



PHOTOGRAPH: NICK WOOD

Shoes and shine

Writer Tali Shine reveals her first love. BY DENEË SAVOIA

ALMOST ANY WOMAN with even a slight interest in fashion will admit to being hopelessly in love with fancy footwear, but not many, bar the obscenely rich, get to regularly indulge in their addiction.

Tali Shine, New-Zealand-born writer and self-proclaimed "connoisseur of couture" is an exception. She's not a spoilt hotel heiress or a wealthy movie star. She's not even a fashion magazine editor. No, she's just an ambitious 22-year-old who knows a thing or two about fashion.

"My mum tells this story about when I was four," Shine says laughing. "She put me in this outfit and I apparently said 'I can't wear these shoes, I've already worn them to every party!'"

Her passion for fashion has been unrelenting ever since. At just 12, she had saved two years' pocket money to buy a Gucci watch, and five years later she'd already picked up a pair of Jimmy Choos, which she says are her main weakness.

"I bought my first pair on sale, and it started a very bad trend, but I still have them," she says. "I don't wear them every day, but they always come out for special occasions.

"My friend was looking through my wardrobe the other day and looked at my boxes and boxes of shoes there and said 'Tali, you do realise you could be driving a very, very nice car right now'."

Fashion addicts will recognise that scenario from the TV series *Sex and the City*. It's Shine's favourite episode, where Carrie realises the tens of thousands she's spent on Manolos in her lifetime could have been put towards a deposit on a house.

"My mum is also obsessed with shoes; between us we'd give Imelda Marcos a serious run for her money. The first time my mother and I really bonded, when she knew I was her daughter, was when we first went to New York together and spent a whole day in the Jimmy Choo shop. We

were like little kids in a candy store."

It's an obsession that's certainly hereditary, on her mother's side at least. Shine says her aunt used to cross the Tasman [from New Zealand] especially to shop when she was younger.

"I used to witness these amazing shopping sprees, and I'd just sit there mesmerised," she recalls.

While fashion has always been Shine's obsession, it wasn't until her most recent trip abroad, where she "AMEXed" her way through Europe and New York, that she felt the need to put her intimate knowledge of Sydney's shopping districts to use.

"Every time I met people going to Sydney for the first time, I'd find myself writing lists for them, telling them what shops to visit," she says. "Then when I got back from New York I was really motivated to write the book because every time I bought a guide book, I found myself saying 'I wish it had this', or 'I wish it had that', or 'I wish it would tell me what the area is really like'. In my head I was formulating the way I'd like my perfect guidebook to be."

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Fact file

Tali Shine spent seven months living in New York, where she experienced an armed hold-up at one Victoria's Secret store, and attended the MTV Music Awards, among other things.

Her book, *The Glam Girl's Guide to Sydney Shopping*, is available now.