

dnA

MODEL MANAGEMENT LLC

555 WEST 25TH ST, 6TH FL NEW YORK, NY 10001
TEL 212.226.0800 FAX 212.226.0022 dnamodels.com

INTERVIEW JEANNE DAMAS

L'It Chic(k)

by Blaise Bojars / photography Bryn Adams

Ask Jeanne Damas what her favorite lipsticks are and she'll rattle off a list. The 23-year-old Parisian beauty is known for her love of lip color. She's also known for being an "It girl," or more specifically, the quintessential Parisian "It girl." With an ad campaign this year for Roger Vivier under her belt, you'll doubtless be seeing her more and more. She also has a contract with Gucci and has come out in numerous publications, from lesser-known blogs to *Vanity Fair*. "I started in the industry when I was 14," says Damas. "I had a blog with photos, it wasn't for everybody, it was for my friends. I took photos on vacation and put it on Facebook for my friends and after – well Paris is a village, a small village and high school students were looking at my blog. It just snowballed from there."

Comptoir de Cotonniers called her to do a campaign and she met lingerie designer Yasmine Estani, who introduced her to the Parisian fashion set. When she was 18, IMG contacted her to model. A couple of years later she finished theater school and it helped expose her further. "I'm working on a film with Agathe Teyssier which will be out in a year and a half," she says. "But my focus right now is really fashion." Enter her soon-to-launch fashion line Rouje. "The line will launch with clothes for summer. There will be a lot of blue jeans and 1970s details, a lot of denim and suede. You'll also find finely-knit sweaters. It will be kind of a mix between APC and Vanessa Seward, very Parisian chic, simple but with a lot of little details." Add to that a chic bag or a pair of cool shoes and you basically have what comprises Jeanne's own wardrobe. "I think there isn't one style that defines Parisian chic, there are several, but I think when a Parisian woman finds her style, she never changes it. I don't know how to explain it but for example, Americans follow the trends, you have sportswear one season and something else the next. The Parisian has the same look all her life. Take Carine Roitfeld, take Emmanuelle Alt, they have different styles

but when you find your style, you keep it." A typical day in the life of the "It girl" begins with coffee at a café around the corner from her flat in the trendy 11th arrondissement, a stop at the local market and then work with her stylist for Rouje. She eats out every evening and you'll often spot her in the Canal Saint Martin area or the nearby Ledru-Rollin. Her father is a chef thereabouts and she doesn't stray too far save for a trip to a nightclub like Montmartre or Chez Castel. For quick getaways you'll find her in Morocco or Ile de Ré, where her family has a home.

Damas cites as her icons Charlotte Rampling, Jane Birkin, Catherine Deneuve, and Isabelle Adjani. There aren't many non-French labels she likes besides Reformation in New York and Realisation Par from L.A.. "It's pretty much French. I love Isabel Marant and Saint Laurent and right now I'm loving Sonia Rykiel."

A photography addict, she says that one day she sees herself being an Artistic Director or something similar. She warns that she's only 23 so isn't in a place to have too many ideas about a life well lived but is thinking about coming out with a book. "It won't be like Caroline de Maigret's

book about being Parisian but will be more personal with a lot of photos, a sort of portrait of my life in Paris." But lest you pigeonhole her as being just a pretty face, consider this little-known fact: when Damas was younger she wanted to be a psychologist. "I began seeing a psychologist when I was eight years old; my mom was very into this. And I admired my psychologist and I wanted to be that."

Damas remains decidedly down-to-earth about her ascent to fame. "I don't think I'd be as famous if there wasn't an online world. I mean, it started because I know a lot of people in Paris, I go out a lot – Paris is a village – but then, with the Internet, it's just a new generation. I think the 'It girl' label is largely due to the fact that I have a lot of followers. That, and maybe, I live in an interesting city."



dress ESCADA