

# VERVE ®Verve Magazine

The Spirit of Today's Woman

APRIL 04, 2014

## LIVING HER DREAMS

*Text by Sitanshi Talati-Parikh. Photograph by Toranj Kavyon. Styling by Shirin Salwan. Make-Up And Hair by Ayesha Mistry. Location courtesy Bungalow 8.*

*Indian cinema and theatre actress, mother and brand builder of her family business: Perizaad Zorabian-Irani is effortlessly easy-going, exuberant and full of life.*



I don't have a single lazy, chilled out moment! My life moves at a crazy pace...but that's the only way I know how to be.'

*Dinner With Friends*, the Pulitzer Prize-winning play directed by Feroz Abbas Khan that she's been working in, has been running for three years and seen a 100 shows worldwide. Simultaneously, Perizaad Zorabian-Irani has looked after specific food ranges as her family business, Zorabian Chicken, started its journey into the retail space. And if that's not enough, she's mother to six-year-old Zaha and four-year-old Zayaan.

Juggling things isn't new to her. The 40-year-old describes how she managed to be in the top 10 of her class in school while training for 12 years to be a ballerina – one whom in her teacher's words was 'born to be on stage because of the immense joy she brings to her performance'. Later, while modelling and being a part of fashion shows and dramatics, she graduated with a gold medal in management from Mumbai University. She followed it with her education in New York City, where, in addition to her MBA, she also attended the Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute. 'All throughout, I have been inclined towards academics and the arts: I feel passionately about both!'

Building the Zorabian brand in the retail space with a limited marketing spend has been extremely challenging. 'All I had when we started building our brand was quality – an outstanding product to offer the Indian consumer. Convincing our storekeepers and retailers to give Zorabian shelf space when we first started off was tough, but today when people stop me to tell me how much they love our product, I feel like I have conquered the world and it makes me believe even more in the power of doing things right.'

She's been nominated for a best debut award for *Bollywood Calling* (2003), and won a best actor award for *Joggers Park* (2003) at the Bollywood Awards in New York. She's acted in more movies since, including essaying the role of Indira Gandhi in a Chinese film, *Badung Sonata*, and looks forward to exploring that profession further. 'Zorabian Chicken gives me an adrenaline rush; being an actor is my moment of nirvana – I need both to complete me.'

She's been trained early to manage her time effectively and she's grounded with a strong sense of discipline with the ability to prioritise, which all form key aspects of the balancing act. She admits that it's not easy to do all of it together, especially when one has young children, but, 'if you really want to do something, the whole world conspires to make it possible!'

Perizaad got married in 2006 and believes her husband, businessman Boman Rustom Irani, is the 'wind beneath her wings'. 'In spite of being hugely successful in his own right he has never undermined my need to excel – he has always respected and encouraged it.'

She describes her style quotient as minimalistic, understated, classic and feminine; and her most treasured possession is her engagement ring, which she absolutely can't take off, even after seven years. While passionate, committed and hard-working are all what she's about, Perizaad Zorabian-Irani believes success is merely 'living life on your own terms. Being able to chase the dreams you want to; being free!'