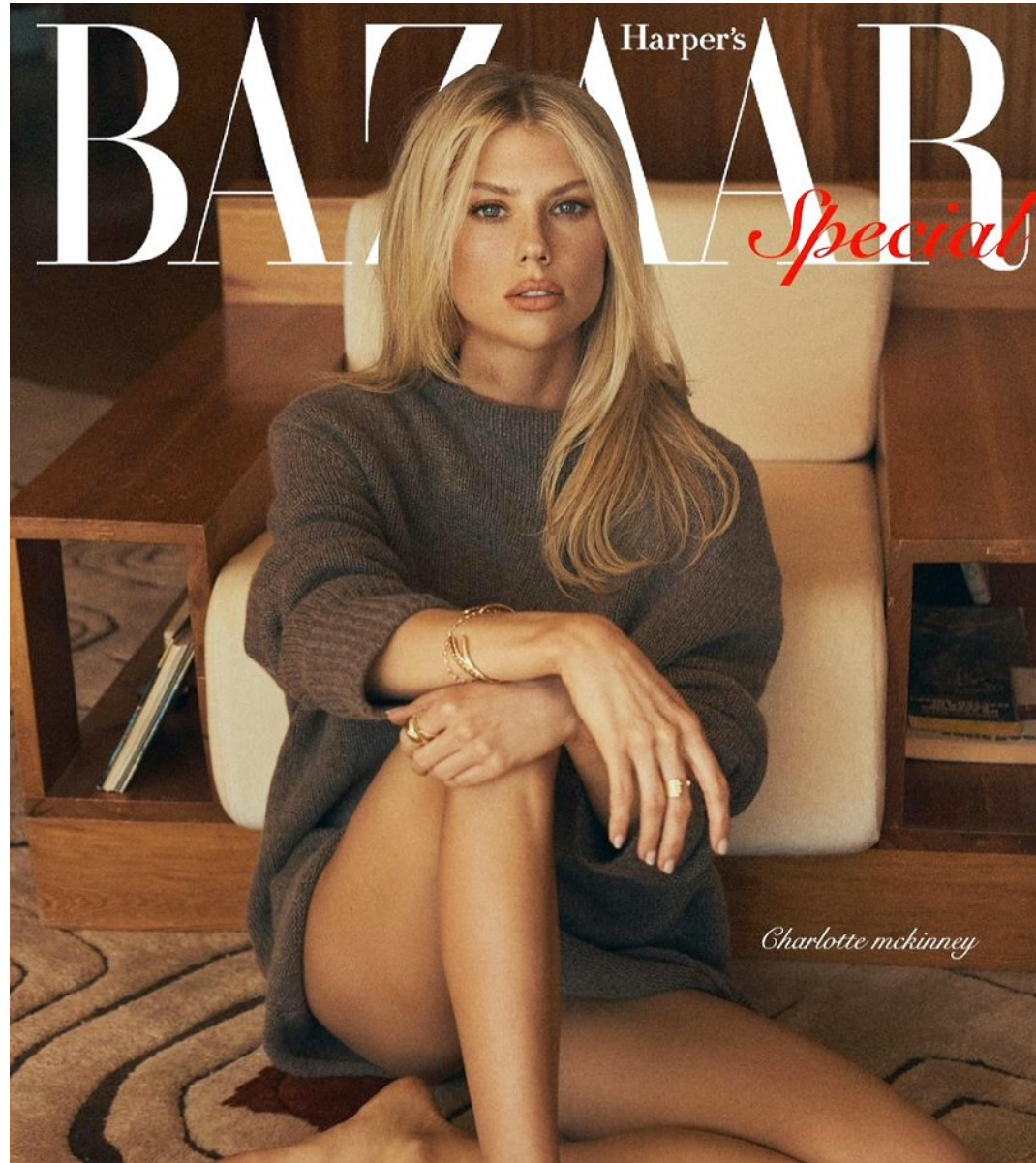


FENTON
MODEL MANAGEMENT



CHARLOTTE

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‘Insta-famous’



Charlotte McKinney is America's latest bombshell, cementing her status in one of this year's Super Bowl adverts (she ate a burger in a bikini). But it all started on Instagram. Told she was too curvy to model, the 22-year-old took matters into her own hands. Her account now boasts more than half a million followers, and made her Kate Upton's heir apparent. God bless social media...

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **HUNTER & GATTI**

STYLING BY **ZOE COSTELLO**



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Charlotte McKinney, poolside.

McKinney wears a robe by Frette and, opposite, a swimsuit by Peixoto. Earrings by Tiffany & Co., and a bracelet by Jennifer Fisher.

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— Spotlight —

T

he love goddess Venus rises from the sea, gold-wreathed, and her latest incarnation hails from Orlando. Charlotte McKinney first made waves as the blonde bombshell in a 2014 ad campaign for Guess, made another splash in early 2015 with a sassy Super Bowl ad for Carl's Jr. all-natural burgers, and then dived right into Season 20 of ABC's *Dancing with the Stars*. Though her image swims through the Internet, her profile still needs to fill out. Who is this new girl, seemingly born for a bikini?

"I grew up in Florida," McKinney says. "I have two parents that are still together. They own a business—they sell exotic cars. To me, nowadays, it's so lucky to have two parents still together. I believe that's how I've made it so far, having such an amazing family behind me." McKinney's destiny was thrust upon her at 14. "The day before I went into my freshman year I woke up and I had these things"—breasts, big ones. "I didn't really know if it was good or bad. Thank God my older sister, Garland, was there to help me dress them." Turns out the mean girls in high school didn't like McKinney or her breasts and she was bullied. "I guess they saw me as a target. I was always palling around with guys because I was funny, and I didn't have a lot of girlfriends to back me."

McKinney made other plans. "I knew what I had to do," she says. "I knew school wasn't an option for me—with my dyslexia, my grades, the bullying." With icons Brigitte Bardot, Claudia Schiffer, and Christie Brinkley as guiding stars, McKinney dropped out of school at 17 and hit the modeling agencies. The agencies laughed.

"You're five seven, you want to model, and you have ginormous boobs" was the refrain McKinney remembers hearing. "No one's going to book you." Before the Guess ad opened doors, she couldn't even get a job for Miami Swim Week. "Who wouldn't want a curvy girl in a swimsuit?" McKinney asks rhetorically. The answer is: No one wouldn't. Which is why this 21-year-old is Venus ascending. "I'm really into comedy. I hope to find an outlet to show who I am. I'm a funny girl."

@v.com
To watch an interview with McKinney, go to VF.COM/JUNE2015.

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