

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW AND PHOTOS

THE WELLNESS ADVOCATE AND MOTHER OF THREE
KAREN KORAMSHAI
ON GETTING WHAT SHE REALLY REALLY WANTED
– THE SPICE GIRLS' FORMER HOME IN SUSSEX



Karen looks every inch the model, posing at the Sussex home (top right) she shares with her husband and three children



Model and wellness advocate Karen Koramshai has what could be easily defined as an enviable lifestyle. She lives with her multimillionaire husband and three children in a five-bedroomed mock-Tudor house – once home to the Spice Girls – that is set in five acres of landscaped gardens with stunning views across the Sussex countryside.

“As soon as I saw it, I fell in love with it,” Karen, 42, says, opening the doors exclusively to **HELLO!**, coincidentally in the same week Geri Horner, Melanie Chisholm, Melanie Brown and Emma Bunton reportedly held a secret meeting to discuss a new world tour.

“My husband was like: ‘Play it cool,’ but by the end of the

(LEFT) DRESS: REISS; EARRINGS: ORELIA
(ABOVE) DRESS: KAREN MILLEN; EARRINGS: SORU



'All five Spice Girls lived here – that's why we have blacked-out gates to keep the paparazzi away'

viewing, I was drinking champagne with the owner. So much for playing it cool."

IDEAL FAMILY HOME

While there was a lot of work to be done when Karen first saw the property 14 years ago, "I could see beyond that", she says. "It was a lovely home to raise a family."

Indeed, Luca, 14, Gabriella, ten,

and five-year-old Theo have grown up enjoying an indoor swimming pool, playroom, games room and basement cinema, where you'll also find Karen's husband Dean Richmond, founder of the Pet Family group of companies, at the bar mixing cocktails for the many parties the couple host throughout the year.

Knowing the Spice Girls ▶



The house's former occupants have included the Spice Girls, (from left) Melanie Brown, Victoria Adams, Geri Halliwell, Emma Bunton and Melanie Chisholm, seen here in 1998

'As soon as I saw the house, I fell in love with it'



(LEFT) DRESS: VALLE & VIK. EARRINGS: ORELIA. BRACELET: SORU. (RIGHT) JUMPER: REISS. SKIRT: GHOST. SHOES: GINA. EARRINGS: ORELIA

lived at the house in 1997 was, she says, something of a bonus.

"We heard the rumour before we moved in," she says. "All five of them lived here at the beginning of their careers, when they were being managed by Simon Fuller, as he lived in Brighton nearby.

"That's why we have blacked-out gates to keep the paparazzi away."

FATHER'S EXPERTISE

With a vision to transform a big house in need of renovation into one that was modern but cosy, Karen asked her architect father, Jam, to build the basement floor and worked with designer Louise Bradley to create classic interiors using a neutral palette.

Her favourite spot is the kitchen, where she develops the plant-based recipes she shares on Instagram and her website.

She is, she says, at the beginning of her journey into the world of wellbeing advocacy and is keen to develop either ▶



A roaring fire by a well-stocked log pile adds to the cosy feel of the Tudor-style home, which is beautifully decorated for Christmas (above and left). Karen is joined by nine-year-old maltipoo Coco in another sitting room – which looks out over the rolling Sussex landscape – with a neutral cream, taupe and white palette and its own tree (below and right).





(LEFT) JUMPSUIT: REISS, EARRINGS: ORELIA



Karen enjoys a fig from her healthy spread (above). The wellbeing advocate adores entertaining and regularly hosts dinner parties with husband Dean Richmond

branded products or a cookery book. While she hasn't decided which yet, Karen has no doubts about her passion to help others live healthier and happier lives.

"When I started out in the modelling industry, [I was surrounded by] all these stick-thin models and realised what a destructive impact this was having on my mental and physical wellbeing," she says.

"It's when I had a wake-up call and realised I needed to nurture my body the best way I could."

MOTHER'S RECIPES

Inspired by her mother Linda's cooking, Karen changed her diet, began training to teach yoga and "connected with like-minded people in the health and fitness industry".

