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Wendy Both
Top Model and
Reiki Master

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Mouse Mansion



WENDY BOTH

Top Model, Reiki Master and Adrenaline Junkie

She loves flowing from one adventure into another. Wendy Both is a top fashion model, a thrill seeker, but also a spiritual medium and reiki master. Her life-story sounds like an adventurous highway, with miles and miles of adventures ahead.

By Vivian Boon and Michael Passage

Her eyes light up when she is presented the plate of gado-gado with peanut sauce. We meet Wendy Both at Simpang Asia in Culver City, an authentic Indonesian restaurant. 'This is my favorite dish: gado gado with extra peanut sauce. My dad used to make this. One of the things I miss about Holland is watching my dad cook. When I visit my parents in Holland I love sitting in the kitchen watching my dad cut vegetables for the bami goreng and making krupuk while my mom makes the peanut sauce.'

Wendy (49) lives in Los Angeles. She was born in Vught, the Netherlands, and has a Dutch mother. Her dad Richel is of mixed descent: his mother Lieke was Indonesian and German, his father Lachman was born in India. 'My grandfather and grandmother on my father's side were together until my dad was about two years old,' Wendy tells. 'Then my grandfather was lured back to India by his mother, away from Lieke, because she had set up an arranged marriage. Opa Lachman then had three more sons and one daughter from that marriage. My grandmother moved to the Netherlands when my dad was about twelve years old. She then married opa Both, who adopted my dad as his own and now I carry his name. What amazes me is after all that heartache, they all ended up getting along. I believe that helped me in striving for that kind of relationship with my ex-husband and his wife.'



Although she has lived in the USA for a long time now, Wendy feels very much in touch with the Indo side of her family. She always has. 'Growing up we used to go to my mother's Dutch family almost every Sunday. The family would be sitting around the living room filled with cigar, pipe and cigarette smoke. The

- INTERVIEW -



Wendy's grandparents and her father as a child



Photo: Wendy and her parents

Photo: Peter Mueller



Photo: Wendy's grandparents



adults would sit in a circle and leave the kids be. It did not feel inclusive. I had a much different experience with my Indo family. I would help my opa and oma bake spekkoek in two ovens. It was his mother's recipe and people loved it so much, that they started ordering it to bring to friends and family. I loved driving with my opa to make the deliveries. I have fond memories of their friends and family coming over, the house filled with laughter.'

When you browse the internet looking for images of Wendy, you cannot be but impressed with the fashion shoots she has done. She has worked with iconic creators such as Patrick Demarchelier, Steven Meisel and Fabrizio Gianni. She has participated in famous campaigns including those of Victoria's secret, Corneliani and the well-known black-and-white Guess campaign with other top models like the late Ana Nicole Smith.

'I moved to Miami to pursue a career in modeling when I was seventeen. My aunt had sent a picture of me, without me knowing, to a National televised modeling competition hosted by Linda de Mol and I came in second. One of my first jobs was in Miami. I remember going there and loving it so much. One of the first jobs I did was in Tunisia for Rucanor. I got to ride a beautiful Arabian horse bareback through the desert at full speed, while the photographer and his assistants drove alongside me with a Jeep trying to capture us. There in the desert, no end in sight... it was amazing. I was just going. I still remember it to this day.

After that I had a few other jobs in different countries. I loved it so much that I told my parents: I don't want to be a in school anymore, I want to be a model. So I moved to Miami and signed with Models International. The Dutch manager Conrad Bakker took care of me because I was so young. I moved to Miami all by myself. In the beginning my mom went with me, but of course they couldn't stay. When I think about it now... I have a daughter, Sophia, who is seventeen, and I sometimes ask myself: 'would I be okay with that?' The answer is: not really. But I'm happy my parents allowed me to do it.'

'I moved to Miami to pursue a career in modeling when I was seventeen.'

To do all that at that age, you have to have guts. 'I must admit that I am a bit of an adrenalin junkie. I love fast cars, jumping out of airplanes, riding mo-

tocross, anything that gets my adrenaline pumping. When I was seventeen in Miami, I was offered to model for a bathing suit company while swimming with sharks alongside a shark wrangler. I was beyond thrilled. My mom was not however and booked a flight from the Netherlands to stop me.

As a kid I wanted to be a search-and-rescue helicopter pilot, a fighter pilot or a race car driver, much to my parents dismay. My love for cars started at a young age. I was fascinated watching my dad drive. I had a fascination with the lines of the cars, the way engines revved up and was right in my element when I started watching Formula One and Nascar Races. You can imagine that I still cherish the shoot I did with the late Ayrton Senna, the world famous formula one driver. We were at a small airport with his car and helicopter in the back. He was very shy, and I actually had no idea who he was at that time. He ordered the photographer to shoot only one roll of film and when she put another roll of film in, he grabbed my hand and took me into the helicopter. We took off and we landed in the backyard of his house. We just left the whole crew behind.'

Wendy sees life as a journey and tries to enjoy the journey to the fullest. She tries to create fun first and surrounds herself with like-minded people. Everything else she builds around it. She still models, but has expanded her career, using her spiritual side. 'I am also a reiki master. Reiki is a form of energy



guided me towards people and situations where help was needed. When reiki came into my life it amplified my purpose to heal and help people. When I started working with people my abilities as a medium started coming in. I started hearing things. My path to healing actually began as a young age. As I grew up I learned about psychic abilities through my Indonesian grandmother. I was fascinated by it. It's the combination of my psychic-intuitive abilities, mediumship and reiki that helps me to heal my clients on all levels: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual and giving them the tools to cultivate a healthy lifestyle.

I see every adventure as an opportunity for growth, to get out of your comfort zone. There's nothing wrong with being in your comfort zone, unless you get too comfortable and start holding yourself back