



BEAUTY

Beyond The Fringe

With her trademark dark hair, wry smile and great comic timing, Claudia Winkleman has become one of the highlights of Saturday night TV. Beauty editor Nadine Baggott catches up with the popular presenter to get up to speed on her make-up must-haves

I first met Claudia Winkleman when we appeared on Granada Breeze TV together many years ago, when she was starting out. Back then, she had a reputation for always laughing and giggling on screen, so it is comforting to know that, despite her huge success, she has not changed one bit – she remains as charming and self-effacing as ever and she still loves to laugh.

Little wonder, then, that the co-host of *Strictly Come Dancing* has won over not only the family audience that makes up the show's fan base, but also pretty much everyone else, too, as her appearances on comedy panel quiz shows like *8 Out of 10 Cats* and *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* demonstrate. Marks & Spencer is certainly a fan, which is why it asked Claudia to collaborate on a collection of make-up and Christmas gift sets.

With the festive countdown now on, HELLO! caught up with Claudia to see what she has planned for the big day and to get the lowdown on her new cosmetics range.

Congratulations on being the first person to realise the importance of combining Percy Pig sweets with eyeliner. Could this be why, really, you decided to create a beauty range for Marks & Spencer?

"M&S are adorable and magically they called me and asked if I'd be interested in creating a make-up line with them. I almost dropped the phone. I've always loved their shops – for socks and for macaroni cheese. I said, 'Have you got the right number? Have you seen what I look like? Did you see me at the GQ Awards? You know I only believe in black eyeliner and pale lipstick?' And they said, 'Yes, come in straight away.' It was sort of love at first sight. They're brilliant and even said I could give away Percy Pigs with some of the make-up. Win-win."

How involved were you in the process of creating the make-up and putting together the gift sets?

"We sat down and talked about what I feel strongly about. I like make-up that looks like you might have slept in it; I like sweets and I also love shiny hair. We created a conditioner that I'm particularly proud of and they let me move into the lab while they put together the best lipstick colours on the planet. I'm sure they wanted to chuck me out, but they let me drive them mad, shrieking, 'No, this is too beige!'"

What were your must-have products for the range?

"Black eyeliner, the greatest mascara on earth and a really fantastic bright-red nail polish. Even if I have a bad cold and don't want to leave the house, I'm immediately more excited if I have a shiny deep-red nail. Weird, but true."

Your signature eye make-up is super-cool and slightly lived-in. What is the best way to achieve the look?

"Well, I do it extremely fast – which is why it looks like my four-year-old has done it. I want it to look like it's five days old. My style icons are Captain Jack Sparrow from *Pirates of the Caribbean* and Steve Tyler. I use MAC Feline Liner for the inside of the eye, plus my new Game Changer eyeliner from M&S. It's glossy black and glides on very easily – I am in love with it. Then stick on loads of my Pile It On mascara, smudge it up a bit and you're done. Not neat, not clean and not perfect – that's an eyeliner crime."

Who is your beauty icon?

"Chrissie Hynde."

Do you enjoy getting your make-up done for TV or do you prefer to DIY?

"I don't mind either way. Debbie Dannell has done my face for TV for about 100 years. Every time I leave the house looking repulsive I lose her a lot of work. Can I say sorry here? She's amazing and really fast. I'm not very good at sitting still, so we can stick it on in about eight minutes."

And your hair – who is responsible for keeping that fringe looking great?

"An actual hair genius cuts my hair. He's called Michael Charalambous and his salon is Nyumba in London. He gives me that 'Has she just woken up?' hair that I love."

Name your two favourite hair products...

"Aveda Shampure shampoo and my new conditioner for M&S. It's sort of 'the one'."

Are you high or low maintenance when it comes to beauty?

"I think I'm low. I've never knowingly taken my make-up off. I don't sit and play with eye creams. But saying that, I've been known to almost openly weep in Diptyque. There are so many extraordinary products and I can go pretty nuts over an oversized room candle."

Do you have a signature scent?

"Opium is the sexiest scent on the planet. No question."

What is the best beauty advice you have ever been given?

"Sleep a lot."

To spa or not to spa?

"Massage is my favourite thing on earth, but I can't do facials – they make me want to jump up and leave."

What does Christmas mean to you – are you a festive fan?

"I'm not sure it's possible to love Christmas as much as my family and I do. We dress up as reindeers from about November and discuss the upside of brandy butter from August. Part of our weird ritual has always been buying brandy butter and chipolatas wrapped in bacon from M&S in early December. I eat both, daily, until 1 January."

Describe Christmas morning at your house...

"Excitable, bonkers, fun, loud; carols, Nigella's Christmas cake, gravy and mainly family. We're all allowed sweet jars in my house and the jars are massive and we spend an awful lot of time choosing what we want. My 12-year-old is pretty sure it's wine gums this year, but then it might change. Christmas morning we basically eat the contents of our jars and drink hot chocolate and cuddle. Does that sound hideous? And then massive, enormous Christmas lunch, and on Boxing Day nobody's allowed to get dressed. The house is covered in chestnut shells and Lego pieces."

Make-up on or make-up free for Christmas Day?

"Probably old make-up on from Christmas Eve, with maybe a last-minute smear of pale lipstick."

PJs or dressed up?

"Comfort – always."

Christmas jumpers: yes or no?

"An enormous yes. The more hideous, the better – something that lights up is always good."

What's on your Christmas gift wish list this year?

"A bottle of YSL Opium, a lie-in and a Bella Freud sweater."

And what special surprise would you most like to find under the tree?

"A baby owl."

Finally, what are your plans for New Year's Eve?

"Babington House – the greatest hotel in the land. A New Year's Eve party – I shall be wearing black jeans, a T-shirt and some magnificent boots." ❏



WINKLEMAN'S WINNERS 1. Yves Saint Laurent Opium EDT 90ml, £80, from Boots 2. MAC Kohl Power Eye Pencil in Feline, £14; visit maccosmetics.co.uk 3. Diptyque Ambre Cognac scented candle, £55; visit diptyqueparis.co.uk 4. Aveda Shampure Shampoo, £13.50; visit aveda.co.uk 5. Claudia for M&S Get It On... Get It Off Nail Polish Set, £10. Contains Claudia's favourite red nail polish plus a nude and a blue, plus nail polish remover wipes 6. Claudia for M&S Freakishly Good Hair Set, £10. Contains The Answer Super Conditioner and a comb 7. Claudia for M&S Use More Absolutely Loads Eye Set, £19.50. Contains Pile It On mascara, The Game Changer eye pencil, false lashes and an eyeshadow duo. All exclusively from Marks & Spencer stores nationwide; visit marksandspencer.com. A pack of Marks & Spencer Percy Pigs is included in Claudia's Favourite Gift Set for M&S, £40 (not shown), which includes some of the products above

