



Gigi as a young child in Paarl

GIGI

**Survivor SA winner and owner of The Lollipop Lounge
GiGi on living in Jo'burg and her donation to Hospice**

Where do you live?

I live in Atholl in Sandton and I have lived there for 12 years. It's a great neighbourhood, but I work until late at night so I don't see the neighbours too often. I leave for work at 12 p.m. and arrive back home in the early hours of the morning.

What's your neighbourhood's best-kept secret?

The best-kept secret about Atholl is the Atholl Square shopping centre and John the Cobbler who sees to our shoes. I also love the beautiful gardens which extend into the streets.

What do you most enjoy about living in Jo'burg?

I love living in Jo'burg because there's an energy in the air and the people are interesting. I also love my work as it stimulates me and I am passionate about it.

What's your typical work day?

My typical work day is to be at work at 12 p.m. to open the club, train from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and then back to work, meetings and more meetings. The training is only three times a week, although I wish I had more time to do it every day.

And your typical weekend?

I work until 3 a.m. on a Saturday morning and then I sleep late because I am back at work at 5 p.m. On Sunday, I love to drive out to the

outskirts of Jo'burg. Last Sunday, we drove to Parys to have lunch at this wonderful restaurant called Ruby's (tel +27 (0)56 811 5080). It was worth it!

What are your favourite out-of-town escapes?

My favourite out-of-town escapes are the small towns in the Overberg such as Hermanus, Gansbaai, De Kelders and Franskraal. There's nothing more magical than seeing the whales in Walker Bay, Birkenhead beer, having breakfast at Coffee on the Rocks and walking on the beach at Uilenkraalsmond.

Where do you enjoy shopping?

I love shopping in Hermanus. The combination of shopping while smelling the ocean... the best!

What was the biggest challenge for you on Survivor?

The biggest challenge was the eternal hunger, the sand flea bites, the all-over body aches from sleeping on the hard sand and coping with the tropical storms.

What charity organisation do you support and why?

My charity is Hospice in Houghton. My club has supported Hospice since we started in 2005. My partner's wife died of cancer in 2000 and since then Hospice has always been our charity of choice.

Tell us more about your business?

I am the co-owner of the Lollipop Lounge in Randburg. I have 60 dancers working for me and I only employ South African girls.

What's been your worst ever career disaster?

When I was 22, I got a job to work in the office of a hotel. After two days, I stopped going to work. I am a performer and love the stage too much, I was not ready to sit in an office!

What's your advice for a young person trying to break into your game?

For a young person wanting to make a career out of dancing, I'd say she needs to know that it's a short-lived career. Save your money, buy your first property and be dedicated. By doing this you will be financially independent and free to make your own decisions about your future.

What has been your biggest career lesson?

My biggest life lesson came from my dad who always said "Do the things you fear and the end of fear is certain." And that is why I entered *Survivor*. I feared taking part but walked out a winner!

What's your message to Sandton?

My message to Sandton is simple: let's keep Sandton clean and fight the crime together ☺
Details: hospicepalliativecaresa.co.za