



Singer, TV personality and now perfumier... Cheryl is enjoying the sweet smell of success with the launch of debut scent Storm Flower. "From the beginning I knew I wanted it to be floral and fresh," she says. "I just wanted it to be classically feminine and pretty"

BEAUTY

Scents of A WOMAN

Singer, X Factor star and happy newlywed, Cheryl Fernandez-Versini takes us behind the scenes of her new fragrance shoot and reveals why these days she's saying it with flowers

She has topped the charts, wowed with her inimitable style and steered her acts to victory on *The X Factor*. But now Cheryl Fernandez-Versini – aka Cheryl Cole – has a new incarnation, that of a perfumista. Celebrating the launch of her debut fragrance Storm Flower, the 31-year-old former Girls Aloud star gives us a sneaky peek – and a sniff – and sits down for an exclusive chat about the inspiration behind it.

After months of waiting, the time has come to unveil Storm Flower. Talk us through the fragrance, please, Cheryl...

“You know how long I have wanted to create my own fragrance – I have been talking to you about it for a few years. It’s a beautiful fresh floral and I love it. It comes in a box in a curvy, womanly-shaped bottle with a gold rose flower top.”

Did you enjoy creating it?

“I loved it. I went in with a list of scents I love and a list of those I hate. I told them the notes and smells I love and hate and they came up with six or seven scents; the minute I smelt Storm Flower I knew it was the one for me. From the beginning I knew I wanted it to be floral and fresh.”

So you weren’t tempted to create anything too outrageous or exotic?

“With this particular fragrance I went in there thinking I never want to use sandalwood; I never want to use musky tones. What I hadn’t realised was that you have to use those as base notes. Then you build up the top layers, which are mandarin and nectarine with freesia and peach

blossom. I love how people like Thierry Mugler can use strange notes like leather, but for my first fragrance I just wanted it to be classically feminine and pretty.”

How involved were you in the whole process?

“Basically, I’ve wanted to do a fragrance for a long time, but I needed to have the time to really focus on it. I didn’t just want to put my name to somebody else’s work. So everything you see – from the fragrance to the bottle shape, from the colours to the box and even the way it sits in the box – comes from me.

“It’s a collaborative thing, but I’ve been involved in every stage. I met the ‘noses’ and I did a lot of sniffing with the coffee beans and smelling different fragrances and different floral blends. It was actually a very exciting and educational process. I loved it.”

Where did the name Storm Flower come from?

“You would not believe how hard it is to find a name that hasn’t been used. Storm Flower means it is beautiful but tough. It can withstand the rough weather, then blossom, so that makes it even more precious. I liked that.”

What was the first scent you ever wore?

“When I was little, I used to try to make fragrances with my sister. We would go round picking petals and putting them in water then letting them steep for, say, a month – but it never really smelled very good. The first perfume I had when I was a teenager was Versace Red Jeans. I haven’t smelt it for many, many years, but I know that if I smelt it now it would take me right back.”

Cheryl worked with renowned photographer Rankin on the Storm Flower campaign, which sees the star dancing backwards through a storm, as well as in a water tank. "It was a bit like shooting a music video, only for a perfume," she says



Do you find that fragrance can evoke memories?
"One hundred per cent. Over the years, whenever I was on tour with the girls I would always get a new fragrance for that particular tour so that I could have a specific smell and memory of that time to look back on. Holiday fragrances always take me back, too. I'm always changing things, though."

Apart from Storm Flower, do you have a favourite smell?

"I have a very strong sense of smell and the hotel The Langham in London smells so good. I absolutely love it, but apparently it's a secret blend and they won't tell you what it is. I've tried many, many times and they won't give it away."

Scent can be sexy, too...

"Yes, it's so personal. It's funny because I can tell by the smell of someone whether we're going to be compatible or not – men and women. Which perfume they choose to wear but also the smell of their skin; it says so much. In the olden days, natural human scent was what we were instinctively attracted to. That's a big thing for me and I always thought I was weird, but apparently it's scientifically proven."

