

Diamonds For Rolene

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YOU NEWS



Shortly after being crowned Miss World in December last year Rolene Strauss received an extremely special piece of jewellery when her boyfriend of three years, businessman D'Niel

DIAMONDS FOR ROLENE

She kept her engagement a secret for seven months – but now beauty queen Rolene Strauss wants the world to know! Compiled by MARISA FOCKEMA



Strauss (BELOW), got down on one knee and proposed to her in Hartenbos in the Western Cape (ABOVE). BELOW RIGHT: The glittering engagement ring.

ON A sunny Christmas Day they stand at the end of the Hartenbos pier, gazing out to sea. She's dressed in a red summer frock, he in white shorts and a pale-blue shirt. Both are barefoot.

It's here in this seaside village on the Garden Route where their romance blossomed three years ago. With the sound of waves breaking in the background, D'Niel Strauss goes down on bended knee and holds out a box with a diamond ring to Rolene Strauss.

The infectious smile the world had seen only six days before when she was chosen as Miss World in London lights up her face. Then tears of happiness trickle down her cheeks as she sinks to her knees beside him and he puts the ring on her finger. With a light sea breeze playing in their hair they embrace.

For seven months they've kept their engagement under wraps but now for the first time Rolene (23) and D'Niel (33) are sharing all the details with YOU.

"D'Niel is the most incredible person I know," says Rolene, a fourth-year medical student who put her studies at the Free State University on hold after she was crowned Miss World. "He's intelligent, inspiring, unconditionally supportive and motivates me every day to be better. We're a team and work together when it comes to our dreams and visions for the future. I thank the Lord every day that I have him in my life."

During her travels as Miss World, Ro-

lene has received several marriage proposals from men who've been dazzled by her beauty – but little did they know D'Niel, originally from Keimoes in the Northern Cape, had already captured her heart.

The handsome Cape Town businessman, who's a director and co-founder of a venture capital firm, is just as thrilled the most beautiful woman in the world, who by chance shares his surname, has said "yes".

"I'm proud of Rolene, grateful to have her as part of my life and am looking forward to our future together."

Before popping the question, D'Niel first asked her dad Hennie, an Mpumalanga GP, and mom Theresa, a former nursing sister and now a housewife, for their blessing. "He did it in the conventional way by making an appointment to see us," Hennie recalls. "It didn't take much guessing to figure out why he wanted to see us."

Because Rolene couldn't have a public relationship during her year as Miss South Africa D'Niel had to keep a low profile. They're planning to marry next year after Rolene has completed her stint as Miss World. But the date and venue are still a secret.

ROLENE has entrusted the design of her wedding dress to her close friend South African designer Casper Bosman. He also made the gown she wore when she was crowned Miss World last year as well as several other



outfits that have turned heads during her reign.

Casper says they've already played around with ideas for her wedding dress. "Her dress will have clean lines and be soft and fuss-free. We're not going to try to create a new trend. It must evoke the same feeling in people as her Miss World dress. Her inner and timeless beauty must shine through."

Rolene's 2,5 carat engagement ring – which consists of an oval diamond nestling in a bed of smaller diamonds set in rose gold – was designed, with input from Rolene and D'Niel, and manufactured by Jack Friedman Jewellers.

Rolene and D'Niel's big day is being coordinated by wedding and events planner Aleit Swanepoel, the founder and chairperson of The Aleit Group. "Rolene's vision for her special day mirrors her personality and will be timeless and traditional, with elements of royal splendour fit for a princess," he says. "It will be a true show stopper." ■



AMORE PERSON STYLING: WENDEL WESSEL; HAIR: GARY ROK; CLOTHING: KOBUS PAULSEN; CULTURE