



Angela, with her son Dakota, three.



a life aquatic

FORGET A MANSION IN THE HOLLYWOOD HILLS, A TUSCAN VILLA OR A CHATEAU IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE. FOR MODEL ANGELA LINDVALL, HOME IS A CONVERTED OIL RIG UTILITY BOAT ON THE HUDSON RIVER. BY **BRITT COLLINS**



The solar-powered tugboat home is moored on the Hudson River with a view of the impressive Manhattan skyline.

She's graced the cover of every glossy fashion and culture magazine going, but by supermodel standards, Angela Lindvall leads a very quiet, low-key and refreshingly grounded existence. She lives with her husband William Edwards, and their three-year-old son, Dakota, on the fabulously beautiful 18-metre tugboat, *Lakota*, moored on New York's Hudson River.

"I feel absolute freedom here," she says of her floating home. "It's so calm and peaceful to be surrounded by endless sea and sky, with the city skyline in the distance. I love the light and the stillness when the sun goes down."

The boat is her first adult home since she was plucked from obscurity as an aspiring 17-year-old model in Missouri. Fresh-faced and gleaming, she has since starred in campaigns for Christian Dior, DKNY, Chloé and Calvin Klein. Her home afloat offers respite from the chaos of working life and Manhattan. "I was always a mad workaholic, rarely took time off and felt lost when I wasn't working," says the 26-year-old. "But now I'm just like everyone else. I cook, care for my son and look forward to the weekends to spend more time with my husband."

In 2001, Lindvall was holidaying with some friends on the island of Tortola in the British Virgin Islands when she met

Edwards, a 30-year-old professional diver, originally from South Africa. "It was love at first sight," she gushes.

At the time, neither was looking for a serious relationship but, as Edwards puts it, "love takes a hold of you and won't let go". Dakota was born soon afterwards.

Edwards had long wanted a houseboat and found *Lakota* through a business associate. A former utility boat for an oil rig, its interior had been gutted by a fire, but structurally the vessel was in fairly decent shape.

Lindvall helped strip and clean the boat while Edwards spent much of a year sandblasting the interior of its charred shell, creating additional porthole windows to bring in more light and adding a second storey to the pilot house so the original could become their bedroom.

Respecting the earth's resources has always been a priority for both Lindvall and Edwards, so the couple decided to use natural, environmentally friendly materials in their solar-powered, sun-drenched home. Inside, it's an explorer's fantasy of exquisitely beautiful cast-offs, vintage objects, restored furniture and recycled timber floors.

"We used recycled glass and salvaged wood everywhere," says Lindvall. "The bathroom floor is made out of glass tiles handcrafted from old car windshields."



On deck, the outdoor entertaining area is complete with a barbecue.

It's inspired by the sea, sky and a hotel in Miami I fell in love with. There are

no synthetic or toxic materials in our home. Everything is re-used or sustainable.

An experimental fusion of Mediterranean and Moroccan influences, the home comprises three levels and is decorated with vivid Indian rugs, ethnic-print cushions and carved African art collected from their travels.

The canopied upper level has been transformed into a deck-top garden with plants and handmade chairs, where the family soaks up the sun. The light-filled kitchen features slate floors, black stone benchtops and a wall of recycled stained-glass tiles in green, blue and orange.

"It's inspired by the sea, sky and a hotel in Miami called The Shore Club that I fell in love with," explains Lindvall. "There are no synthetic or toxic materials in our home. Everything is reused or sustainable. Our throw rugs are made of hemp, our mattress is natural rubber and we even have an incinerator toilet to conserve water. Most people know more about their favourite Hollywood stars than about what's in their water supply."

Political activism is nothing new to Lindvall. She has previously lent her earthy glamour to green charities and action groups, including the Sierra Club, the Rainforest Association and the Global Renaissance Alliance. Next, she is planning an eco-fashion show at New York Fashion Week to demonstrate that green clothing can be sensuous and beautiful.

Describing herself as a style-obsessed environmentalist, she had her conscience raised when she first arrived in New York as a teenage model. "New York is a great place for observing life," she says. "I met all these amazing young artists who were constantly questioning the state of the world and it changed everything for me."

While she embraces the intense, liberated culture of Manhattan, she also remains a thoughtful mid-western girl who worries about global warming and vanishing wildlife. "Everyone's in a position to do something about the sad state →

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL ARNAUD/CORBIS OUTLINE/APL



Portholes are the only clue that this Moroccan-inspired living area is aboard a boat.

of the planet. No one person can change everything," she says wistfully, "but you can change small things in your life, from the simplest things like the food you eat to the clothes you buy, which can affect the larger whole."