Her friends include Rosie Huntington-Whiteley's brother Toby, a model and personal trainer, and ▶





'I had a wake-up call and realised I needed to nurture my body the best way I could'



The dining area and bar (above and below) are perfect for Christmas entertaining. A sitting room (left) links to the flagstones of the terrace beyond its huge window through the use of neutral, natural colours, also found in a quiet reading corner (far left)



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'The moment Dean and I met each other, we both knew this was something special'

Karen offers a peek into her wardrobe collection of handbags, shoes and blazers

Louise Parker, "figure magician" to the stars.

Mindful to practise what she preaches, Karen doesn't eat red meat, dairy, gluten or refined sugar, is teetotal, meditates and exercises two hours a day – whether that's yoga, Pilates, swimming or weightlifting.

"I live on the edge," she jokes.

She does, however, know how to have fun. Her favourite meeting spot in London is the exclusive club Annabel's and she and Dean host regular dinner parties.

But one party resulted in a life-saving dash to an emergency vet with Coco, ▶



**'My daughter's
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We could have
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TOP & TROUSERS; REISS; EARRINGS; ORELLA

A sinuous modern water feature in a manicured lawn contrasts with farmland beyond, with the sculpture reflecting the owner's love of yoga. Karen poses (left) outside the patio doors leading out from her favourite room in the house – the kitchen. Here, she creates recipes to share with her growing list of followers on social media

the family's nine-year-old maltipoo and Karen's "fourth child".

"An ex-rugby player trod on her," she says. "She is white and the floor was white and he didn't see her. She was only four months old and had to stay in a cage for months."

Coco needed steel rods inserted in her back legs and hips, and owes her life, says her owner, to "Supervet" Noel Fitzpatrick, who performed the revolutionary surgery. "He was amazing."

Given that Dean runs a chain of pet stores, it might seem surprising that the family doesn't have more animals.

"My daughter's obsessed with horses and my youngest one wants a gerbil," says Karen. "We could have a zoo."

She met Dean when she was in her late 20s, after they were introduced by a mutual friend on what Karen now realises was a blind date.

"The moment we met each other, we both



knew this was something special and we fell in love straight away,” she says. They married six years ago in Chichester’s register office.

“It wasn’t a glamorous wedding,” she adds. “We’d like to renew our vows one day.”

Karen’s background, however, is far more exotic. She grew up in Brasilia and São Paulo in Brazil, where her Scottish mother had met, fallen in love with and married Iranian-English Jam while she was teaching English and he was studying architecture there.

It was an “idyllic” childhood, Karen recalls. “Everybody played on

the street, in the sunshine, and it’s all about the community.”

She was 18 when she came to the UK to study business administration and then started modelling while also carving out a successful career working on the commercial side in women’s glossy magazines, on titles including *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper’s Bazaar* and *Glamour*.

She eventually became the commercial account director for *Elle* in Paris.

INDUSTRY PRESSURE

She found modelling difficult, however. “It was around the time

when ‘heroin chic’ was a big influence in the industry. There were so many times when I was told: ‘You’re not skinny enough,’ or: ‘You’re not tall enough.’

“The more skinny you were, the more likely you’d get a job. I didn’t fit that mould and it started to affect me. I was living off Lucozade and Nutri-Grain bars, but it wasn’t sustainable. It was making me ill.

“I lost a lot of weight and my mum, who was very aware of it, said: ‘You’ve got to stop this.’ It was then I became more savvy about what I was putting into my body.”

Her experience has made her

especially conscious of how she is bringing up Gabriella. “A few of her friends have said: ‘I’m not skinny enough,’ so it’s still going on now and it shouldn’t.

“I want Gabriella to do what makes her happy, but if she ever wanted to go into modelling, I’d be very wary.”

Although Karen misses working in the magazine industry, she loves the balance she now has with modelling and launching her new business.

The flexibility will also give her time to plan the Christmas dinner extravaganza she and Dean will host at home.

While it would fill most with dread,



A firepit makes outdoor yoga on option even in the colder months. Karen with husband Dean (left)

ADDITIONAL PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES



'I'll be preparing Christmas dinner for weeks in advance, but I absolutely love it'

for Karen, it's a form of relaxation. "I'm doing all the cooking for 30 guests and will be catering for every dietary requirement – meat eaters, vegetarians and vegans. I'll be preparing for weeks in advance, but I absolutely love it. I consider it my me-time."

Then in January, she will launch a wellness reset, including a non-alcoholic bloody Mary. "So **H** watch this space."

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