



Heather Graham is one of Hollywood's most recognisable faces. With one of its most covetable figures. Here, the 43-year-old actress shares her greatest body, food and sex secrets with you. Hold on to your seat...

Words
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*WH keeps costs
down by turning
off the heating*





Heather Graham is talking about sex. Again. We're at the corner table of her local cafe in Beachwood Canyon, the star-packed neighbourhood right underneath the Hollywood sign.

"A woman being able to express her sexuality is the ultimate form of freedom," she says. "In American culture, I feel like women don't have the safety to express themselves sexually. There's a lot of movies about men's fantasies, but what about women?" Her eyes open wider. "What would the world be like if women asked for everything they wanted?"

Eventually she stops, laughs, and then she's off again. It might be the slow mid-afternoon shift at the cafe, but Heather Graham is buzzing.

Heather (we're on first-name terms almost immediately) appears to be the perfect poster girl for the Los Angeles lifestyle. She's been sugar-free for five years, does yoga three times a week (she's off there post-interview), and this morning she's already done her daily 20 minutes of transcendental meditation (mega-quiffed director David Lynch got her into

it when she made the *Twin Peaks* prequel *Fire Walk With Me* with him in 1992).

Actually, it's only fitting that one of Hollywood's most-enduring sex symbols should have sex on the brain. Of all the roles she's played, the best known have exploited her ability to be both racy and innocent at the same. Her porn star ingénue, *Rollergirl* in *Boogie Nights*, put her on the map.

When she became a household name as Felicity Shagwell in the *Austin Powers* movies and, of course, Jade, the nubile stripper in *The Hangover*, one of the most successful comedy franchises of all time.

"It's an aspect of my personality," she says. "Sex is a part of who I am and it took me a long time to feel good about it. I wasn't sure if it was good or bad to be a person who really enjoys sex."

Hollywood isn't always kind to actresses of Graham's age (she's only 43, not old by any standard, but we're talking about Hollywood here). Roles become scarce and competition is fierce. Susan Sarandon, she says, is her inspiration. "She's like, 'I'm a hot woman, I'm going to do whatever I want.' It's too depressing if you listen to what society says, so why not make your own rules?"

I wouldn't want to bet against her. "To



HEATHER WEARS: PREVIOUS PAGE: DRESS: STELLA AND JAMIE; RING AND BRACELET: EF COLLECTION; SHOES: GUISEPPE. THIS PAGE: TOP, HOUGHTON; SHORTS, REBECCA MINKOFF; RINGS, EF COLLECTION AND ELAINE

be honest I'm so grateful," she says. "I'm lucky I ever worked at all, and I'm lucky I continue to work." But, after 80 credits and counting, it's not just luck. And after the enormous success of *The Hangover III*, she's as in demand as ever. In a couple of weeks, she's off to Vancouver to shoot her next movie, *Flowers In The Attic*, alongside Ellen Burstyn, a "super creepy" story of incest in which Graham plays the evil mother – a departure from former roles.

Heather has also just finished filming the seventh and final season of *Californication*. But the project that's closest to her heart is her own – the only movie she's ever written called *Half Magic*. It's about sexuality, but also sexism in its own way. She's been working on it for several years.

"The industry is totally sexist," she acknowledges. "It's run by men mostly. Look at the movies that are coming out. How

many are about women? If you look at who the leads are, they're probably 75% men." Now she's making one of her own to highlight the imbalance.

Empowering women is central to her film. "I play a director who makes films about women, but no one wants to see that," she says. "It's a light-hearted comedy about how women get confusing messages about sex. On the one hand, people are really judgmental and, on the other, sex is all that matters. So damned if you do, damned if you don't. I don't think society accepts a woman having these different aspects of herself."

Incidentally, Graham knows a thing or two about orgasms. When she was filming *The Guru* in 2002, she got into the tantric scene, where orgasms can last a whole afternoon, and, in her words, "I haven't looked back since."

