



As one of the most photographed supermodels in the world and a cover girl 300 times over, people don't expect Caprice Bourret to be more than a pretty face. But, apart from her **signature flaxen locks, the only thing** remotely 'blonde' about this feisty Jewish Californian is her ambition **and, when she quit the catwalk to start her own lingerie empire, she surprised even her most vehement critics.** The woman dubbed Queen of the Undieworld is motivated by a **desire to "make women feel feminine, confident and sexy", while joking** that she herself is more of a 'cover-up girl' these days, featured on the front of top business magazines!

Caprice was guest of honour at THE gala event of the season last month: **essential** magazine's 5th annual Marbella Awards, staged at the Hotel Puente Romano to give public recognition to the achievements of local business people over the last 12 months. And there could have been no more fitting a person to present them than a beautiful lady who has become a successful businesswoman in her own right, as head of the successful By Caprice Lingerie empire.

Her transition from eye candy to entrepreneur is all the more commendable as this is her own business, not a licensing agreement, although she started out that way in 2000, lending her name to a lingerie range for Debenhams in the same way that fellow supermodels Kate Moss and Elle Macpherson launched their fashion brands. But in 2006 she took

up the reigns of commerce herself, and investing £263,000 of her own money was only the start. In 2007 she added a swimwear range, By Caprice Swim, followed with By Caprice Sleep nightwear, Glam By Caprice occasion wear designed exclusively for Littlewoods and, this year, By Caprice Bedding. One of her greatest coups last year was being invited by retail chain tycoon Sir Philip Green to sex up the image of Bhs with an exclusive lingerie range. Her affordable collections turned over £4m last year and are stocked by Littlewoods, Debenhams, Asos, Figueaves, Lipsy, Oli and some 70 independents in the UK, where over two million women wear her designs. She also distributes to Spain, Scandinavia, Germany, France, South Africa and, soon, to her homeland across the Atlantic.

Today Caprice lives in a private gated residence

A MODEL ENTREPRENEUR

# Caprice



Caprice fans can check out the latest news at [www.caprice-online.com/](http://www.caprice-online.com/)

in Notting Hill with her two Chihuahuas, Stinker and Roly-Poly. (She also has a seven bedroom country house in Surrey.) She left her native California at 25 to further her modelling career in London, turning heads early on in a see-through dress at the British National Television Awards. Her first cover was *Vogue* and she was both *GQ* magazine's and *Maxim's* Woman of the Year. Even today, her name conjures up images of a scantily-clad blonde with a sexy 34-25-34 silhouette and a California tan. But as she was only too aware, every model has a sell-by date... thus, she dabbled in West End theatre (appearing in the acclaimed *Vagina Monologues* and *Rent*), TV and movies and even released two pop singles before finding her true metier in business. This is one determined lady, a quality instrumental in her success although it hasn't always been easy... late deliveries, cancelled orders and exchange rate fluctuations are particularly tough calls in a recession. Nor did many of the city 'suits' take her seriously at first. However, she is proud to have done it all without owing a penny to anyone and now she spends a large part of her time sharing her hard-won experience with others at her own business start-up seminars, which are making a big impact with budding entrepreneurs throughout Britain.

Now read more in our exclusive interview.

Caprice modelling her latest lingerie collection



**Why did you feel the need to leave California, the so-called Land of Opportunity, to further your career in London?**

Because I wanted to go to a smaller territory and be a big fish in a smaller pond. Fortunately for me, my crazy idea worked. In California the lifestyle and the weather are sensational. However, in England there's culture, all my friends are here, doing business is easier here... England is my home.

**Do you know Marbella?**

I've been coming to Marbella for 14 years and I absolutely love it. You really can't get this kind of weather anywhere else. The lifestyle is easy, the food is good and the people are very nice.

**Is modelling as tough and bitchy as the press makes out?**

The world of modelling is vain, superficial, bitchy... but I absolutely love it. It's given me, a normal middle class girl, opportunities that I could only dream of.

**What was your biggest challenge?**

Moving from being a successful international model to a credible businesswoman. It's been five years since I started By Caprice Lingerie... and I've done it all on my own. During the recession I didn't have to take on any equity partners, I paid off all my loans and I'm in clear profit. So if somebody doesn't acknowledge my accolades it's their own lack of research. I have nothing to prove anymore.

**Are you planning any new launches or expansion of your Spanish operation?**

I would loooooove to expand my business in Spanish territories but I would either like to take on a Spanish partner or find a rep.

**Have you ever been subject to 'blonde-ism' in business?**

Everyone stereotypes models... I wasn't spared from this stereotyping when I went from model to entrepreneur. There really is nothing you can do about it other than wait until you have a success story with your new venture... then you get the credibility.

**How do you unwind?**

I meditate every day. This keeps me focused, relaxed and helps keep me sane.

**You have often said you would like to marry and have children? Is that still on the cards and are there any contenders?**

I would love to marry and have kids. I'm 39 so I should probably start thinking about it right about now. I think everything in life happens at the right time. I know it's in my cards and I know it will happen, I just don't know when.... Watch this space... By the way, yes, I am dating someone quite seriously.

**Tell us about your successful Business Start-Up Seminars?**

Yes, I have been doing loads of seminars. I

talk to a range of audiences, from students to entrepreneurs starting new businesses. I usually discuss my transmission from a model to a businesswoman, trials and tribulations through the recession and how business is for me now. I think it's really important to share my experiences and usually I do these seminars for no fee.

**Who's your favourite clothing designer?**

Herve Leger. It's only recently that I've become such a fan. But the dresses are so sexy, fit like a glove and give you this amazing hourglass figure.

**What's your secret for looking young and fabulous?**

It's work!!!!!! I take 51 vitamins a day, I've never done drugs, I exercise five days a week ... two days of tennis, two days with a personal trainer and one day at the gym doing a body pump class. Also, I think it's having a good, positive, healthy attitude. I'm generally very happy and very thankful for everything the universe has provided me with. I'm a lucky girl!

**Where do you see yourself 10 years from now?**

Whit Caprice Lingerie bigger than Victoria's Secrets, two beautiful, healthy kids, an amazing husband, and having more time on my hands to be more involved with my selected charities. I'm blessed with what I've been given and I would love the chance to give back as much as I can. ■