Jessica Alba aims to help families enjoy greener, toxin-free homes and talks about her passion for balanced living.
SPONTANEOUS activist

Concerned about chemicals in household and baby products, Jessica Alba co-founded an eco-friendly company.
On a trip to Disneyland with her parents when she was just six years old, Jessica Alba uncannily articulated what would prove to be her adult passion.

"My parents took a video of me saying I was a modern woman, a feminist, and was going to stand up for all women because we can prove we’re better than men in certain areas," says the mother of two daughters, Honor (4) and Haven (3) with husband Cash Warren. "I was way too young to be talking about that stuff. At six you have a different focus, though I’ve always championed causes for women and children.

In fact, Alba’s passion for social justice has led to several trips to Capitol Hill to testify in front of Congress for the Safe Chemicals Act, while serving as current spokesperson for the Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families Coalition.

At 31, she’s come a long way from showing off her figure in films such as Fantastic Four, Sin City, and Machete. She even co-founded The Honest Company, which sells eco-friendly baby products and environmentally friendly goods for the home. It was a load of laundry that spurred her search for greener commodities and a stylish line of nontoxic essentials.

**ALLERGIES AND ASTHMA**

"I broke out in hives and had a sneezing attack due to the baby detergent I was using," explains Alba who, as a child, suffered from severe allergies and asthma. "It was the catalyst for me to start research into what eco and green really meant. I found the link between certain ingredients and the harmful ramifications on the health of our children and ourselves.

As a child growing up in Southern California, Alba had been in and out of hospital for everything from a collapsed lung to pneumonia to a kidney operation before she was 10. "Anything with seeds, certain nuts, dust, fresh fruits and vegetables" are substances that began to trigger her allergy attacks. However, as she matured, she started keeping a mental note of when and where these attacks took place.

**NO ADDITIVES**

"I realized it was the preservatives, nitrates, sulfates in the foods—what was added or sprayed on the fresh foods. So I eat organically now, and I’m fine," Alba says. In particular, The Honest Company has a food wish to rid produce of chemicals. "It’s knowing your environment inside and outside the home that is important."

Alba takes her own and her family’s health seriously; however, she’s not fussy about what everyone else eats. "We eat French fries and hamburgers, make cookies together. We eat like normal people—I just use better quality ingredients: no bleached white flour, no high fructose corn syrup, no highly processed foods or anything that’s genetically modified or watered down. I try to keep everything natural."
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Nutritional staples in the Alba-Warren household run the gamut from grains and legumes to fresh organic produce. "During the summer months, we do a lot of grilled meats and big salads...we love avocados. When it's cooler weather, I do a roasted chicken, maybe Indian food."

Even though she has an eye-popping, curvy 5'7" figure that looks as good in jeans and tee as in a Donatella Versace gown, Alba, surprisingly, does go for periods of time when she doesn't work out.

TIME FOR THE KIDS
"I really don't like a fitness regimen," she readily admits with a laugh. "It's just hard for me to dedicate that much time to myself. When I was pregnant—gaining over 60 pounds with Honor—it was easier because I would do yoga and feel like I was doing something good for my baby. Though I have to say after I was 8 months pregnant, I didn't weigh myself anymore. When it's just for me, selfishly, I have my office, my acting, my husband and my babies. So if I have that extra hour, I usually need to sleep or spend time with my kids."

With production on Sin City 2 just a few months away, Alba is looking forward to immersing herself in that project. "I'm actually excited because I'll have to get in shape again for the movie. If it's not my job, I'm not going to be doing it. So it'll be circuit training again, that gives me the best results."

CHILLING OUT
Yet when it comes to chilling out, laughter holds centre stage. "Laughter with my kids all the time. I think laughter is incredibly important to your overall health and relaxation," Alba says. Other personal leisure pursuits include the occasional manicure/pedi, or a glass of wine with girlfriends. "A movie is always nice, and reading, which is something I never really get to do that much—it keeps my mind healthy."

The impression Alba gives is that this confident woman knows she sets fashion trends, is aware her activism influences people, knows her responsibility as a parent, and that she is looked upon as more than an actor posing for the cameras.

"I dress for myself, and it's taken me a while to get to this place of confidence," Alba says. "I'm comfortable in my own skin, and I think having perspective on life and the importance of priorities that I didn't have before has made me feel this way."

STRUCTURE VS. SPONTANEITY
This newly found confidence, for a woman who has received industry awards, along with Golden Globe and People's Choice Award nominations, has also enabled Alba to be spontaneous. "I have a lot of structure in my everyday life, so it also allows me to be spontaneous. My career is certainly unplanned."

What's not impulsive are her activist interests, which are many and varied. "I've been blessed in my life, and I feel it is just part of my duty to serve the public in some way," Alba says. "Growing up with loving and open-minded parents has been a definite influence on me. They embrace everyone."

She smiles and recalls that day 25 years ago at Disneyland. "I can still remember my mother saying 'you go baby...that's my girl.' "