

elle

Now, though Macpherson and her baby's father, French financier Arpad Busson, live in foggy London, she does her best to maintain a healthy, outdoorsy lifestyle, jogging four miles a day, rain or shine, five days a week and getting away when she can to the Bahamas, where she can swim and run on the beach. She varies her routine, sometimes working out with a trainer, other times using whatever exercise video has recently caught her eye. The diversity helps her stay "spiritually aware."

While pregnant, Macpherson dropped the running in favor of swimming and yoga and the last six weeks worked daily with New York City-based trainer Julie Tupler, who specializes in "maternal fitness." Tupler designed special 1½-hour workouts that strengthened Macpherson's back and abdomen for delivery and helped her snap back into shape after giving birth. "But to tell you the truth, I don't care," she told friends at the time. Having the baby was more important than having *The Body*.

Beauty, brains ...

Six feet tall, with a healthy, girl-next-door beauty, Macpherson is a worldwide object of male fantasies. But growing up in her native Australia, she didn't consider herself very attractive: She was taller than all the boys, and even in elementary school she was broad-shouldered and athletic. In her teen years, the boys saw her more as a pal than as date material.

She was also smart. After scoring in the top 5 percent in the Australian equivalent of the college boards, Macpherson was all set to begin studying law when fate intervened in the form of a ski trip to Aspen, Colo., where a model scout spotted her and suggested she come to New York.

At first, never believing she had what it took, Macpherson thought the notion ridiculous. But her mom encouraged her to make the trip, just for the adventure of it, and so Macpherson went to New York, where she planned to stay no more than two weeks. But after signing with the Click agency and getting a few bookings, she decided to give mod-

When Elle was pregnant, she didn't hesitate to eat whatever — and however much — she thought her baby needed to be healthy. She also didn't hesitate to gain 20 pounds for her movie role in "Sirens."

eling a serious try. After a slow first few years, her breakthrough came in 1985 when, on a shoot in Tahiti, she met Gilles Bensimon, a worldly Frenchman nearly 20 years her senior and the primary cover photographer for *Elle* magazine. Bensimon recognized in the free-spirited Australian the possibility for superstardom. (He also wanted to date her.)

At first, Macpherson resisted, but the next year they married, and with her husband as mentor, Macpherson became the coincidentally named magazine's primary cover model and the four-time cover star of the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue. When Macpherson and Bensimon divorced in 1990, her biggest client, *Elle*, disappeared along with her husband.

... and a head for business

Although her modeling career faded, Macpherson quickly scrambled to reinvent herself. In short order, she made a best-selling fitness video ("Your Personal Best Workout — The Body") with Karen Voight, produced three sold-out calendars, joined with several model friends in a restaurant chain and launched a line of lingerie sold exclusively in Australia. The restaurants failed, but the lingerie business became the most recognized in that country's history. By the time Macpherson turned 30, her net worth was reported to be well above \$30 million.

In 1997, male readers of *Maxim* magazine voted Macpherson No. 1 on a list of women they'd most want to spend their lives with.

Word has it that the role of working mother agrees with Macpherson. She's growing herbs, cooking family meals, trying out the homey things her lifestyle once precluded. "This is the happiest I've ever seen Elle," says her longtime manager and fellow Aussie Stuart Cameron. "She's at a really, really great place in her life." ■

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