

Tuesday, November 10, 2009

LIVINGSTYLE

Cheryl Cole may be creating headlines with her outrageous dresses as judge on the *X Factor* but she's adopted a different look for her music career. The pop princess has turned to military styling to launch her attack on the charts with her No1 solo single *Fight For This Love*. In both her music video and much-talked-about *X Factor* performance, she stood to stylish attention in statement peak cap, bright red military jacket and tough black boots. Cheryl's military fashion moment has made soldier-inspired styling this season's hit.



This season's winter coats and jackets have had a military makeover with brass buttons, frogging (braid fastenings) and belted styles. You'll find military styles in long tailored tail coat versions or cute cropped jackets. Opt for traditional black, navy or grey for versatility or stand out from the style army with Grenadier Guard-inspired vivid red. **TRY:** Primark sequin military jacket, £21; Yasmin Le Bon for Wallis Ink embroidered military coat, £150; New Look red military coat, £45; Monsoon Fusion grey military coat, £100.

DIET - OR DIE

When doctors told 30-stone Teresa Syrett her weight was killing her, drastic surgery seemed the only option. She tells **PAULA THOMPSON** how she lost half her body weight and transformed her life

'If you don't lose weight you'll be dead in five years'. That was the doctor's stark warning to 30-stone Teresa from the Isle of Wight.

The 49-year-old was so big she couldn't bend down, and even a short walk left her breathless.

At her heaviest, Teresa wore a dress size 30 and her huge stomach made everyday tasks like cleaning impossible.

Teresa had always been a slim size 12-14 but after having four children the weight piled on and she struggled to get rid of it.

Suffering from depression and with four children to bring up alone, Teresa fell into a pattern of comfort eating.

"The depression set in quite badly when my husband left," she says.

"I used to eat to make myself feel better. I'd snack on anything and everything and would eat leftovers from the kids' plates so nothing went to waste.

"I would go to the fridge at all times of the day and eat whatever I could find. My weakness was cheese sandwiches."

As the weight piled on, Teresa says she saw no reason to worry.

"I didn't really notice it. I was happy being big and that's how everyone knew me, including my children. I didn't even weigh myself.

"Sometimes when I picked the kids up from school I heard the other children saying 'look at the fat lady', but I didn't mind.

"I had tried dieting but the weight always piled back on and because I didn't have a bloke in my life I wasn't that bothered."

However, a trip to the doctor's gave 5ft 2in Teresa the terrifying wake-up call she needed.

"I was getting arthritis in my

knee and was always short of breath so I was going to the doctors more and more. One day the doctor turned to me and said if I didn't do something drastic about my weight I would be dead in five years.

"It was such a shock. I thought 'Oh my God I'm not going to see my children grow up and get married. I'm not going to see my grandchildren'. I was frightened."

With a history of failed diets behind her, doctors suggested gastric bypass surgery, where a band is fitted around the top of the stomach to create a smaller pouch and limit the amount of food a patient can digest. The new, smaller pouch is connected to the small intestine, bypassing



Teresa before her weight loss

the stomach altogether.

"Before I was allowed the operation I had to keep a diary of everything I ate," says Teresa.

"I realised I had no sense of

when to eat or when I was full.

"I had no concept of when I should stop eating and meal times were non-existent.

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Teresa today with her grandson

LIFEEXPERIENCE

COVER STORY

● Continued from front

"I was literally eating all day. I was shocked not so much by the amount of food I was eating but by how often.

"I didn't know when I was supposed to eat. I was snacking because I was miserable. Telling me to eat less was like telling an alcoholic to stop drinking. It's like an addiction – I just couldn't help it.

"Then I worried it was going to kill me so I'd eat some more to comfort myself. I was on this treadmill and couldn't get off."

Teresa was referred to television's "Fat Doctor" Dr Shaw Somers for help and underwent gastric bypass surgery in 2006 through his clinic Streamline Surgical.

