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In the closet with

# Melody Gardot

The jet-setting singer leads the fashion pack

Words and styling by Tricia Welch

Melody, 30, is a Grammy-nominated, platinum-selling singer/songwriter whose latest album, *Currency Of Man*, is a mix of jazz, blues and R&B. Born in New Jersey, her career began through music therapy after a horrific car accident that left her with head and spinal injuries. She spends most of her time travelling.

**How would you describe your style?** Whoo-hoo chichi! I'm passionate about my eco jewellery made by friends in Brazil and other sentimental items that I mix with beautifully designed pieces. It's very personal. The "whoo-hoo" is a bit nuts, the "chichi" more chic.

**Which colours and shapes suit you best?** I mostly wear black with occasional contrast and splashes of colour. I love my curves but I like fitted rather than tight clothes.

**What is your favourite fashion era?** Every era has its beautiful things but perhaps the 1950s – picture Sophia Loren in Cannes – when women dressed sensuously and emphasised their curves.

**What are your favourite high-street brands?** I rarely shop in the high street, I'm too busy travelling, but if I have to grab something quickly, it would be Zara.

**Who is your favourite designer?** Lanvin. Alber Elbaz really understands the female body and his designs are so flattering to the female form.

**Do you have a style icon?** I admire originality. Jimi Hendrix was a one-off,

but I like musicians with their own vibe.

**What is your best beauty secret?**

Sleep. Plus I only wear organic cosmetics.

**Are you a hoarder or do you clear out your wardrobe each season?**

I'm definitely not a hoarder. I don't like excess. I spend my life travelling and most of my wardrobe fits into a suitcase.

**Are you a fan of vintage?** Yes, especially at vintage prices. The older generations took care of their clothes and I really empathise with that. I even hand-wash my lingerie.

**How many shoes and handbags do you own?** Not enough to be notable. Ten pairs of shoes and boots, including the ones I only wear on stage, plus five bags, all gifts.

**What do you like to wear to perform in?** Mostly Lanvin: light jackets, stretch pants, fluid dresses. I'm a mover and a shaker and play the guitar and the piano on stage, so I need to be comfortable.

**You wear sunglasses most of the time. Which are your favourites?**

I have photosensitive eyes and wear vintage or styles by Orgreen, made from titanium, which are incredibly light and comfortable. Orgreen are the best for performers as heavy glasses can alter the tone of your voice.

"I spend my life travelling and most of my wardrobe fits into a suitcase"

**You're also a fan of the headscarf** I use silk ones from India. I've got long hair and if I'm touring, doing five or six concerts a week, a scarf is a practical option. It avoids wrecking the hair with styling products and heated appliances and also keeps my ear monitor in place.

**What is the best piece of fashion advice you have ever been given?** Keep it simple.

**Is there an old favourite you turn to in a wardrobe crisis?** I don't have wardrobe crises, but if I don't have the time or inclination to style my hair, I'll wrap it in a scarf.

**How much do you spend on clothes each month?** I don't buy clothes every month. I tend to do a major shop every two to three years when I'm launching a new album and

Melody wears a hand-painted scarf by Franco Ferrari for L'Eclaireur with leggings by Maria Nistri and a black Indian silk headscarf

Melody models a jacket handmade for her in Japan, with a black LGB waistcoat, leggings by Ilaria Nistri, a Pantropic hat from Fedora Primo and Giuseppe Zanotti boots



Clockwise, from above: The musician adores vintage pieces like this fur and silk wrap by Cutuli Cult and black wrap from a vintage store in LA. "The older generations took care of their clothes," she says

A black jacket by Emilio Pucci with Melody's favourite LBD by Lanvin

Melody's leather gloves by Lanvin with a cream and black bag by Bottega Veneta, a black leather jewellery bag, which was gift from a friend, and her new album

Black and gold platform heels by Charlotte Olympia. "Everything is worn until it falls apart or can no longer be reheeled," Melody says

Melody's necklaces from a craft market in Venice, LA, with silver bracelets from India, a gold one by Alexandre Vauthier with an onyx ring by Bottega Veneta



Melody wears a sparkly top from Zara under an Alexander McQueen jacket. Her leggings are by Ilaria Nistri, the hat is from Fedora Primo, LA, her sunnies are vintage, the bangles were a gift and her rings are handmade

Photographed at the Grosvenor Hotel, London ([grosvenorhotellondon.co.uk](http://grosvenorhotellondon.co.uk)).

spend an embarrassing amount, but I may go a year without buying anything. Everything is worn until it falls apart.

**What do you wear when you're not performing or touring?** That's my break time and I survive with a bikini, sarong, sandals and a white T-shirt. I live for months with the tiniest bag.

**What is the most expensive item in your wardrobe?** A cashmere and wool Lanvin coat. It's huge, like a blanket. I'll be wearing it until I'm 90.

**What is your best bargain?** The designer items I bought from a yard sale in Venice, Los Angeles, last year. I stumbled upon it while walking my dog and came away with a pair of unworn \$600 Jimmy Choos for \$50.

**What is the oldest item in your wardrobe?** I don't have old clothes as I wear everything until it falls apart. I have two jackets, one raincoat and my high boots are five years old.

**Who would you like to make your wedding dress?** I'll have lots of honeymoons, but I'm never getting married! I don't care about a piece of paper and I don't need more rings.

**Have you a favourite little black dress?** My Lanvin dress.

**What is the one item of clothing you couldn't live without?** Beautiful lingerie, preferably French or Italian. As long as it's sexy and makes my behind look good. Which is hard.

**What is your favourite piece of jewellery?** A Piaget gold ring with a central chain. It's exquisitely made and I wear it all the time.

**Have you ever made a fashion faux pas?** Once, when the jacket I'd planned to wear to a prestigious awards ceremony in LA was ruined by the hotel dry cleaners. I had nothing else suitable so I wore a tiny Lanvin shawl over an Italian scalloped bra and a Piaget diamond necklace. The focal point should have been the necklace but all you could see were my breasts.

**What item of clothing would you save from a burning house?** I'd grab my dog, Pete, and if time, my Piaget diamond ring. It was a gift when I collaborated with them, creating a version of *La Vie En Rose* by Edith Piaf. 🐾

Melody's album, *Currency Of Man*, is out now on Decca Records.