



INTERNATIONAL supermodel Nicola Breytenbach relaxes with her father's cat, Boo, at his home on the Berea. She visits South Africa regularly

Pictures: MARILYN BERNARD

Supermodel turns into girl next door

ROY BARFORD

DURBAN-BORN international supermodel, Nicola Breytenbach, is back in town on a short holiday and says that she is thinking of returning permanently.

"I love Durban - this is where I feel most at home," said Breytenbach.

As the accompanying picture shows, the *Sunday Tribune* team found her kicking back on the sofa with Boo the cat while relaxing at her father's flat on the Berea.

Breytenbach looks every inch the Durban girl-next-door rather than the glamorous supermodel striding the catwalks of London and New York.

She left South Africa 15 years ago, and has since shared the catwalk with the likes of Cindy

Crawford, Kate Moss and Claudia Schiffer, having worked for agencies such as Trump Models, owned by billionaire Donald Trump.

Breytenbach was also the only non-American judge at the 2005 Miss United States pageant, after being invited by Trump himself.

Stereotypical supermodel character traits do not pertain to the down-to-earth Breytenbach, who has a refreshing sense of modesty about her.

Despite 10 years of modelling at the highest level abroad, she remains "proudly South African".

"I once had a braai in the snow in Washington DC."

The tall 27-year-old said that after years of work and travelling, she is now considering making a permanent return to her country of birth.

Her job requires her to travel

back and forth between London and New York, both of which were "homes" during the different seasons. Her accent is still strongly South African, but highlighted by streaks of English and American. "I try to adapt it to wherever I am," she laughed.

Breytenbach said she generally visited South Africa at least once a year. "But this is my fifth visit this year. I seem to be coming back more and more these days."

She left South Africa when she was 13, moving with her family to Holland, where she began her modelling career five years later.

Breytenbach said she was very keen to establish a swimwear business in South Africa.

She advised aspirant models not to start too early.

"I think from the age of 18 is okay," she said.



DOWN-TO-EARTH and relaxed, Nicola enjoys taking a break from the glossy world of high fashion (inset), where she has shared the catwalk with supermodels Kate Moss and Cindy Crawford, and worked with renowned fashion photographers Steve Meisel and Patrick Demarchelier. Now she's thinking about returning to her favourite city, Durban