She laughs at the memory of a workshop

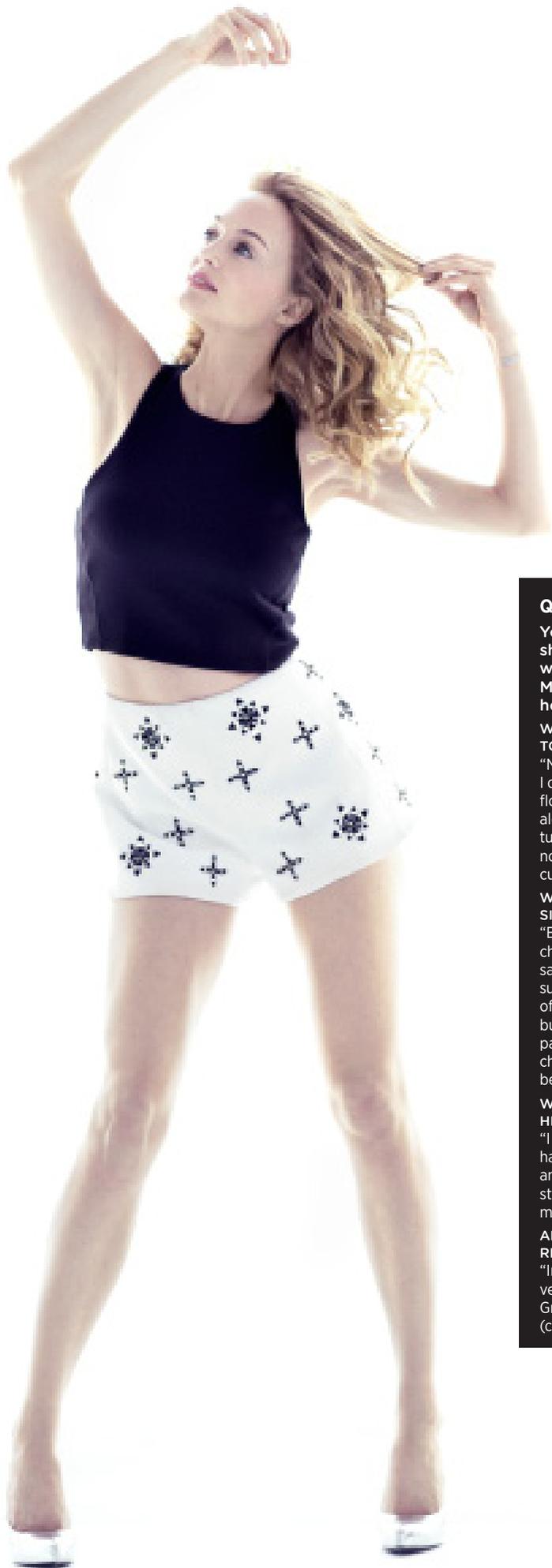
she attended. "You were supposed to look at yourself naked and say, 'You look amazing,' then leave stickers on your refrigerator that say, 'Love your body today.' They did one class where everyone who didn't feel good about their boobs got on stage, topless. This woman got up and she'd had breast cancer, so one boob was removed and she had a total scar, you know? And the other women were like, 'F***, we're so lucky to have boobs! Know what I mean?'"

How did you feel about your body? I ask. "I was too shy! I just watched!"

Really, to some degree, Graham's interest in sex stems from her strict Catholic upbringing in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her dad worked for the FBI, so they moved around a lot, and she grew up as a nerdy girl who wore a head brace. "I always wanted to be the pretty girl, but I thought I wasn't," she says. "When I started acting and getting pretty girl roles, I felt like I was just pretending, and



*That's one way
to warm up...*



QUICKFIRE FOOD

You know what she thinks, but what's in her fridge? Ms Graham reveals her life in food

WHAT DO YOU EAT TO STAY IN SHAPE?

"No refined sugar. And I don't eat a lot of white flour or drink much alcohol because they turn to sugar. But I'm not perfect. I'll have a cupcake now and then."

WHAT'S YOUR SIGNATURE RECIPE?

"Beer can chicken – it's chicken with a paste of salt, pepper and brown sugar. I know it has a bit of sugar and alcohol, but it is a real treat. You pat the paste over the chicken, pour over the beer and bake it."

WHAT'S YOUR BEST HEALTHY DISH?

"I make an amazing hazelnut-crusted halibut and tacos with yam strips. I also make a mean guacamole."

AND YOUR FAVOURITE RESTAURANT?

"In LA, I like Nobu. I like vegan food, too – Café Gratitude is a favourite (cafegratitudela.com)."

Rocking the Mo Farah 'Robot'

nobody saw I was just this big nerd."

She hasn't seen her parents in 16 years. Staunch conservatives, the rumour is they were unsettled at her scenes in *Boogie Nights*. When pressed, it's the only time she won't talk. "I just feel like I want to preserve their privacy and mine," she says.

Parental estrangement aside, she has a lovely life in Hollywood. She likes to talk about 'fun' – people, things and places are all fun, it's part of her child-like appeal. And nothing's more fun than a yoga retreat.

"You practise yoga in the morning for two and a half hours on the beach," she says blissfully. "It's like a normal holiday except you get wasted on yoga!" she laughs.

It's been a while since she got traditionally wasted. "I'm not a big partier, but I like dancing!" she says. "I don't need to drink. I could dance right now! I also sleep as much as I want. I'll sleep like 11 hours, unless I'm working. Sometimes I do feel like – this is weird, I should just get up so I can fit into the world. Then I'm like – why? I don't have a nine-to-five job."

Not being a mum is part of it. Having allegedly dated what looks like a who's who of Hollywood talent – Edward Burns, James Woods, Matt Dillon, Kyle MacLachlan, Leonardo DiCaprio, Benicio Del Toro – she's managed to emerge without a ring on her finger or a baby on her hip. "A lot of people aren't getting married and having kids as much," she says, characteristically breezy. "It's not unusual in a big city."

There have been moments where she considered starting a family, but the dice didn't roll right. "I'm not the kind of person who needs to be a mother no matter what," she says.

If she doesn't have her own kids, she'll find others to nurture. "Life brings you people," she says. "Maybe I'll nurture someone who's not my child, like a friend, or an actor I'm working with who needs some love."

