



# the comeback girl

BY ALISON PRATO  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES WHITE

Following a bad ankle injury and very public breakup, Olympic gold medalist Lindsey Vonn is stronger than ever. This is how she powered through—and what she's gunning for now.



"You guys, did you hear that somebody was murdered in the basement here?" Lindsey Vonn asks her cover shoot glam squad, who are gathered in the kitchen of California's famous Sowden House, the rumored site of the unsolved 1947 murder of Elizabeth Short, aka the Black Dahlia.

Fortunately, Lindsey—the four-time World Cup champion and Olympic gold medal-winning skier—is bringing some positive energy to the alleged crime scene. She is in a good place: Her recent ankle injury (more on that later) is fully healed, she just took a much-needed girls' vacation, and she's been training her butt off—with the 2018 Winter Olympics, in South Korea, firmly in sight.

A competitive skier by the age of 10, Lindsey is used to growing up in the spotlight. But recently, the 31-year-old has had to endure a new level of public scrutiny, thanks to a nearly three-year romance with pro golfer Tiger Woods that ended in May 2015. While the tabloids speculate about her love life, she chooses to focus on her actual passion: The Lindsey Vonn Foundation, which she launched this year to help empower girls. Turns out, girl power is very much on her mind these days.

**You've been spending more time on the red carpet. Do you feel comfortable out there?**

At first it's kind of awkward standing there while people take pictures of you; now it's fun—although I definitely don't fit in on the red carpet.

**What do you mean?**

I'm, like, twice the size of anyone, in both height and weight! I'm five-foot-ten, but I'm definitely quite a bit heavier than everyone else. I feel like the odd man out sometimes, but that's even more reason to be confident, to show girls that you don't have to be a size 2

to be beautiful. Any size is beautiful as long as you're confident in yourself.

**You've worked hard at putting out that message, especially with your foundation.**

I'm really proud of it. I've always wanted to start my own foundation, but with skiing I didn't think I had the time to do both. I don't ever want to do something and not put all my energy into it. But when I got hurt the second time, it was honestly a blessing in disguise because it gave me the opportunity. We've got scholarships, camps. The main goal is to teach young girls about self-esteem and teamwork.

**Have you ever experienced body image issues?**

It's kind of funny because before I was 17, I was incredibly skinny. I was made fun of and called "chicken" and "chicken wings"—I was super tall and probably weighed 30 pounds less than I do now. Then I gained weight because my metabolism slowed down, and I kind of was on the other end of the spectrum. I'm normal-size, but when I started to do well and do events and photo shoots, I felt like I was too big.

**Any advice for women reading this who might be having body image issues?**

The most important thing is to eat healthy. When I'm eating really clean and splurge on something really sugary, I feel like I'm gonna vomit. So eat what your body wants, and try to be as active as you can. Get into

a routine, and the more you can stick to that routine, the easier it'll be to stay fit and healthy.

**Do you believe in the revenge or breakup body? Because you look better than ever.**

Thanks. I think it's just given me more time to spend on myself. That's what happens with most breakups: You really look at yourself and figure out what makes you happy, and you also have a lot more free time. I'm focusing on my job—my skiing—and I've been working really hard. I got a new nutritionist, and I'm just doing everything I can to be in shape for this season. And it's paying off.

**Recently, there was a gossip item about a new guy you were supposedly dating. How does it feel when your personal life is splashed across the tabloids?**

It's almost comical because it's not even my life. I feel like people just write whatever they want, and it's funny—even some of my friends who I haven't seen in a while are like, "Oh my God, are you dating so-and-so?" And I'm like, "No! Are you kidding? I would've called you!" Everyone assumes that it's fact, and it's not, so I just have to laugh. I mean, if you take all that stuff seriously, then you'll drive yourself crazy. So I don't take it seriously. At all.

**Like Beyoncé, do you have a Sasha Fierce?**

I don't—it's not that extreme. [Laughs] But I definitely have more confidence when I'm on the red carpet and in photo

shoots because normally I'm a pretty low-key, shy person.

**Are you? You don't seem shy.**

Yeah, I'm kind of talkative, but with guys I'm shy. I'm never the person to put myself out there.

**Is there anything you want to clear up, rumor-wise?**

I'm single, and I probably will be for a while. I think this is just a good time for me to focus on myself. I'm not ready to have a family yet, but I will be at some point.

**So you want to have kids?**

I definitely do. I love kids. I love working with them. But right now I'm gonna focus on me.

**You've dealt with a lot of injuries. What's your recovery process like?**

I'm a planner, so when I get injured, I need a plan and a timeline. We map out the next however many months, weeks and days, figure out what needs to be done, and then I get to work right away. I need the light at the end of the tunnel. I need to say, "In this many weeks, I'm gonna be back skiing." Having goals and mini goals gets me through.

**Have you always been very goal-oriented?**

Always, since I was a kid. I wanted to make the 2002

Olympics in Salt Lake, and I was 17 when I made it. My dad and I had made a five-year plan when I was 12.

