



People | In the Stratusphere

You'd never think to look for a famous wrestling star in the suburban community of Richmond Hill, Ont.—but that's exactly where you'll find **Trish Stratus**. The World Wrestling Entertainment diva doesn't stray from her roots and still resides in her hometown. "I bank at the same bank as always," she says, "and go to the same hairdresser." Meanwhile, Stratus, who's on the road 300 days of the year, is known and loved by wrestling fans for her combination of sex appeal and brute strength. Wearing a bikini, leather trench coat and cowboy hat, she'll wow an audience with "Stratusfaction"—a gravity-defying acrobatic manoeuvre that

leaves her opponent face down on the mat.

But Stratus, 27, is more than just beauty and brawn. Studying biology and kinesiology at York University, she was finishing the last year of a four-year degree—and planned on applying to medical school—when a 1997 faculty strike sidetracked her studies. "I thank the teachers for going on strike to this day," she says. As a result, Stratus got a job as a receptionist at a gym—which led to modelling for fitness magazines, before being hired by the WWF (now WWE). Her first pro gig was as a valet, dressed in shorts, cowboy hat and low-cut top, escorting tag-team wrestlers **Test and Albert** into the ring. Stratus's popularity exploded in no time—thanks to some wild (and staged)

On one of her rare days off, the WWE Babe of the Year chills out at her suburban home

heel-crunching and hair-pulling incidents.

Although Stratus is currently at the height of her wrestling career—she's been named WWE Babe of the Year two years in a row—she sees a more mellow future. "I would like to be a mom," she says, adding she could finish her degree during the pregnancy. She loves decorating and might be interested in an interior design career. "I can't wait for the day when I can decorate my house on every holiday," she says. "I'll be one of those people that, come February, puts hearts all over the lawn." Turns out, this wrestler's a bit of a softie.

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