

Alessandra Ambrosio



One of the most recognisable faces in the world, the Victoria's Secret Angel, swimwear and beachwear designer popped by Dubai for the 2016 Dubai Shopping Festival. We caught up with her over an intimate dinner... *By Yi-Hwa Hanna*

If you don't already know her name, you'd definitely know her face (also, we'd suspect you would quite possibly have been living under a rock for the past decade or so): Born in Rio, the 34-year-old Brazilian beauty burst onto the fashion and modelling circuit at the tender age of 15. She made the cover of the Brazilian edition of a global fashion magazine, scored a slew of ad campaigns with brands from Revlon to Christian Dior, and even a spot on the sought-after Pirelli Calendar, and has



walked the runway for brands such as Prada, Chanel and Oscar de la Renta, to name but a few. But it was when she was named the first spokesmodel for Victoria's Secret's PINK line that she skyrocketed past her rep as a top fashion model to one with girl-next-door appeal. Fast forward to 2016 and she's now such a household name that she's had cameos in major films like *Entourage* and *Casino Royale*, a guest-starring role on *How I Met Your Mother*, and a spot in the Brazilian telenovela *Verdades Secretas* as well as appearing as a guest judge on shows such as *Project Runway* and *America's Next Top Model*. You can catch her flexing her acting chops once again in the upcoming sequel to the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, but beyond the silver screen, she's also a successful swim and beachwear designer, not to mention a busy and devoted mum. Somehow, she also manages to squeeze in copious amounts of global travel thanks to her continuing modelling work that takes her all over the world—recently, including Dubai, where she hosted an exclusive dinner with some VIPs ahead of her presentation on perfume at Mirdif City Centre for the annual Dubai Shopping Festival earlier this year. We sat down with the bombshell to find out how she stays so radiant despite all of those hours on the road, finding a work-life balance in the midst of a hectic schedule, and the secret to her posing skills...

WH: What's your secret to posing so well for a truly great photo?

AA: It depends on what you're taking the picture for really, but

pictures of Cindy Crawford, Christy Turlington and Claudia Schiffer. That was the first time I saw models, and I thought, "This is what you want to do."

When I was 12, I saw some pictures of Cindy Crawford, Christy Turlington and Claudia Schiffer... and I thought, "This is what you want to do."

confidence is the best thing. Make sure you feel good about yourself, try and act natural, and don't forget the good light!

WH: Which other models do you look up to?

AA: When I was 12, I saw some

WH: You travel a lot. What do you tend to eat when you're on the plane?

AA: I [almost always] fly with American Airlines, and I eat protein with meat and vegetables. I avoid the pasta dishes when it's around show

time—I have two bites then tell them to take it away! I grew up eating plane food [honestly], so I'm used to it.

WH: You're already a super model, but if you could pick any super power, what would you choose and why?

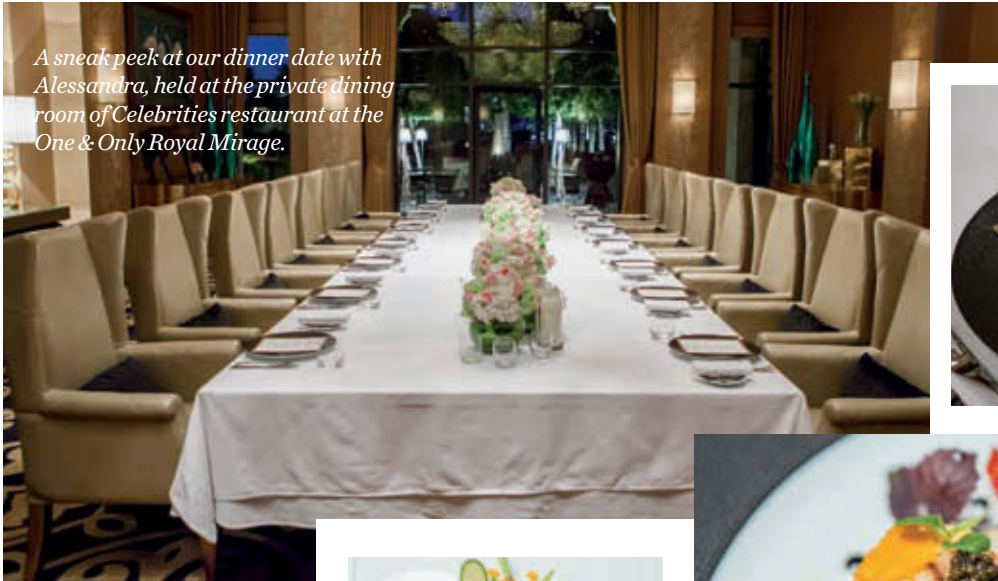
AA: Flying—I love birds, and would love the sense of freedom it could give me.