"It was painful afterwards and I couldn't move a lot to start with. The first time they gave me something to eat after the operation they came towards me with a teaspoon of jelly and I just laughed – it was so tiny. But it was incredible because when I ate it I felt full instantly.

"Now I can eat what I want but I eat children's-sized portions. If I eat too much I'm sick."

Since the operation Teresa has lost an incredible 18 stone – more than half her body weight – and has dropped to a dress size 12-14.

"I used to live in elasticated skirts and T-shirts. Now when I go shopping I head straight for the plus sizes and have to be reminded that I don't need them now."

An operation last November to remove excess skin around her stomach completed the transformation.

"My life is so different now," says Teresa.

"I've got four grandsons all under the age of three and now I can take them to the park and run around with them like crazy.

"I can walk now – before I could only waddle – and I can walk and talk at the same time.

"I can do all the little everyday things that other people take for granted, like getting in and out of the bath.

"I couldn't bend over before – now I can actually see my feet. And my knees don't ache anymore."

But she says, weight loss surgery is not an easy remedy.

"It's not a quick fix. It's hard work and you have to do it yourself. It's a sacrifice. I've always had a battle with food and I still have to control what I eat.

"Most people can come home after a bad day at work and cheer themselves up by sitting down to a nice meal and a glass of wine. But I can never do that. I can never dive into a big bowl of pasta or treat myself to a big meal. That's difficult."

And adjusting to her new image has been tough.

"It sounds funny but coming to terms with the weight loss has been mentally challenging.

"All of a sudden I'm like a different person. Everyone in my village knew me as big Teresa – larger than life and the life and soul of the party. Sometimes I feel a bit insignificant now, like I'm not me anymore.

"But I know I've done the right thing. And of course the health benefits far outweigh any doubts.

"Dr Shaw Somers has given me a new life. I should be dead but I've been given a second chance."

* Teresa's story is featured on *Fat Doctor* tonight on *Discovery Home & Health*, 9pm.

TERESA'S DAILY DIET

BREAKFAST:

Four Weetabix, five slices of toast, a couple of packets of biscuits and some fruit.

LUNCH:

Seven rounds of sandwiches, three packets of crisps and more biscuits.

DINNER:

Constant grazing from the fridge and cupboards, eating all the children's leftovers and not sitting down to a proper meal.



THE HORROR STILL HAUNTS ME

Today, he works to ensure mental health patients are well-treated. But, as Hampshire-based inspector Derek McCarthy tells SARAH JONES, he will always remember the horrific lessons of the past

MITRA'S OFF TO TOOTH CAMP

Dental expert Mitra Najafi counts sporting stars and WAGs among her clients, but now she is leaving the celebrity world behind as she fulfils a life-long ambition to help children in Tanzania

AT HER multi-award winning hi-tech practice in Southampton, Dr Mitra Najafi is used to treating celebrities and performing smile makeovers using the very latest technology.

She numbers sporting stars and WAGs among her clientele – England striker Theo Walcott's girlfriend Melanie Siade is just one of her celebrity patients.

Mitra built her practice up from scratch and has a loyal patient following who admire her for her professionalism and caring attitude.

And it is these two qualities that Mitra will be drawing on in the new year when she fulfils a life-long ambition.

"I've always wanted to do something meaningful – to give something back. I've been really lucky in my career and have enjoyed a high level of success.

"Now I want to share the expertise and experience that I have with people who sadly will never

have the opportunity to receive the sort of dental care that we all take for granted in this country," she said.

Mitra has signed up to travel to Tanzania in Africa with the Bridge to Aid project.

She will draw on her savings to meet the £3,000 cost for the trip and she is busy fundraising to take much-needed equipment with her.

She will be going back to basics, staying in tents at a Tooth Camp and treating up to 50 patients a day.

"Children are dying in Tanzania due to dental infections and suffering terrible pain because they don't have access to a dentist.

"The work being done at the Tooth Camp is saving lives and I would love to be part of that.

"This will be a return to the fundamentals of dentistry and I hope to be able to pass on valuable information for others to learn from," she said.

No stranger to being in challenging situations,