**Around that same time, your family moved from Minnesota to Vail so you could train competitively. Your siblings had to leave their friends. That's a lot of pressure.**

It was a lot of pressure. The realization that your family basically gave up their lives to move to Colorado so you could follow your dreams was really intense. I always felt as though eventually I'd be in the Olympics and that I would win the Olympics. But I was a kid, so it

was kind of like a childish dream. But then when it hit me that my family had given up so much, failure was not an option for me.

**We know from your recent Instagram posts that even when you're on vacation with your friends, you're still hitting the workouts hard.**

I was planning on taking that whole week pretty easy, but then I broke my ankle, so I couldn't take a week off because I wasn't going to be able to come back and train really hard, so I was like, "Great, I have to work out on my vacation." But if I have to work on vacation, I'm gonna at least do it by the pool!

**Why are girlfriend trips so important to you?**

Because I travel so much, and I never get to see my friends. All of my friends throughout my whole life come together, and we've become this awesome group of women. It's my squad. I mean, it's not like I have a huge entourage. Unfortunately, I'm not T-Swift. [Laughs] I have, like, seven friends. I don't have to wear makeup. I don't have to be someone else. We could literally not say a single word to each other all day and just listen to music and have margaritas, and we would all be perfectly content.

"Any size is beautiful as long as you're confident in yourself."

3.1 Phillip Lim gown; 31philliplim.com.



# Lindsey's Lower body blaster

Why not train like an Olympian? Lindsey is sharing her secrets. These moves tone and trim everything from your core to the floor. Do this series three or four times a week, and a better bottom half awaits.

1

## Single-Leg Box Squat

► Stand on right leg in front of a plyo box (or bench), with toes of left foot resting on box and arms at sides, an 8-pound dumbbell in each hand (A). Lower body down until right leg forms a 90-degree angle (B). Return to "A." Do 10 to 12 reps, then switch legs and repeat.



2

## Single-Leg Lift

► Start on hands and knees, with abs tight (A). Squeeze butt as you lift left leg up to form a 90-degree angle (B). Return to start. Do 10 to 12 reps, then switch legs and repeat.



3

## Single-Leg Hamstring Curl

► Lie faceup with arms at sides, left heel on a Swiss ball and right leg straight up, foot flexed (A). Press hips up as you bend left knee to pull ball in toward you (B). Keeping hips up, straighten leg to roll ball back out. Work up to 12 reps. Switch legs; repeat.



4

## Squats

► Stand with feet hip-width apart and hands clasped in front of you at chin level (A). Push hips back as you lower down (B). Push through heels to return to start. Repeat 10 to 12 times.



5

## Single-Leg Romanian Deadlift

► Stand with right foot in front of left, an 8-pound dumbbell in each hand. Shift weight forward onto right leg so that only toes of left foot are on the floor (A). Hinge forward, lowering torso until parallel to the floor (B). Reverse motion to return to "A." Do 10 to 12 reps; switch legs and repeat.



6

## Single-Leg Hip-Ups

► Rest your back on a Swiss ball, with right foot on the floor and left foot extended straight out, foot flexed (A). Lift hips so that body forms a straight line from chest to foot (B). Lower back to "A." Do 10 to 12 reps, then switch legs and repeat.



7

## Single-Leg Step-Ups

► Stand facing a plyo box (or bench), with arms at sides and an 8-pound dumbbell in each hand. Place right foot on box (A). Press through right heel to lift to standing, bringing left leg up to a 90-degree angle (B). Reverse motion back to "A." Repeat 10 to 12 times, then switch legs.



### HEALTH-BODY BIBLE:

This spring, Lindsey is releasing her first book, *Strong Is the New Beautiful*, "a menu of foods you can eat and workouts you can do. You pick what works for you."

Styling by KAREN SHAPIRO

Hair by CHARLES BAKER STRAHAN for Herbal Essences at Crosby Carter Management

Makeup by MAI QUYNH for Lancôme at Starworks Artists

Manicure by NETTIE DAVIS

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## Lindsey fills in the blanks

The ski star puts herself on the line.

I would try anything once.

Weirdest thing I ever ate was cow tongue. "It was accidental, and it was disgusting."

The movie of my life would star Jessica Biel. "She's ripped."

My go-to food indulgence is dark chocolate acai berries. "They're addicting."

Last live concert I saw was Taylor Swift. "I think I went deaf from all the screaming little girls."

Favorite jeans are Paige. "I have long legs and a big butt, so it's actually kind of hard to find good ones."

My can't-live-without beauty product is eyeliner. "I always wear the Bobbi Brown long-wear. It's in a jar, and you paint it on with a brush. It stays on forever."

I keep my Olympic medals in a safe in my house. "I've only taken them out once since the Olympics, and that was for a photo shoot with the kids for my foundation."

"I have a hard time being patient and letting things heal."

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