How do you like the men in your life to smell?
"Not too strong – I don't like overbearing

aftershaves. My little brother tends to wear a very, very strong one and I'm like, 'Really? It's like 9am, why are you doing that?' Just relax. Squirt it once, please."

Is creating a fragrance for men something that appeals to you?

"It is, actually. I would really enjoy creating a male fragrance. A unisex fragrance would be

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good – something that is definitely masculine but that a woman could wear, too."

What was the inspiration for the Storm Flower flacon?

"We went through a lot of different shapes – there were so many possibilities – but in the end I wanted something soft and feminine. The lid is inspired by a rose. I love the colours; they are very me. It's just me, even down to the font that we have written 'Storm Flower' in.

"It's so exciting when you have ideas and

then you actually see them come to life. You think, 'Wow, that's exactly how I imagined it.'"

You worked with renowned photographer Rankin on the ad campaign – what was that like?

"Rankin shot both the commercial and the stills for this. I've worked with him a lot and I love his work. He shoots stunning photography and I've shot music videos with him before. He's doing more videos, so I knew that if we wanted to get the feeling of a beautiful still come to life, he was the guy to do that.

"We created a storm going backwards so that I could come out from the storm dry. I had to be in a water tank and to dance in chiffon – it was a bit like shooting a music video, only for a perfume. It was fun and something I hadn't done before. The name Storm Flower is reflected by the wind and rain meeting the flowers. The petals are going crazy and I'm dancing in it and then I come out dry. You know how after it rains and everything smells beautiful and fresh? That's how I wanted it to feel."

All that water must have been a challenge for your hair and make-up team...

"Make-up-wise, we started off with the dry stuff. Then once I got wet I stayed wet."

Who decided what you should wear?

"I always have a very strong vision of what I like and how I like it to go. I'm 12, 13 years in now and after that kind of time the styling becomes a very collaborative process. For the clothing we had some pieces tailor-made. The fabric was really key. You go through trial and error and, after a decade of doing music videos and photoshoots, you know what works."

Do you always work with the same fashion stylists for your videos, the red carpet and now this fragrance campaign?

"I switch and change stylists. It's important to do that because sometimes when you work intensely with one team, none of you can see the vision any more. For a long time I did have the same team but sometimes you know each other so well it's hard to see each other differently and you can't come up with anything fresh. Whereas if someone new comes in – like, say, for the commercial – you feel really inspired."

For your work you spend a lot of time looking glamorous with perfect hair and make-up. What's your beauty routine on your days off?

"Skin-wise, it's back to basics. It's good to simplify what you're doing to your skin to avoid putting it off balance. Sometimes I just use E45 and L'Oréal Skin Perfect through the day."

Any recent great product discoveries you would care to share?

"I like the Bliss under-eye cooling gels; they're like little pads that you put under your eyes to de-puff. When you have late nights and early mornings, you need a bit of de-puffing."

And your secret SOS skincare product?

"I love a bit of Sudocrem. Last week I wore a bracelet all day for *The X Factor*. I didn't notice it was rubbing, so it kind of burnt my skin. Sudocrem was the only thing for that. It's great if you get bitten or feel like you're getting a spot."

Finally, what is the secret to great style?

"Make sure you're comfortable. It can spoil your day if you have sore feet." ■



CHERYL'S PRODUCT PICKS 1. Crème de la Mer The Body Crème, £160 2. L'Oréal Paris Skin Perfection, £9.99 3. Storm Flower Eau de Parfum, £39.95 4. Essie Nail Polish in Ballet Slippers, £7.99 5. Tangle Teezer Compact Styler Gold Rush, £12.25; visit tangleteezer.com 6. Bliss Triple Oxygen Instant Energizing Eye Masks, £40 for eight; visit blissworld.co.uk 7. Scott Barnes Body Bling, £27.99, from feelunique.com

