

colleen paige's

WINTER 2009

# pet home

*Happy Holidays*

Elizabeth TenHouten & Romi

*Colleen's conversation with...*

## *Elizabeth TenHouten*

She's a Beauty *and* a Beauty Expert...  
but Elizabeth's True Beauty Extends Into Her Love of Animals.

**Where did you grow up?**

I am a native Californian. I grew up in Laurel Canyon with 3 or 4 rescued dogs at any given time. It seemed that each occasion we visited "the pound" for a dog to love, we came home with two! I believe that growing up with our pets as part of the family inspired my sensitivity toward animals. It was the root of my animal rights activism.

**Did you have any pets when you were a child? What were they and how old were you when your first pet came into your life?**

My childhood dog that I was most connected to was a Toy Shepherd mix named, Fragile. He was gentle and had kindness in his eyes. My mind is flooded of memories of weekends at the beach where Fragile would splash in the salty ocean with my brother and me. Such playful memories... animals give us such beautiful memories and add so much love to your life.



*Elizabeth and her Persian cat, Romi*





**“I felt a special bond with a Lion, who exuded such love and grace”**

**I always wanted a puppy for Christmas but could only have cats....was there a specific pet you wanted but couldn't have?**

YES! I think all children have fantasy pets that they would want, even if the fantasy is a puppy. Over the years, I had owned dogs, cats, fish, frogs, and birds. So, I dreamt of having a Kangaroo, a Lion, and I probably fantasized about owning a Unicorn, as well! I spent quality time watching the Nature Channel and it fed my wild dreams of creating a jungle in the bamboo forest that made up my backyard in Laurel Canyon.

I actually had an amazing experience at an animal sanctuary where I was able to spend time with some beautiful creatures. I bottle fed a Kangaroo Joey and kissed a 600lb. tiger on the nose! It was wild, quite literally. I felt a special bond with a lion, who exuded such love and grace. I had no fear, only gratitude to be in such close proximity to these magnificent animals.

**Did you aspire at an early age to become a model?**

No. Actually, I was academically driven. I have my bachelor's degree in Philosophy with honors from Loyola Marymount University. Before becoming an author and beauty expert, I aspired to model at the encouragement of a friend in the industry. I loved doing photo shoots and I am grateful for the experience. Modeling was fun, but my true passions are writing, cooking, beauty, and skin-care. I combined these loves of mine together and wrote, *Cooking Well: Beautiful Skin*.

Actually, modeling inspired my writing and guided me to develop my philosophy of beauty. As a model, I was judged solely upon my outer beauty. This incomplete judgment impassioned me to redefine beauty. In my book, *Cooking Well: Beautiful Skin*, I redefine beauty as one's inner, authentic self.



Elizabeth TenHouten continued....

**What sparked the idea behind your new book?**

My inspiration for writing *Cooking Well: Beautiful Skin* was manifold. I love to cook and am a natural cook, intrigued by beautiful ingredients like pomegranates and rainbow chard. I found that as a writer, I could communicate my existential philosophy of existing in a state of "beautiful flux", essentially becoming more beautiful from the inside out. I was inspired to create a unique, beauty cookbook, with antioxidant-rich recipes for glowing skin. All the while, my inspiration for redefining beauty and my love of cooking morphed into this unique beauty book! My book embraces this theory of true, authentic beauty from within.

For me, beauty and health are synonymous. My core interest is skin health, and it was always very obvious to me that there was a direct link between the intake of nutrients and beautiful skin. It seemed that antioxidant drinks were all the rage, but no one knew which antioxidant foods to eat or cook with, other than blueberries. That's why I wrote *Cooking Well: Beautiful Skin*. Antioxidants are chemical compounds that occur naturally in our bodies and in certain foods. They fight free radicals in the environment that wreak havoc on our skin. Our bodies can't produce antioxidants, though. My recipes are infused with antioxidant-rich ingredients, so your skin will glow.

