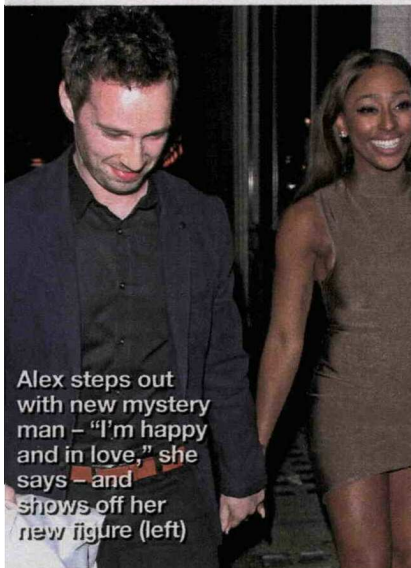


SHAPING UP FOR A FANTASTIC YEAR

ALEXANDRA BURKE

'THE BODYGUARD' STAR TELLS HOW SHE IS AT A GREAT STAGE IN LIFE

Alexandra Burke may be starring in top touring show *The Bodyguard*, but she's not resting on her laurels. The 2008 *The X Factor* champion has already signed up to star in stage musical *Sister Act*, which opens in July.



Alex steps out with new mystery man – “I’m happy and in love,” she says – and shows off her new figure (left)

“It’s very exciting, yes, but it’s a lot of hard work learning a script for another show while you’re still doing *Bodyguard*. My brain is like, ‘Give me coffee!’” she tells HELLO!. “But it’s so nice to be picked for *Sister Act* – I didn’t audition. They saw me and got in touch to say, ‘We want you for this role.’ I’m hoping for it to be a major success. I’m going to work very hard to make it the No. 1 touring show out there. Because right now *Bodyguard* is, and I’ve worked really, really hard on that. I’ve been in it for over a year now and I’ve only had two sick days.”

Alexandra, 27, is feeling in better shape than ever having dropped three dress sizes and lost 18lb in the past six months on SlimFast. “I’m now a size 8,” she says proudly. “It all started when I went on tour and got to know amazing new people – but then my habits would change. A show would finish and we’d all go out for dinner, and that’s where it starts. All of a sudden it’s 10pm and I’ve

already had dinner five hours ago and then I’m going out for dinner again. I was noticing my jeans weren’t fitting me any more, so I was wearing a lot of leggings and baggy tops.

“Last September I went to Ibiza with my boyfriend and on the plane home I was flicking through my pictures and I saw this hideous, horrific picture of myself in a bikini with a gin and tonic and food next to me and I was like, ‘Oh, girl, you’ve lost yourself.’”

But the new SlimFast celebrity weight loss ambassador got back in shape with the help of a personal trainer. “I do feel better,” she says. “My confidence has gone through the roof and it’s amazing to meet people and them go, ‘Oh my God, you’ve lost so much weight.’”

She allows herself the odd treat. “On a Sunday I have my roast – and I love a glass of red wine with it. You can’t take that away from me,” she smiles.

She’s keeping tight-lipped about the identity of her boyfriend, who she was pictured holding hands with last week, but he is also helping keep her on the straight and narrow. “He’s training for a triathlon – so we’re training together,” she says. “I’m very happy and in love.”

And she is just as happy at work. “I live, eat and breathe what I love doing. I haven’t taken a break in seven years and I won’t take a break until a doctor tells me to. There’s no way I’m taking a break unless I’m having kids and I don’t want kids yet.”

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