

ANYTHING **but** PLAIN

Swedish beauty **Elsa Hosk** would like you to believe she's the average girl next door. But following her work for labels such as Victoria's Secret and H&M, this self-proclaimed tomboy is proving she's more than just a pretty face.

BY DANINE ALATI | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACK GUY

Elsa Hosk is a tough woman to pin down. The 24-year-old Swedish blue-eyed blonde has been in New York, Miami, Brazil, and the Florida Keys—all in the span of seven days. “Sorry. You caught me at one of the most hectic times with my schedule,” she says, back Stateside at the end of her whirlwind week. But this jet-setting life of an international model has *not* been a lifelong dream for Hosk, who grew up as an athlete. A basketball superstar in high school, she pursued the sport as a profession, but her father changed the trajectory of her career when he submitted photos of her to Swedish modeling agencies. “When he told me, I was just kind of shocked. I didn’t think that I could be a model at all,” she says, claiming she’s less glamour girl and more down-home gal. Then the jobs started pouring in. With her stunning looks and playful personality, Hosk has enjoyed the excitement of the industry and the opportunities it’s afforded her—from print campaigns for brands like Ugg and Nine West, to the covers of *Elle Italia* and *Elle Sweden*, to the catwalks of Carolina Herrera, Dior, Oscar de la Renta, and, of course, the Victoria’s Secret Fashion Show. But she also appreciates using her newfound celebrity to help a cause close to her heart, FAIR Girls, an organization to end human trafficking.

Styling by Annie Ladino at The Wall Group
Hair by Luca Blandi using Oscar Blandi Products
Makeup by Tina Turnbow using Lancôme at Crosby Carter Management
Manicure by Julie Kandalec at Bryan Bantry Agency for Chanel Beauté



Satin patchwork top, **Prada** (\$2,655). *Bal Harbour Shops*, 9700 Collins Ave., 305-864-9111; prada.com. White enamel drop earrings, **Kenneth Jay Lane** (\$90). *Mildred Hoyt*, 265 Sunrise Ave., Palm Beach, 561-833-6010; mildredhoit.com. Elsa Peretti rock crystal ring, **Tiffany & Co.** (\$2,145). *Bal Harbour Shops*, 305-864-1801; tiffany.com

Printed overalls, **Moschino** (\$1,950). *moschino.com*. Bangle, **Alexis Bittar** (price on request). *Neiman Marcus, Bal Harbour Shops, 9700 Collins Ave., 305-865-6161; neimanmarcus.com*. Elsa Peretti rock crystal ring (\$2,145) and Elsa Peretti doughnut bangle (\$14,500), **Tiffany & Co.**, *Bal Harbour Shops, 305-864-1801; tiffany.com*. Polished gold cuff, **Kenneth Jay Lane** (\$188). *Mildred Hoyt, 265 Sunrise Ave., Palm Beach, 561-833-6010; mildredhoyt.com*. Cable bangles (\$1,550-\$6,500) and Starburst ring (\$2,300), **David Yurman**. *Bal Harbour Shops, 305-867-1772; davidyurman.com*. Plexi heel ankle-strap pumps, **Michael Kors** (\$750). *Bal Harbour Shops, 305-864-4144; michaelkors.com*



OCEAN DRIVE: Why did you decide on modeling over professional basketball?

ELSA HOSK: It became hard to balance everything.... I had to choose basketball or modeling because I was doing both on top of school, and it was hard coming back from jobs and having my teammates already practicing new [skills]. I couldn't keep up. If I'm not the best at something, I don't want to do it at all. I was the team captain and kept missing games, which was unacceptable, so I chose modeling. But I do miss basketball.

So you probably enjoy working with Victoria's Secret Pink, because you get to interact with various sports teams.

Yes, with Pink we do collections with teams. In Miami we did a meet-and-greet with the Marlins, and I got to go to the new stadium, which was amazing. The fish tank behind home plate was so cool! It's so Miami.

Was Victoria's Secret your big break?

My career has gone a lot of different ways. When I started [at 15], I did more shows and a lot of editorial to build my portfolio. While finishing school, I did more commercial jobs, like campaigns for Guess jeans with [photographer] Ellen von Unwerth. Then I moved to New York [at 20] and started modeling full-time. It was a dream to work with Victoria's Secret and become part of its big family.

