

## **Age-defying bikini model, 62, constantly mistaken for son's girlfriend**

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An age-defying grandmother who models swimsuits in her 60s gets mistaken for being 20 years younger than she is.

Leslie Carleton has modelled in magazines, catalogues, television commercials and billboard advertisements around the world.

*Leslie Carleton constantly gets mistaken for 20 years younger.*

At 62-years-old, the model and author is proving age is just a number by being one of the oldest women to compete in the 2021 Sports Illustrated swimsuit competition.

Leslie, who is engaged to Hollywood actor Matthias Hues, 62, spends her time living between her home in Bali and Los Angeles.

“I never imagined I’d look the way that I do in my 60s,” she said.

“The majority of people guess that I’m in my 40s, and are shocked when I tell them I’m 62.

In her teens and 20s, Leslie said she never worked out or participated in sports, but followed her dancer grandmother’s advice to eat small, healthy meals frequently throughout the day, every couple of hours.

“I also followed the rule of thumb that carbs and protein should be the size of your palm, while vegetables should be twice that size,” she said.

Leslie was just 17 when she gave birth to her eldest son, and 19 with her youngest “making her one of youngest mothers to pick up their kids at the school gate.

*Leslie has modelled in magazines, catalogues, television commercials and billboard advertisements around the world.*

She said being a teenage mum meant she was often mistaken for being her son’s sister when they were young “and then their girlfriend once they got older.

“When they were teens they hated it because their friends would call me “hot”. No son wants to hear that and they are both very protective of me,” she said.

“Then as young adults, they hated it when people thought I was their wife or girlfriend, since it sort of ruined their game.

Her sons are now in their 40s and are fathers themselves, however people still mistake Leslie for their other half when they’re out together.

“So even though people still think I am their girlfriend or wife, or even sometimes say my sons look older than I do, they smile and say thank you,” she said.

“They are proud of the way I look now and thank me for being a teenage mother that stayed young and healthy for so long, because as a result, I am a healthy strong grandmother to their daughters.”

The ageless beauty credits her youthful looks to a myriad of lifestyle choices that she believes has helped her stay in shape and look young.

*She constantly gets mistaken for her son's girlfriend or as younger than them. Photo: Caters*

Leslie said it wasn't until she was in her 30s that she fell in love with sports and she started skiing and got a black belt in karate.

“It's only in the last 10 years that I began lifting weights. That has helped me maintain a strong and toned figure into my 60s,” she said.

“Eating frequent small and healthy meals throughout the day keeps me energised, and I like to keep them balanced with a mix of healthy protein, carbs and greens.”

She also stressed the importance of getting at least eight hours of sleep a night and drinking a lot of water throughout the day.

“I also think it's imperative to have time in nature every day and also have some alone time each day, when you can. It does wonders for your mental health,” she said.

“For six days of the week, I do watch what I eat. I don't eat fried food, and I try to limit flour and sugar.

“But always on Sundays I allow myself to relax and have a cheat meal, like some wine, burgers etc. This keeps my metabolism in check also.”

Leslie began her career as a teenager modelling for the makeup brand Max Factor, and she soon saw her face plastered in magazines and on billboard advertisements all over town.

And now in her 60s, she continues to model and is even competing in the highly coveted 2021 Sports Illustrated swimsuit contest, going up 40 years her junior.

If she wins, she will be one of the oldest models to ever feature on the cover.

“I want to inspire women and show that we can be beautiful at any age,” she said.

“I am fitter now at 62 than I was at 40. I never thought that was possible.

“I never imagined I'd be rocking a bikini after the age of 50.”

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