I like to think of it as a beauty cookbook. While it is certainly nutritionally informative, with tons of delicious recipes, I also offer the reader "Beauty Bytes", which are natural, topical beauty treatments, like de-puffing your eyes with warm teabags for pretty peepers!

**When did animal advocacy become an important part of your life?**

I believe that animal advocacy has actually always, deeply been a part of who I am. Compassion and empathy are part of my nature and I have always felt a joyful connection with animals. I appreciate them for the innocent creatures that they are and I feel a moral obligation to strive to protect them and be their voice.



Animal rights activism manifested itself in my life starting with my heart, and then I committed to reaching out; supporting various animal rights charities. Beyond the support, letters, lobbying to Congress and calls to Senators, I cover many charitable events in Celeb Life Magazine, as their Editor-in-Chief, to help raise more awareness. My position grants me the opportunity to bring attention to suffering animals, who cannot ask for help.

**What is your favorite animal charity or are there several and why are they your favorite?**

I had the honor of being a part of IDA (In Defense of Animals)-Africa's "Born to Be Wild" event, where Dr. Sheri Speede spoke of the injustices of the chimpanzees being killed for "bush meat". I sponsor Baati, a sweet chimpanzee at the sanctuary in Cameroon. It's a beautiful haven for these sensitive, intelligent animals.



I also support the **ASPCA** (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) as a proud "guardian" supporter as well as the Humane Society of the United States. I was able to attend this years Genesis Awards produced by the Humane Society of the United States Hollywood Office, which is a wonderful awards event honoring the major news and entertainment media for producing outstanding works in television, film, print, and the arts, that raise public understanding of animal issues. It was a touching night to say the least.

**FARM (Farm Animal Rights Movement)** actually dubbed me a "Farm Hero" in honor of my charity work, so that was very exciting for me. I became familiarized with this charity at the 2009 National Animal Rights Conference, where I won a painting by a monkey named, Andy, at the live auction. It was a great night of inspirational animal activist speakers.

**The Animal Miracle Network** is a beautiful and inspiring organization whose mission is to help orphaned animals find new homes, promote spaying and neutering, and put an end to puppy mills. I believe in and proudly support their mission.







**Do you see yourself adopting any pets in the near future?**

I would love to adopt more pets, however, at the moment, my husband and I are traveling so much it wouldn't be fair to add another animal to our family right now. Romi is a well-adapted traveler (and actually quite enjoys flying), so she fits into our currently lifestyle perfectly and joins us in all of our travels.

Adding an animal to your family is a decision that should be thought out in detail before hand. Pets can add so much to someone's life, but at the same time they are a huge responsibility and require just as much attention and care a child would. So many people act on impulse and bring home a pet before they are ready for the time and monetary commitment required to properly care for these living creatures and far too often these cases end at the animal's expense.

After the movie, Beverly Hills Chihuahua, there was a massive influx in the amount of Chihuahuas showing up in shelters, because people went out and bought these puppies on impulse, only to decide later they weren't ready for the responsibility. It is selfish and not fair to the animal to adopt before being truly ready or capable of providing your pet with the life they deserve.

So though I see myself with more pets in the future, until my husband and my lifestyle allows for the adoption of another pet, Romi will remain an only child.

**If you could express to the world your feelings about adopting a pet vs. buying from a pet store, what would it be?**

It is beyond feelings. Frankly, it is a moral issue and a matter of education. Buying your pet from a pet store is perpetuating the business of forced breeding and despicable living conditions that these innocent animals are subjected to. They live an unhygienic, miserable life without attention; without mercy. Meanwhile, there is an overpopulation crisis in the shelters, which can be cured by spaying/neutering and the boycotting of store-bought pets.

I went to a wonderful shelter event by the Found Animals Foundation (FAF) where over 70 dogs and cats found homes. The philosophy of the FAF is to fund research for the pursuit of non-surgical sterilization technologies. I think it is a brilliant idea. Avoidance of suffering is a basic human need and it ought to be extended to animals and we can be their voice. ❤️