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STEFANI**

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Time to stock up on warm-weather must-haves— from chic and easy frocks to the most covetable carryalls

What to Wear Now

A leopard-print wrap dress has star style with classic appeal, much like the woman wearing it. Dress, \$385, and bag, \$650, **L.A.M.B.** Nordstrom; 800-695-8000. Studs, price upon request, **De Beers.** 800-929-0889. Sunglasses, **Dita Eyewear.** 323-658-7078. Platforms, \$725, **Alexander McQueen.** 212-645-1797. Ring, Gwen's own. See Where to Buy for details. Fashion editor: **Jenny Capitan**

Photograph by Peter Lindbergh

HAIR: DANILO FOR PANTENE; MAKEUP: KATHY JEUNG FOR CHANEL; MANICURE: ASHLIE JOHNSON

Coat, \$1,200, and dress, \$3,400, **Marc Jacobs**. 617-425-0707. Platforms, \$725, **Alexander McQueen**. 212-645-1797. On the colonel and Higgins: Tails, waistcoats, and pants, **Brooks Brothers**. 800-274-1815. Shirts and bow tie, **Thomas Pink**. 212-838-1928. Print tie, **Paul Smith**. paul.smith.co.uk. See Where to Buy for details. Fashion editor: **Jenny Captain**

A photograph of two men in formal attire standing in front of a building at night. The man on the left is wearing a black top hat, a white shirt with a high collar, a white waistcoat, a white tie, and a black tuxedo jacket. The man on the right is wearing a black top hat, a white shirt with a high collar, a white waistcoat, a white bow tie, and a black tuxedo jacket. They are standing on a sidewalk in front of a building with a window. There are several large potted plants with colorful flowers in the foreground. The text 'MUSIC FAIR' is written in large, white, outlined letters across the bottom of the image. Below it, the name 'Gwen Stefani' is written in a smaller, white, serif font.

MUSIC FAIR

Gwen Stefani

After two hit albums, a cult fashion collection, and a new baby, the star

Text by **Alix Sharkey** Photographs by **Peter Lindbergh**



L'Oréal

reveals why platinum blondes have more fun



Elegant and eloquent.
Dress, \$3,960, **Chloé**.
Bergdorf Goodman; 212-
753-7300. Ring (worn
throughout) and studs,
Gwen's own. On Higgins:
Suit, **Valentino**. 800-997-
0140. Shirt, **Ermenegildo
Zegna**. zegna.com. Tie,
Etro. 212-317-9096. See
Where to Buy for details.



hen I first meet Gwen Stefani, I think, There's no way this woman is 37 years old.

In her dressing room after a photo session in Los Angeles, the elfin pop star is curled up in a casual teen outfit of a white zip hoodie, black cropped pants, and sneakers from her L.A.M.B. label. Husband Gavin Rossdale is at the shoot, too, toting their son, Kingston, who turns one this month.

For this session, Gwen plays a platinum-blonde Eliza Doolittle, but "I've done so many different looks," she explains with a wave of her French manicure. She remixes her inspirations, downloading and sampling Rasta, edgy English, and Japanese *manga* as she goes.

As for the blonde thing, she was hooked in her teens. "I'd always wanted to go platinum at school, but I never had the money, because you have to keep getting it done." Instead, her frosting-kit fiascoes left nasty stains on the bathroom rug. "My mom hated me for that," she recalls with a Betty Boop laugh.

These days, Gwen almost never leaves the house without makeup. But there's a simple—and pragmatic for a pop star—reason: "There's always paparazzi outside my house," she notes. "If you had paparazzi outside your house, you'd make sure you looked good, too."

Gwen remembers "dying to get out of the house" when she was pregnant with Kingston. "I had to sneak into the back of my brother Todd's car—eight months pregnant—and lie down on the floor." She pauses, registering the absurdity of it. "Just so we could go to Target."

Gwen gave birth to Kingston just five months after completing a grueling tour. (Kingston is her first but Gavin's second child; he is also the father of 18-year-old model Daisy Lowe, by British designer Pearl Lowe.) Introducing himself, Gavin proudly holds up their burbling tot tro-

phy-style. "He's already got four teeth," he says, beaming. "And he's keeping Gwen up a lot, because she's nursing. But other than that, he's a happy little boy."

Gwen always felt Gavin would make a great father. "I even wrote in a song, 'You seem like you'd be a good dad,'" she notes. "So, yeah, he's lived up to my expectations, more than. He has always been very loving and romantic."

The couple actually married twice—in London and L.A.—in 2002, Gwen wearing a custom-made John Galiano pink-and-white wedding gown for the London ceremony. "There's no secret, and I'm certainly not one to give marital advice,"

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good, too"**

she says of her relationship. "I just work on it, like we all do."

Gwen recorded the bulk of her second solo album, *The Sweet Escape*, during her pregnancy. "Now I'm in a repeater zone," she says, laughing. "I just want to make babies and make records."

As for her style, "I've gotten a little more feminine over the last few years," she says. "Right into my late 20s, I never wore heels; I was always in my Doc Martens and baggy pants. But as the years go by, you get more comfortable with looking more like a woman."

Her hair, of course, has remained goddess blonde. Hairstylist Danilo Dixon is the man charged with maintaining her locks. "I'm the only one who touches that hair," he says with a smile. He retouches the color every two weeks "with a very mild, special formula I concocted just for her. And I give her a lot of conditioning, two or three times a week."

Surprisingly, Gwen recently considered going brunette. "I was looking at one of my videos where I'd done it brown for a scene and thought, *Hmmm*, that's kinda cute. Then I said, Nah, I'm gonna milk this blonde look for as long as I can." She giggles. "And then I'll go brown."

Gwen didn't waste time getting back into shape after Kingston's birth. Was it tough? She sighs at the memory. "Yeah, it's so much work afterward to get the weight off." Yesterday she ran for the first time in months and found it excruciating: "I thought I was going to throw up, but..." She continues, "If you just do it, it comes off. And when you're nursing, like I am, your metabolism is like, *whoosh!* You're sleep deprived, but you have this crazy amount of energy because of all those hormones. I'm scared what'll happen when it all stops," she chuckles, "what it'll feel like, going back to the regular me."

Gwen admits, though, that she struggled to maintain her size 4 figure even before pregnancy. "Seriously, though, it's very boring and embarrassing and I hate talking about it, but it's true: I've *always* been on a diet, ever since I was in the sixth grade. It's an ongoing battle, and it's a nightmare. But I like clothes too much, and I always wanted to wear the outfits I would make. And I'm—" another chuckle —"very vain."

"I don't have a daily food regime," she insists. "I eat pretty healthy most of the time, but I let myself cheat once or twice a day with a cookie or pizza. The rest of the time, it's salads, fruit—all the healthy stuff. But I do like eating the fat way, too, especially when I'm training, because it just makes me feel better. But I'm, like, supernatural about it." She pauses to consider this statement. "Normal meaning I'm obsessive. The way we all are. Right?"

But Gwen, of course, is more driven than most. So in 10 years, she'll be...?

"Some days, I think there's no way I can get away with this any longer... I still feel like that sometimes, even though it's been 20 years. But then some days, I just feel really inspired and I really believe in everything." Her dark eyes sparkle. "It's like the 15 minutes just keep getting longer." ■

"The rain in Spain," Gwen recites in ruffles. Gown, \$23,660, **Alexander McQueen**. 212-645-1797. Hat, price upon request, **Philip Treacy for Alexander McQueen**. 44-207-730-3992. Bracelet, \$95,000, **Harry Winston**. 800-988-4110. Shoes, \$725, **Christian Louboutin**. neimanmarcus.com. See Where to Buy for details.







Off to the races in glorious marigold. Gown, price upon request, **Givenchy Haute Couture**. 33-1-4431-5000. Hat, \$1,730, **Philip Treacy London**. 44-207-730-3992. Gloves, \$250, **LaCrasia Gloves**. wegloveyou.com. On the colonel: Suit and tie, **Etro**. 212-317-9096. On extras: Suits, **Calvin Klein**. Macy's; 800-BUY-MACY. Shirts and ties, **Thomas Pink**. 212-838-1928. See *Where to Buy* for details.

I've grown accustomed to her face: Gwen's famed style will be bottled in a new fragrance this fall from Coty.

THIS PAGE: Gown, \$3,545, John Galliano. Saks Fifth Avenue; 800-330-8497.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Top, \$8,995, and skirt, \$4,475, Giorgio Armani. 212-988-9191. Earrings, price upon request, De Beers. 800-929-0889. Bag, \$570, Swarovski. 800-426-3088. See Where to Buy for details.

“**I**’ve always been on a diet. It’s an ongoing battle. But I like clothes too much, and I’m,” she chuckles, “very vain.”







On husband
Gavin Rossdale:
“He’s lived up to my
expectations, more
than. He has always
been very loving
and romantic.”

Stole and gown, prices upon request, **Valentino Haute Couture**. 212-772-6969. Clutch, \$1,495, **Leiber**. Bellagio, Las Vegas; 702-693-7923. Shoes, price upon request, **Giorgio Armani Privé**. 212-209-3653. On the colonel: Tails, waistcoat, and pants, **Brooks Brothers**. 800-274-1815. Tie, **Paul Smith**. paulsmith.co.uk. On extras: Tuxedos, **Ralph Lauren**. polo.com. Shirts and bow ties, **Thomas Pink**. 212-838-1928. Men’s shoes throughout, **J.M. Weston**. 212-535-2100. See Where to Buy for details. Higgins: Richard Kyler; the colonel: Jerry Trent; hair: Danilo for Pantene; makeup: Kathy Jeung for Chanel; manicure: Ashlie Johnson; production: Ricardo Martins for North Six L.A.; prop stylist: Lynn Nigro.