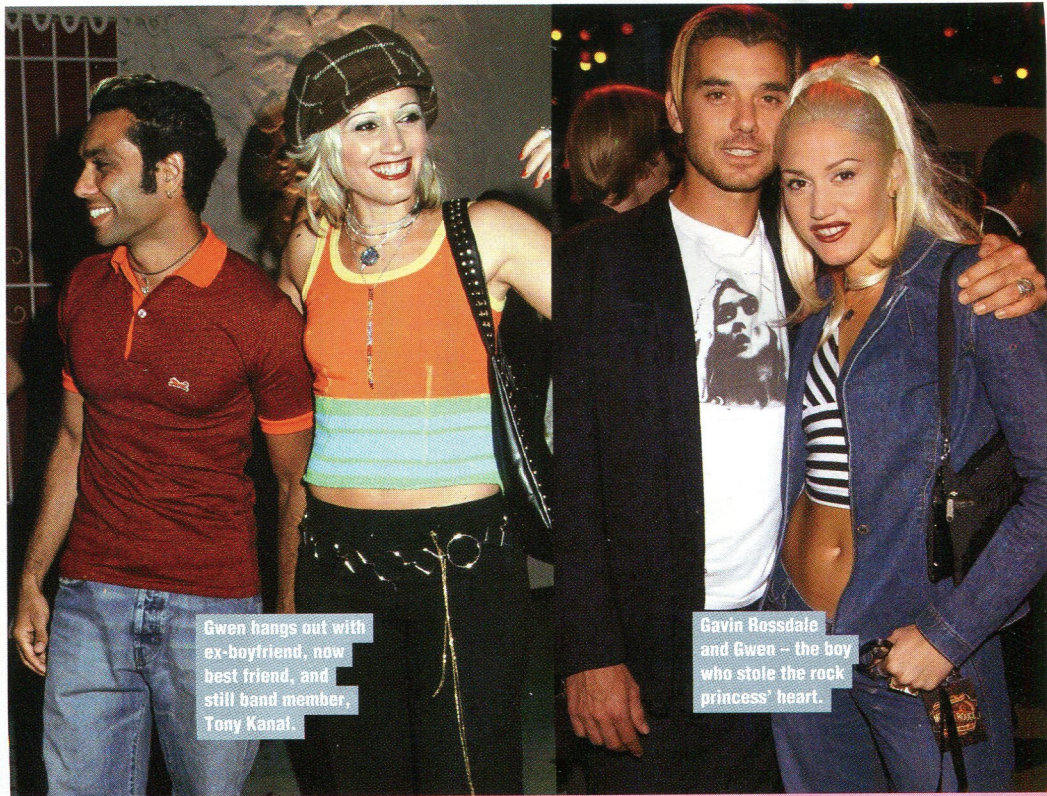
just turn on and turn off and be like, 'Oh shit, I gotta get home to my boyfriend, he's waiting for me to watch *Friends* with him.' In some strange way we were meant to have an independence from each other for a while 'cause we have to write and travel and stuff. So although in some ways I complain about it a lot, I also enjoy the fact that I got to spend time touring and seeing the world and having my own thing as a woman. Compared to my mum – who I think had the hardest job in the world raising four kids, which was a completely selfless job – I think I have a completely selfish job. So it's good but it's hard."

**And when you're in the same country, who cooks?** "He does. I *would*, but he likes it so much and he's so good at it and so passionate about it and I like to eat it, so it works out perfectly for both of us."

**Everyone who I've told that I'm interviewing you is like, "Wow, I love her. Wow, she's so cool." How does that feel?** "Um, wow! Honestly, that kind of stuff is so weird. You can go either way – I read things that are the opposite, where people get me all wrong and I think that stuff is so not real. Everyone looks at you and sees you in a certain way but you know how you are yourself. I'm lucky 'cause I've been in the band for 15 years, so I'm surrounded by my best friends. I don't



Gwen's own brand of ghetto-fabulous dressing. Bring on the fake jewels and the J.Lo hairstyle!



Gwen hangs out with ex-boyfriend, now best friend, and still band member, Tony Kanal.

Gavin Rossdale and Gwen – the boy who stole the rock princess' heart.

## GWEN'S BOYS

think about stuff that people say or write, it's not real. What is real is what I can control, sitting in a room with my best friends, making up songs. We do that completely for ourselves and we don't think about, you know, is somebody gonna think I'm cool if I write this or is somebody gonna think I'm trying too hard or is someone gonna think I'm superficial – which I read the other day and I was like, 'What? I am not! What does that mean, anyway? I gotta look it up in the dictionary.' So I don't consider anyone else when we're doing stuff – it's my thing. But saying that, it feels good when I hear good stuff."

**How is it/was it, working with your ex? [Gwen went out with No Doubt bass player Tony for seven years.]** "Tragic Kingdom was about that – *Don't Speak* – all of that. When we wrote it, we never knew anyone was going to hear it. I didn't even know I could write songs! It was really as hard as you'd think it would be. And not only did that happen, but my brother also left the band, so it really felt like it was a very screwed-up situation. But a lot of amazing things came out of it. I became a songwriter, I became independent, I got a best friend – Tony. He's, like, the greatest guy, and we're really blessed that we have a great friendship. I haven't really lost anything. But then, who would have thought that the band would be where it is now and that we'd be sitting in

a room together six years later, talking about it every day? And we do still talk about it all the time, 'cause we went through it together and it was intense."

### Where does your eccentric style come from?

"When you're at school, it's all about getting the shirt or the jeans everyone else has, then as soon as I hit puberty, I was like, 'I don't want to be like anyone else.' I don't know where that came from – hormones, I don't know. Ever since then it's been like Halloween every day for me and I love it. I dress in costume. I've always made my own clothes – I'd take thrift-store clothes and cut them up somehow. My mum made a lot of my clothes when I was little, and I spent a lot of time in craft and fabric stores. It's just another creative outlet, I think. I copy everyone; I get inspired by everyone I look at. I'm a people watcher. And I think I love getting dressed up to show people our new music."

**Favourite designers?** "I love John Galliano. He made a dress for me for the Grammys, which was a total Cinderella moment. I told him I wanted to look as though I was going to the prom, so he made me this amazing red dress. It was like a dream. All these people came to dress me, and I was like, 'Are you kidding? This is my life, this is so cool.' I also love Vivienne Westwood, I think she's a genius."

**Anything you wouldn't wear?** "I don't really like to wear skirts and shorts. But I never like to say never 'cause, who knows?"

**Any fashion tips?** "Umm, nope."

**Does Gavin like the way you dress?** "He likes everything about me, he's going to marry me!"

### You haven't ever succumbed to starving yourself skinny. How do you feel about your body?

"I'm like everyone else, I have my good and bad days. If I'm in my healthy phase, I can look pretty fit, and I have to be fit to jump around on stage. If not, well ... mostly I try not to focus on it – I think we all think about it too much. I just think of it as in 'I want to be healthy.' So I think about things like my heart rate and fitness and I think, you know, I'm lucky I can walk and that's more important than body image. But, don't get me wrong, I'm like everyone else, I have my days that I dwell on it. I'm a woman."

### Girls want to be like you. What do you think of that?

"Wow, umm, I'm like everybody else and I'd never try and give advice on how to be like me. Being creative makes me happy and that's all I would say – find something you love to do and it'll make you happy." **COSMO**

**The new album from No Doubt, *Rock Steady*, is in music stores now.**