

Beauty and the beach

Back to rule our screens as Queen Helena on *The Royals*, **ELIZABETH HURLEY** is the eternal beach goddess if there ever was one. **AARTI VIRANI** listens in on her five commandments for the bikini season



As the most audacious matriarch on television, actor Elizabeth Hurley is magnificent as Queen Helena on *The Royals*, a decadent series that probes into the saucy personal lives of a fictional British royal family struggling to shield its combustible secrets from the London tabloids. With its guilty-pleasure plotlines and extravagant costumes—Hurley cycles through an average of six costumes per 40-minute episode, a stunning assortment of jewel-toned Vera Wang and Dolce & Gabbana silhouettes—it's no surprise the show was scooped up for a third season in America (it's soon to debut in India on Colors Infinity).

It's Hurley's acerbic one-liners that keep the viewers binge watching. "Even though the queen is devious, I think people can see that she's desperately trying to hold her family and the monarchy together and I think a lot of women can relate to that," Hurley admits. "But they also see it as a spectacle because I've got a

BEACH READY

At 50, Hurley models the swimwear she designs for her eponymous brand, Elizabeth Hurley Beach

crown and do outrageous things that we probably all want to do."

When she's not setting the screen or red carpet on fire with her inimitable sex appeal—who can forget that body-hugging Versace dress, strategically studded with golden safety pins, circa the *Four Weddings And A Funeral* premiere—Hurley devotes time to designing her eponymous swimwear line, Elizabeth Hurley Beach, which she launched over 10 years ago. The elegant collection, inspired by her frequent jaunts to St Tropez and the Maldives, is one she describes as "chic but wearable." Her favourites include a bandeau-style leopard print and a sleek ivory bikini that swaps strings with a delicate gold chain. The best part? They're pieces the 50-year-old stunner often models herself (take a peek at her Instagram account with its over-2,50,000 followers, if you don't believe us). Here, the ultimate beach goddess shares her five commandments for the bikini season.

SECRET WEAPON

"It's all about the kaftan or the sarong—it can be diaphanous silk or chiffon, see-through and gorgeous," Hurley reveals. Her own selection of beaded and embroidered cover-ups is crafted almost entirely by Indian artisans; it's also the reason she travels to Mumbai at least twice a year. "I always have a slightly ethnic and exotic feel to all my beachwear," she adds. "I like bright colours on the beach; we have enough black and grey in the city, so I opt for pinks, turquoises and oranges."

BRONZE AMBITION

Though she's previously lamented its tediousness, Hurley is a passionate advocate for the self-tan (her favourite helper: Estée Lauder Go Bronze). "I get really white and pasty but this is where Indian ladies have a big advantage," she admits. "I feel much more confident with a tan—stomach and bottom—and tell all my girlfriends to get one before they go to the beach." >

PHOTO: PATRICK DEMARCHELIER. STYLIST: XANTHI JOANNIDES. HAIR: GUY LAURENT/FILOMENO/BUMBLE AND BUMBLE SALON. MAKE-UP: FULVIA FAROUI



SECRET SERVICE
Hurley credits her great skin to two mugs of hot water every morning

FRESH-AIR FIX

The secret to Hurley's dewy skin—"although I should admit I'm backlit in some of those Instagram photos," divulges the star—is a strict H₂O regimen that involves kick-starting the day with two mugs of hot water. Another Hurley tip: occasionally skip the air-conditioner and snooze with the windows open (goodbye, circulated air!) so your pores can breathe easy. And never underestimate the power of a good old-fashioned, over-the-basin steam session.

ALL HAIL THE HERBIVORE

Hurley's exceedingly toned abs and thighs are the result of an active lifestyle, a combination of Pilates, core exercises and vigorous dog walking (true story—the actor hardly ever skips a brisk 30-minute morning walk with her four pups), though a demanding shoot schedule can often shake up her fitness routine. "I just watch what I eat," she insists. "I love South Indian food because it can be a vegetable-based cuisine," she adds. "And it's much easier to stay vegetarian when you're eating Indian and not English food—because it's delicious."

THE ROYALS



MANE EVENT

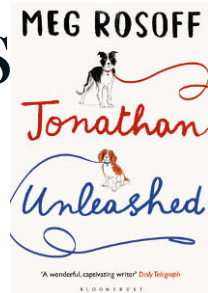
Though she maintains a bare-face policy on the beach, Hurley, a make-up fan—"I don't see the point of looking less than your best," she's previously quipped—doesn't skimp on her locks, which she nourishes with earth-friendly Origins products and regular trips to her Mayfair-based colourist. "I like glamorous ladies," she says. "On *The Royals*, Joan Collins plays my mother-in-law; she's 82 and looks phenomenal. She's got the jewels and the great legs. Glamour can go for a long time." ■

BOOKS

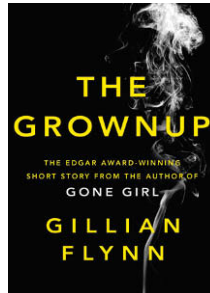
SEASON'S BEST

From a Manhattan rom-com to a spine-tingly novella—take your pick from the hottest sunscreen-smudged pages of the season

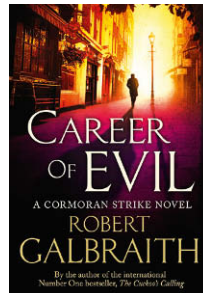
Beach reads get a bad rap for being trashy, guilty pleasures and are diminutively tagged "chick lit" by and for women. But since bikinis and brains aren't antithetical, we're flipping the misogyny and lining our beach bags with the most exciting reads of the season (and they're all by women!) to add the right balance of romance and juicy storytelling to those sun-kissed vacation days.



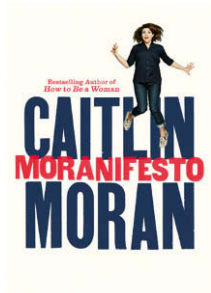
▲ JONATHAN UNLEASHED by Meg Rosoff (Bloomsbury)
At first glance it might seem like the tired Manhattan rom-com starring a boy in a dead-end job, a disapproving girlfriend and a few cute dogs. But Rosoff charms with a refreshing frothiness even as she completely captures the nuances and complexities of relationships today. A must-read for those who crave romance and not mush.



▲ THE GROWNUP by Gillian Flynn (Orion Publishing)
For fans of *Gone Girl*, the thriller writer takes on the classic ghost story in this modestly sized novella. The Edgar Award-winning tale about a con artist posing as a psychic who walks into a haunted house is guaranteed to give you the right kind of sunbed chills.



▲ CAREER OF EVIL by Robert Galbraith (Little Brown)
Between Lisbeth Salander's badassery and do-gooder Alex Cross, crime fiction has found space for a new serialised favourite in Galbraith's (JK Rowling's detective book writing avatar) one-legged war-veteran-turned-PI Cormoran Strike. The third in the series is a nail-biting page-turner with a serial killer on the loose, and gangsters and 'nutters' as suspects.



▲ MORANIFESTO by Caitlin Moran (Ebury Press)
Between selling 'I Am A Feminist' tea towels to raise money for domestic violence survivors, and traipsing between her various columns for the *Times*, Moran has finally compiled her columns into a cheeky and brilliant book. And it has come together as a sort of treatise on our times, be it 21st-century capitalism or Benedict Cumberbatch. —Shahnaz Sigantoria

PHOTO: PATRICK DEMARCHÈRE; STYLIST: XANTHI; JOANNIDES; HAIR: GUY LAURENT; FLOWERS: BUMBLES AND BUMBLE SALON; MAKE-UP: FULVIA FAROUI