

# Durban beauty has fashion world covered

By KASHIEFA AJAM

SOUTH African-born model Nicola Breytenbach says Paris Hilton is not as silly as everyone assumes, one of her closest friends is celebrity magician David Blaine and she says she will never understand why her fiancé has a phobia for creams and lotions. But she loves him anyway.

She has done campaigns for Revlon, L'Oreal and Versace; mingled with the likes of Brad Pitt, Jennifer Lopez, Tom Cruise and Madonna; and worked alongside international supermodels Kate Moss, Cindy Crawford and Claudia Schiffer.

Breytenbach has graced the covers of dozens of international magazines, sashayed down the runways of Milan, Paris and London and has featured on a huge screen in New York's Times Square.

Breytenbach made headlines in South Africa a few years ago when her relationship with hunky swimmer Ryk Neethling – which only lasted a few months – had tongues wagging.

"Do people still talk about that?" she wanted to know. "I am sure they don't! Do they?"

Now though, she is planning to wed American businessman Ben Steiner.

Although originally from Durban, Breytenbach moved to Europe with her mother and stepfather after her 16th birthday. Her modelling career was launched when a friend of her mother's suggested she see a modelling agent in Amsterdam.

She got her big break when

she was appointed as Dior's in-house model and it wasn't long before she turned into one of the hottest ramp models in Europe and then the US.

However, the green-eyed beauty insists she does not let fame control her and says she "really has few celebrity friends".

"I do know a lot of well-known people but they are not my friends," she says.

"Take Leonardo DiCaprio, although I am good friends with Giselle Bundchen," (the star's ex-girlfriend). "I wouldn't phone up him up and say, 'let's go for lunch'."

One of the main reasons for her being in South Africa this week, was to finalise details for her new fragrance which she hopes to launch here soon.

Breytenbach says she has no plans to turn her back on South Africa. "I will always be loyal to South Africa, it is my home. After I am married I plan to do projects here. I have to give back," she says.



**SIMPLY GORGEOUS:** Top South African model Nicola Breytenbach mingles with the stars

Picture: CARA VIERECKL