Lindvall isn't the only celebrity seduced by the simplicity and vitality of a pared-down green lifestyle. Fighting to protect animals and the environment has never been more vital or cool. Stars like Natalie Portman, Outkast's Andre 3000, Chris Martin, Sienna Miller and Dannii Minogue are green devotees who purport to buy everything organic from wheatgrass and beauty balms to cruelty-free fashion and furnishings.

Lindvall recently launched New York-based charity, Collage (www.collagefoundation.org). Dedicated to educating young people on various issues including the environment, animal-rights and politics, it uses popular culture, mass media and no-doubt supermodel power to engage an audience.

"I want to create a more peaceful, natural life without exploiting other people, the earth or harming animals," she explains. "The whole idea of Collage is to empower people to make change happen. To help them realise that anything is possible – we don't have to resign ourselves to things we think are unfair. What individuals can learn from the website is as

simple as creating a community garden or starting a petition. It's about raising people's consciousness."

Leading a bicoastal existence between New York and her other home in the Hollywood Hills, Lindvall is flitting between family life, modelling and a fledgling film career. She had her first taste of the silver screen when Sofia Coppola's brother, Roman, persuaded her to take part in his debut film despite the fact that she'd never even given acting a thought. She has since appeared in *CQ* (2001) alongside French star Gerard Depardieu and *Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang* (2005), with Robert Downey Jr.

She is discovering a new life at the moment and it's one that she hasn't entirely adjusted to yet. "Ideally, I'd like to take part in a film a year and only do the more creative and interesting modelling work so I can spend more time with my family and my foundation – that's the core of everything."

Her houseboat, she says, is where she feels happiest. "It's my dream house. If I didn't have to leave so often, I probably never would," she adds. "We'd like to spend as much time here as possible. Well, at least while it's warm. I think the boat would definitely lose its charm if we were here all year round. →



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Like the rest of the boat, the new wheelhouse is lined with salvaged wood; The old wheelhouse has been converted in a cosy bedroom; The statue of a Buddhist meditative pose invokes calm; A family photo of Angela with her husband and son.



Getting Green

From what to recycle to what to avoid, Tanya Ha, author of *Greenology* and consultant to Planet Ark, shares her advice on creating an environment-friendly haven.

1. RECYCLE

"Recycling is important because it helps us to make better use of our planet's resources," says Ha. But we're not just talking about cans, bottles and paper. Things like printer cartridges and plastic bags can now be recycled through special collection bins. If you don't know what items are eligible in your area go to www.recyclingnearyou.com.au and type in your postcode. And remember, you haven't really finished the process unless you are buying products made with recycled materials.

2. BUY SOME POT PLANTS

Indoor plants mean you can enjoy – and benefit from – plant life, no matter where you live. "A NASA study found that certain pot plant varieties, such as peace lilies and kentia palms, can help clean indoor air by removing various pollutant gases," says Ha.

3. USE REUSABLE BAGS

"Australians have cut their plastic bag use by over 25 per cent since 2002," says Ha. "As well as holding more groceries, green bags have helped to reduce plastic bag waste considerably."

4. BUY SECOND-HAND FURNITURE

Buying pre-loved pieces or renovating existing furniture is a great way to recycle. "Old pieces are often well-made, using solid timber instead of composites and veneer," says Ha.

5. KNOW YOUR ORGANIC FOOD LABELS

"The words 'organic', 'fresh' and 'natural' on food packaging don't tell you very much about where the food comes from as there is very little restriction on the use of these words in labelling," says Ha. "Look for food products that are labelled as 'certified organic'. You can trust these foods to have been organically grown as they are certified by an independent agency."

6. AVOID ANTIBACTERIAL CLEANING PRODUCTS

Ha says we've become ridiculously obsessed with killing germs around the house, nullifying beneficial bacteria along with the bad. "The overuse of antibacterial agents is contributing to the growth of 'superbugs' that have built up a resistance to antibiotics. Low-level exposure to germs is not necessarily a bad thing. These small challenges help to build a strong, healthy immune system."

7. CHOOSE PLANT-BASED DETERGENTS

These are far better for the planet than those containing petrochemicals.

"Look for Planet Ark and Aware brand laundry powder. They're also phosphate-free, making them a far better choice for the health of our waterways," says Ha.

– Bessie Recep



GET ANGELA'S STYLE

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

Box, \$8.70, at Universal, 03 9415 8111.

Sculpture, \$29.95, at Oxfam

Australia Trading, 02 9231 4016.

Cushion, \$11.95, at Bed Bath

N' Table, 02 9232 5011. **Frame**,

\$22.95, at Oxfam Australia Trading,

02 9231 4016. **Lantern**, \$24.95,

at Oxfam Australia Trading,

02 9231 4016. **Glasses**, \$19.95 for

4, at Barbeques Galore, 13 12 54.

RIGHT Deckchair, \$165, at

Caravan Interiors, 02 9365 0500.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE FERRARI/RENOVATION CONCEPTS