



MEDIA RELEASE

LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS Aussie women spending \$8B a year on superstar style

24 July 2005 – Our obsession with celebrity image is now so powerful that Aussie women are splurging \$8 billion a year in a bid to match the style of the superstars.

Virgin Money's Celebrity Spending Survey found that two in three women (69%) feel they are expected to match the ideal figures, immaculate grooming and designer wardrobes of today's celebrities.

"The Celebrity Spending phenomenon is driving a new credit card trend, with one in two women (54%) admitting to pulling out the plastic to copy celebrity chic," said Virgin Money spokeswoman, Kirsty Lamont.

Aussie women are using their credit cards to spend, on average, \$1,000 a year on designer clothes, hairstyles and beauty treatments popularised by celebrity idols such as Nicole Kidman and Sarah Jessica Parker.

Women aged 18-34 are Australia's biggest celebrity spenders, splashing out a startling \$1,500 a year on their credit cards. One in ten 18-34 year olds spend over \$300 a month, or \$3,600 a year, on copying celebrity chic.

"The cult of celebrity is placing huge pressure on today's women to spend money copying the glamorous images we're constantly exposed to in the media," said Ms Lamont.

"But celebrity chic is not cheap, and more and more women are trading in their savings for the pursuit of superstar style."

In fact, Aussie women are so obsessed with celebrity image that, given the choice, more women would opt for their idol's figure and wardrobe over their fame and career.

Style icons Nicole Kidman and Jennifer Anniston head the list of our celebrity image idols, while media hungry Posh and Paris are our least idolised celebs.

Virgin Money's 'Celebrity Spending' survey also reveals that:

- Women in regional Australia are much less influenced by celebrity chic than their city cousins, spending just \$550 a year on the pursuit of celebrity perfection.
- Women with children feel most pressured by the cult of celebrity. Three in four (74%) women with children feel they are expected to look as good as celebrities.
- Hairstyling and extensions top the Celebrity Spenders' list, followed by designer clothes and accessories then by beauty treatments.
- Celebrity fashion and gossip magazines are the Celebrity Spenders' bibles, with nine in ten women (89%) admitting to trawling their pages for the latest celebrity looks.

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Aussie womens' celebrity image idols:

	Votes
Nicole Kidman	26%
Jennifer Aniston	13%
Sarah Jessica Parker	11%
Delta Goodrem	10%
Kylie Minogue	5%
Paris Hilton	3%
Victoria Beckham	3%

The Celebrity Spender's shopping list*:

	All women	18-34 women
Hair cuts / extensions	43%	53%
Designer clothes / accessories	27%	34%
Beauty treatments	17%	23%
Gym memberships / personal training sessions	14%	16%
Diet programs	3%	2%
Cosmetic enhancements	2%	1%
Fake tanning / sunbed treatments	2%	4%

* credit card purchases over the last 12 months

Celebrity Spending across the country:

	Annual spend
National average	\$1,032
New South Wales	\$1,284
Tasmania	\$1,224
Victoria	\$1,032
South Australia	\$936
Queensland	\$768
Western Australia	\$732

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About Virgin Money:

Virgin Money launched in Australia in May 2003, shaking up the credit card sector with the first credit card to combine low interest rates, no annual fees, up to 55 interest free days and instant rewards. Over 500,000 Virgin Credit Cards are now on issue in Australia, and Virgin Money is now set to build on this success by becoming a broad-based provider of retail financial services in Australia. There's no funny stuff, just money stuff. <http://virginmoney.com.au>

Notes to Editors:

- \$8 billion calculation based on Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 Census data, which states there are 7.7 million women in Australia aged 15 and over.
- Virgin Money commissioned Newspoll to conduct a national telephone survey of 463 Australian women aged 18-59.