WH: What have you been enjoying about Dubai so far?

AA: Meeting people here and seeing how warm they are. Now that I know more people here and have friends here I really love it... It's very similar to Brazil [in that] it's a very warm culture with [a big emphasis] on family, which I love.

WH: What do you tend to do for your workouts when you

A sneak peek at our dinner date with Alessandra, held at the private dining room of Celebrities restaurant at the One & Only Royal Mirage.



travel or are on the road?

AA: It depends on where I'm going. I do yoga in my room, or I love to go for a swim, but it depends, and sometimes I do nothing, like here [on this trip] so far! Does dune bashing and camel riding count? [laughs]



WH: How do you keep your skin in such great condition when you travel so much?

AA: I do have a few creams! Lately I've been wearing this night cream called Charlotte's Magic Cream from Charlotte Tilbury. She's a great friend of mine and it's very moist, so I wear that one. Then my friend Mimi gave me some samples—I need small things that I can take in my bag when I'm in the plane—that are super hydrating and filled with peptides. I also drink a lot of water so I keep hydrated, and whenever I get to a place, I try to have a lot of green juices as well.

WH: What's your current favourite workout? We've heard you like Physique 57.

AA: Yes, these days it's been a lot of Bar Method, which is barre classes. I saw that they have a [Physique 57] here in Dubai and I was trying to go but I didn't have the time [in the end]! It's amazing. I used to do Pilates a long time ago—I started [around] eight years ago—and it was so hard the first week that I tried it. Now I go

and it's not as hard as it used to be in the beginning!

WH: We've heard that you didn't used to work out as much, prior to being a mum...

AA: No, not really—I never had the culture of going to the gym. I had a personal trainer to do the shows, but throughout the year I didn't [really] work out. One month before the Victoria's Secret show I would! When you're young and 19, you're like 'Whatever' but once you [hit] 25 you really want to start taking care of your body. And now, I want to do it whenever I have time to. It's just super healthy. When you're going out and dancing all night long it's different; now I'm at home and taking care of the kids!

WH: And food-wise, what are some of your favourite healthy snacks or meals?

AA: For snacks I like to do guacamole—that's one of my favourite snacks, especially when I'm in California since they have delicious avocados, so that's my number one. If I can do something, it would be

that, or I'll always carry pistachios and almonds. I have these little bars with chia in them that I keep in my bag too.

WH: What's the most important thing you'd like to teach your daughter when it comes to the way women view their body image? In the modern day, it's changed so much and now people are so keen on fitness as opposed to just being slim, for instance.

AA: I think [the importance] of natural [beauty]. To me, natural beauty is my favourite thing. This is my body type [for instance]—I've always been like this. I've maybe been three or four pounds bigger than this, depending on where you are or how you're eating, but [overall] I'm always the same, if you see my pictures from when I was 10 until now! So I feel like whoever you are, you have to embrace that, and that's what I'm going to tell my daughter. That the most important thing is to be healthy, and as long as you have that, [regardless of what your natural body shape or size is], that's all that matters.



WH: What's the secret to being sexy, in your opinion?

AA: Confidence. Being confident is key to getting whatever you want, and it's an attitude. It's the little things that can make you feel sexy. One day it could be a lipstick, the next day it could be a perfume... there are so many tricks and ways to [own it]!

WH: Ok, now the wild card question: If the world were hit by a zombie apocalypse tomorrow, what's the first thing you would do?

AA: Hug my kids and just be with them... Then find Richard Branson and get his planes! ■