

Q&A

The Sweet Smell of Success

The bubbly lead of one of TV's most enduring dramas has struck gold as—believe it or not—a perfume purveyor. She also seeks the simple life in L.A. BY JESSICA RADLOFF

Fans of *Grey's Anatomy* and *Private Practice* know that Kate Walsh, aka Addison Montgomery, is as gorgeous, seductive and intelligent as her character. But what makes her so beloved by colleagues and admirers is her refreshing honesty and openness. Whether she's talking about past relationships, anxieties and insecurities, or life in the spotlight, Walsh maintains a sense of normalcy in an anything-but-normal town. We caught up with the effervescent, down-to-earth Walsh to talk about those gorgeous co-stars, creating successful fragrances and loving her L.A. life.

Can you believe *Private Practice* is in its fifth season?

Yeah, it's crazy! I'm absolutely loving it. For me, it's a little different because this is actually my eighth season playing Addison—three years on *Grey's Anatomy*. Luckily, we have great writers and actors to keep it super-interesting, fresh and compelling for me to act.

Your on-screen lovers have included Patrick Dempsey, Eric Dane and Benjamin Bratt. I won't ask you who's the best kisser, but... You can say me! I'm the best kisser!

I love it! What have your male co-stars taught you about love? Hmm. There's plenty to go around, how 'bout that? [Laughs.]

Your fragrance, *Boyfriend*, available at Sephora, is selling like hotcakes. How did it come about?

I was actually inspired after a break-up years ago. I was in New York shopping, and I missed my boyfriend's cologne. I was like, "I don't have to have a boyfriend to have that boyfriend scent," so I thought, *Boyfriend*. The boyfriend that inspired it said, "Why don't you make it yourself? Do a business deal and own it, create it and make it like you would a pilot out in L.A." It's exciting, terrifying, humbling and really fun and creative.

Did you send samples to your exes with a note saying, "Thanks for the inspiration"?

No, I just put their names in the bottle design! Yeah, but it's fun. It's like a shout-out to the guys and it's all in good humor.

Your newest scent, *Billionaire*, hits stores in February. How do you create a fragrance and make it more than just a celebrity brand? Personally, I was annoyed with celebrity fragrances. It's like, what

an amazing concept! "I'm recognizable! Buy this fragrance!" ... But I'm very inspired and I love the younger generation of people that do many different professions and create. I've always written and acted, so this is just another way to manifest my creative expression.

You seem to have maintained a healthy sense of self while achieving Hollywood stardom. How?

I had to use tools to learn how to make friends with my self-doubt and anxiety. That's probably what made me an actor, too, is this sensitivity to all the things that could possibly go wrong, or feeling scared or terrified. But I think that the ability to embrace it and keep putting one foot forward is the only way you can do it.

You speak of craving a "normal" life. As a celebrity, is normalcy possible?

I think that when I was younger, "normal" meant like *Brady Bunch*, because I came from divorced parents and was raised by a single mom. [My idea was] to graduate college, get a house, get married, have a family. There was an entirely different definition of "normal" [then] and "normal" now for me—although it's more grounded and

happy. I feel like I am that, and I have that. As expansive as my life is, the more I want to simplify it and do simple things like going to the grocery store, getting steaks and grilling them, even though I've worked a 13-hour day. [Laughs.]

Let's talk L.A. Do you have a favorite beach?

I love Malibu. I also love going up the coast to Big Sur. I just love the Pacific Coast.

Who colors those lovely red locks?

I go to Christopher Pierce at the Andy Lecompte Salon in L.A. He's amazing.

OK, spill your flawless-skin secrets! Kate Somerville on Melrose Place. Their products are really good, she's incredible and she has all these great [facial] treatments, scrubs and laser treatments.

You love sushi. Do you have any recommendations?

Jinpachi in West Hollywood. It's this little hole in the wall that is one of the best I've ever eaten at. I love Nozawa in the Valley, too.

How about shopping?

I like Satine. Curve is great, too.