You're in the current H&M Lingerie campaign. How does that differ from working with Victoria's Secret?

Modeling is always different depending on the company. Pink is fun, free, happy, and youthful, while H&M makes beautiful lingerie for a more grown-up woman. Working with H&M is awesome for me because they're Swedes, and it's so nice to be able to hang out and speak your own language. I also get to work with the stylists, photographers, makeup artists, and hairstylists I started out with, and now years later we get to work again for new companies.

You've had the opportunity to travel around the world on shoots—what has been your favorite location?

I loved Tokyo—it's so futuristic, so culturally different. I love big cities with a lot of personality. But then I also love places like the Maldives. I often don't have time to enjoy the locations, though. I usually get there, work, then leave. I did just have one day off [working] in Brazil. We hiked for an hour up these amazing waterfalls, and there were different levels where we could jump off into the water. Normally, we don't have time for that.

Have you had time to enjoy Miami?

My boyfriend and I came here on vacation last year for Art Basel. When I'm not working, I like to just relax and go to the beach. We went to the same little Italian restaurant [Casa Tua] every night. We loved it. My favorite place to stay is Hotel Victor. It's so cool, like old Art Deco. I love the vibe there and the décor.

Yes, that hotel has very cool interiors.

I love interior design! I'm still decorating my apartment in New York. I just got a new kitchen by Henrybuilt. It's so great.

Do you cook?

Well, I will now with my new kitchen. I have to somehow justify it. I like to cook Swedish food. I love to eat.

So you love food and you're a model. How do you make that work?

It's hard when your job revolves around how you look. But I'm not happy when I try to diet, so I work out to be able to eat. I eat what I want and stay active. I do kickboxing, Pilates, spinning, barre classes, and I work out with a trainer—a mix of everything. I hate running and going to the gym, so I need classes and a mix of activities to keep me interested.

What's your beauty routine? Any must-have beauty products?

I use coconut oil and argan oil as moisturizers. They're good for everything—my skin, my hair. It's taken me years to learn how to deal with my skin. Keeping hydrated is essential—drinking plenty of water, eating properly. All the cliché things that they always say really *are* how to keep your skin looking good.

Other than travel, what opportunities has modeling afforded you?

It's enabled me to grow as a person. You have all these insecurities about how you look when you start out, and you have to overcome that to be comfortable in this career. Also, as I become more well-known, I want to [use my celebrity] to do something charitable. For example, I'm involved in FAIR Girls.

That organization seeks to end the trafficking of young girls. What led you to work with it?

I saw a movie called *The Whistleblower*, which dealt with the selling of girls as sex slaves, and I was so touched by it. I had the urge to do something about it. FAIR Girls—based in Washington, DC—is very hands-on. It rescues these girls and helps them to get on with their lives; it even helps them with start-up businesses. I met some of the girls [in DC]—to actually hear their stories is absolutely heartbreaking. I'm grateful that I can do something to help.

How do you stay so grounded and not lose sight of who you really are?

This industry can be really superficial, and it could be easy to get caught up in it. The key is to stay close to friends and family. I see mine as much as possible; they're still in Sweden. And I surround myself with people who have the same values as me—people who don't necessarily work in fashion. Also, all my friends from when I was young are still my best friends. I can't come back to them acting different. They help me stay true to myself.

What would someone be surprised to know about you?

People think if you're a model, you're a glamorous person. But I'm really not. Yes, when I'm at work, I like to be taken care of. But in my free time, I just don't care. I go out in the woods, I get dirty, I'm outdoorsy. I'm kind of a dork, actually. I read a lot. I'm not one to go out all the time. I will go out if there's something to do—and I will be the first one to dance! But I like staying home, having a good home-cooked meal. Small things make me happy. **OD**

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Yellow degrade damier dress (\$9,261) and satin headband (\$515), **Louis Vuitton**. Aventura Mall, 19501 Biscayne Blvd., 305-931-3887; louisvuitton.com. Elsa Peretti round earrings (\$2,500), rock crystal ring (\$2,145), and doughnut bangle (\$14,500), **Tiffany & Co.** Bal Harbour Shops, 9700 Collins Ave., 305-864-1801; tiffany.com. Open-toe boots with gold buckle, **Giuseppe Zanotti Design** (\$1,250). Bal Harbour Shops, 305-868-0133; giuseppezanottidesign.com