For now, it's just her. She split up with director Jason Silva last year and has just got back into dating. Does it get easier? "You just have to enjoy making mistakes." And Mr Right?

What would he look like? "He'd be fun, kind and interesting. So you can have intimacy through being open with each other."

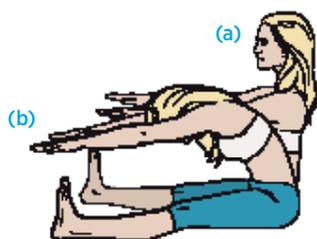
What about love at first sight and being swept off your feet? She sips her drink and grins. "Sure, why not?"

STYLIST: TARA SWENEN AND SYDNEY LOPEZ AT THE WALL GROUP. MAKE-UP: JO STRETTTEL AT THE WALL GROUP. MANICURIST: BARBARA WARNER AT CELESTINE AGENCY. ILLUSTRATIONS: LIZZYTHOMAS.COM. HEATHER WEARS: TOP AND SHORTS, BOTH BEC & BRIDGE; BRACELET AND RING, BOTH KARMA EL KHALIL; SHOES, GUIESEFFE



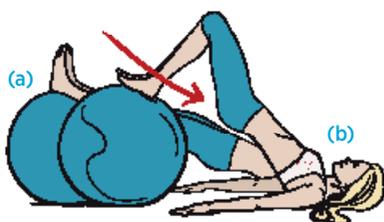
GET HOT LIKE HEATHER

She lives by yoga principles, but it's Pilates that keeps her in shape, with help from A-list instructor Karin Wandner. "Karin comes to my house to do mat pilates. I tape her classes and do them when I'm on the road. Pilates is great for toning specific muscle groups," says Heather. We'll take her word for it. Now follow her signature six-move plan...



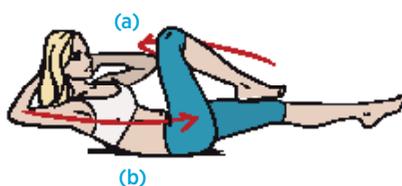
FOR: A STRONG BACK
DO: A SPINE STRETCH

(a) Ready? Sit tall with your legs in front, a little wider than hip-width, arms in front.
(b) Exhale and roll your head and upper torso forward as if over a ball, drawing in your tummy. Keep your arms out in front. Inhale as you roll your torso and head back up, from the bottom to the top, still drawing in your abs. Repeat five times.
TIP: Bend the legs slightly if you need to avoid rounding your back. Feeling it?



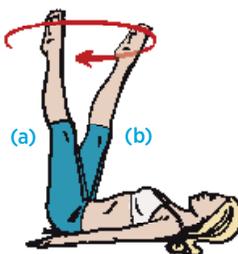
FOR: A TIGHT TUSH
DO: A BEND AND STRETCH

(a) Lie with your heels on top of a stability ball with your legs straight. Curl your pelvis up off the floor to lift the lower back, using your abs and legs to stabilise.
(b) Bend the knees to pull the ball in towards your body then slowly straighten them back out, then roll the pelvis back down to the floor. Repeat 15 times.
TIP: Pull your knees together to make rolling the ball easier. Now feel the burn.



FOR: A KILLER CORE
DO: OBLIQUE CRUNCHES

(a) Lie with your hands behind your head, knees pulled towards your chest. Curl your head and shoulders off the floor before touching your left elbow to your right knee. Easy does it.
(b) Straighten back out to lie with your leg several inches off the floor then repeat on the other leg. Repeat 10 times each side.
TIP: Don't pull your head, lift from your core to protect your neck. Better.



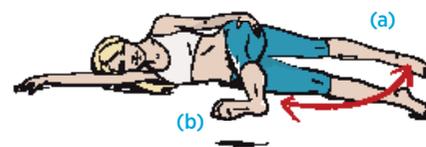
FOR: LONG AND LEAN LEGS
DO: CORKSCREWS

(a) Lie with your arms straight by your sides and your knees bent into your chest. Extend your legs up to the ceiling. Try to straighten them completely, but allow the knees to bend slightly if need be.
(b) Pulling in your abs, draw a circle with one leg, in a clockwise, then anticlockwise motion. Repeat 10 times on each leg.
TIP: The bigger the circle, the more challenging the move. No shirking now!



FOR: SCULPTED SHOULDERS
DO: SWANS

(a) Lie face down with your palms pressed into the floor and elbows pointing up. Draw your tummy in and lift your head, chest and abdomen from the floor.
(b) Slowly lower back down. Repeat eight times before sitting back on your heels and stretching your torso and arms out on to the mat with your back rounded.
TIP: Focus on lengthening your spine not how high you can lift yourself. Got it?



FOR: A PERT POSTERIOR
DO: SIDE LEG KICKS

(a) Lie on your side with your head resting on your outstretched arm, keeping your shoulders and hips in line.
(b) Lift your top leg to hip height before sweeping it as far in front as you can while keeping your legs straight. Then do the same behind you. Repeat the move 10 times on each side. You heard.
TIP: Keep your hips stacked to avoid injuring your back. Stay safe, people. **WH**