

In the closet with

# Alexandra Burke

The singer still has the X Factor – whether she's on or off stage

Words and styling by Tricia Welch

Alexandra, 27, shot to fame after winning *The X Factor* in 2008, and her debut single *Hallelujah* sold over one million copies – a first for a British female solo artist. In 2014, she made her West End debut in *The Bodyguard* playing Rachel Marron, and now stars as Deloris Van Cartier in *Sister Act*. Alexandra lives in Hertfordshire with her four dogs.

**How would you describe your style?** Glamorous on stage, dungarees off stage. Away from the limelight, I revert to being a tomboy.

**Which colours and shapes suit you best?** I love colour

on stage, but in my personal life I like black. As for shapes, I love high-waisted shorts and jeans. I think my legs are my best feature so I'm not afraid to have them out.

**What is your favourite fashion era?** The 1950s, the Audrey Hepburn era. I have a picture of her in my dining room. Every time I look at her, I think, "What a class act!"

**What are your favourite high-street brands?** Zara, H&M or vintage shops.

**Who's your favourite designer?**

Alexander McQueen, Stella McCartney, Chanel and Dolce & Gabbana. Quite a few!

**What do you like to perform in?**

Most of my stage outfits are specially made for me. All-in-one catsuits with high Dr Martens heel boots work well – they are so comfortable.

**What is the most amazing outfit you've worn on stage?** So far, the gold dress I wore when I won *The X Factor*. I was worried my boobs would fall out, so I asked to be taped in.

**Do you work with a stylist for your stage and video work?** I like to work with stylists because they tend to think outside the box.

**Are you enjoying dressing as a nun in *Sister Act*?** Yes, but it gets very hot wearing a habit and wimple!

**What about your outfits in *The Bodyguard*?** It was so different – I had 22 clothes changes and one of them was on stage where I strip down to my bra and pants. There were a lot of layers involved!

**How has your style evolved since you won *The X Factor*?** I'm a lot more confident now and I'm not afraid to experiment.

**Do you have a style icon?** Apart from Audrey Hepburn; Kate Moss and Naomi Campbell.

**How do you keep fit for touring?** I work out four to five times a week, mostly with a personal trainer. I'm also on the SlimFast diet. I've lost about two stone.

**Are you a hoarder or do you clear out your wardrobe each season?** A hoarder, but I have a stylist friend who comes twice a year and edits my clothes.



Wearing her favourite Dr Martens biker-style boots with a jacket by A Star Is Born, vintage Levi's ripped denim shorts and a white vest from Primark

Left: Alexandra wears her best-buy black Chanel suit, which she bought from a vintage shop in London's Chiltern Street

**Are you a fan of vintage?** Yes. My favourite haunt is Cow in Birmingham and Nottingham. But my best vintage buy I bought in London – two Chanel suits which cost £1,500, a fraction of their original price.

**How many shoes and handbags do you own?** Over 500 pairs of shoes, but a lot fewer handbags. By day I'm a trainers and Dr Martens girl but the heels come out for evening. I change my everyday bag every two weeks and de-clutter – some of my favourites are by Céline, Hermès and Chanel.

**What is the best piece of fashion advice you have ever been given?** Always dress for your shape.

**What is your current favourite outfit?** A baggy Levi's shirt with J Brand jeans and Converse or Nike.

**Is there an old favourite you turn to in a wardrobe crisis?** Yes, one of several little black dresses. They are all fitted, tailored and flattering.

**How much do you spend on clothes each month?** Probably a few hundred then I'll splash out on a nice piece every six months or so. My last flurry was in April when Beyoncé brought out her Ivy Park fitness clothing line for Topshop – I bought pretty much the whole collection!

**What's the most expensive item in your wardrobe? And best bargain?** My Hermès Birkin bags are the most expensive – I've got two. And my Chanel suits are my best bargain.

**What is the oldest item in your wardrobe?** My Louboutin shoes which I wore on the X Factor final.

**Who would you like to make your wedding dress?** Either David Emanuel or Suzanne Neville.

**What's your favourite piece of jewellery?** My rose gold Cartier necklace which was a Christmas present from my boyfriend Josh.

**Have you ever made a fashion faux pas?** An all-in-one latex suit – it wasn't until I saw photos in the press that I realised how hideous it looked.

**What item of clothing would you save from a burning house?** I wouldn't. I'd just grab my car keys and dogs Alfie, Prince, Teddy and Milo. They come with me on tour. It's full-on, like having four kids. 🐾

Alexandra is starring in the national tour of Sister Act. For details, go to [sisteractuktour.co.uk](http://sisteractuktour.co.uk).

**Below, clockwise from left: Alexandra wore this Body Armour dress when she won The X Factor. She also wore the minidress by Alexander McQueen – one of her favourite designers – on the show**

**Leather boots, shoulder bag and belt by Alexander McQueen**

**Alexandra loves taking Polaroids. Here she is with Aston from JLS, Mary J Blige, Rochelle and Marvin Humes and Tom Jones**

**Alexandra's dad brings her back Bob Marley memorabilia whenever he visits his native Jamaica**

**The singer uses this Louis Vuitton vanity case for jewellery and accessories. Also seen: her teddy, Family; Moon Dance fragrance; Moo sunglasses and Christian Louboutin nail polishes**

**This multi-coloured D&G playsuit was a gift from Dolce & Gabbana**



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