

# Talk About the Passion

## International Television Host & City Explorer Celebrates Life as an Evolving Adventure

By Mark Rifkin  
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"It's delicious. I'm sold," