

The world of Yasmin Le Bon

The model and wife of Simon Le Bon talks to Sophie de Rosée about her new collection of dog-walking accessories, her daily routine and her most prized possessions.

BY SOPHIE DE ROSEE | 21 OCTOBER 2011



Yasmin Le Bon at home in south-west London Photo: Tina Hillier

Yasmin Le Bon, 46, has appeared in advertising campaigns for brands from Chanel and Moschino to Marks & Spencer, and has graced the covers of Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, i-D and W magazines. Her collection of dog-walking accessories in collaboration with Mungo & Maud launches on Monday (mungoandmaud.com). She lives in south-west London with her husband, Simon, the lead singer of Duran Duran, and their three daughters, Amber, 22, Saffron, 20, and Tallulah, 17, plus two cats Dusty and Chooch, and three dogs Tinker, Luigi and Cecil.

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Morning routine I wake up at seven every morning and take the dogs out into the garden. The next thing is a good strong brew of Assam. I put on the TV news, but then Simon comes down and turns it off because it annoys him intensely, so it's then Radio 4 for the rest of the day. We try to have breakfast together. I like very lightly toasted Ryvita with Udo's Choice oil, a really good omega oil.

Getting started I had always known that I was tall and maybe quite good looking, but I was never going to pursue modelling too young. I did a few jobs with a local agency in

Oxford, where I grew up, for extra fag and booze money during school. I didn't have any plans for after school and I thought that was completely fine. It was my friends who started panicking on my behalf that made me suddenly panic also. So I went to Models 1 in London, the only agency I knew about, and they took me on straight away. Within a week, I realised I could earn a living. When I looked at my first pay cheque I was astounded.

Jewellery This little collection of inherited jewellery (pictured) isn't worth much but each piece is a treasure emotionally. The gold bracelet belonged to my Persian grandmother on my father's side, and when my parents got married my mother inherited it. The gold band was my mother's wedding ring. It was intricately engraved and my parents had been married for so long, 44 years, that it has almost worn off completely. When she died 10 years ago I wore it on a chain. Sometimes it can be difficult to wear jewellery that you have strong emotional attachment to. The fish with the wonderful gold articulated body used to fascinate me as a child. I used to sit on my mother's lap and play with it.



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Nana I've had a figure with the gold turban for more than 20 years and she makes me so happy. She is by Niki de Saint Phalle, who called these figures 'Nanas'. I fell in love with her work at a very young age at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Then one day I wandered into a gallery in Mayfair and, blow me, they had this little Nana for sale.

Tea cups I've been through many times in my life when I've really worried about money, believe it or not. Consequently I've never allowed myself to become a collector of things; I was far too worried about paying the bills. I absolutely love going to antique shops and fairs where you rummage for hours. Tea cups (pictured) are the simplest, most joyful things that don't have to cost a lot of money - and you can use them. Simon and I love tea. He is obsessed by loose-leaf tea and makes his own blend. So tea cups are something that the whole family really enjoys. On a Sunday afternoon we all go to the kitchen and choose our cup and saucer.



Her collection of vintage tea cups, saucers and cake plates. Photo: Tina Hillier

Photography My father taught photography for 38 years and if I hadn't been a model I would have been a photographer. I love taking pictures and I wasn't too bad in the old days but now it's got so technical with digital that I'm not sure I could manage it. Photographs are a big part of my life and I'll always collect them. This Irving Penn (pictured) is a recent acquisition. It's not just a flower. It could be anything or anyone. That's why it's called Showgirl.



Showgirl by Irving Penn. Photo: Tina Hillier

Exercise I don't have an exercise routine. I've spent all my working life abusing my body royally, not warming up properly and so on, and it finally caught up with me. I used to train very, very hard but my body finally packed up about three years ago. I had to stop completely. It needed absolute rest. I gained over a stone and a half in weight, which to be perfectly honest I'm quite happy with. I'm going to be 47 next week. I'm not 21 any more.

Mungo and Maud Simon and I spend as much time as we possibly can in Richmond Park walking the dogs. Whether the dogs want to go or not is another thing. Before I even had a dog I bought dog magazines and when Mungo and Maud first opened I went in and walked out with dog accessories even though I didn't even own a dog. Their stuff is so gorgeous. So that's how my collection of dog walking accessories (pictured) came about.



Classic cars I am obsessed with classic car magazines. They are like car porn and I just drool over them. Simon has started pinching them from me, which is fine as long as I've read them already. I used to own a 1974 Alfa Romeo Montreal, but Simon wrote it off.

Tea towels I'm not house-proud any more. I once was but I've had it knocked out of me by being married to Simon and having the kids. But I am obsessive about how my tea towels are folded. They have to be in pairs and folded in a particular way.

Guitars There are always people strumming on guitars (pictured) in this house. I played classical guitar for about nine years when I was younger and I absolutely loved it. My mother would have to stop me practising at night. Simon recently stopped writing songs so I got on his case and he bought himself a new guitar and, sure enough, I can't shut him up now. Amber has started playing recently and I can't shut her up either. We try not to have family jamming sessions because it gets really loud.



Part of the collection of family guitars. Photo: Tina Hillier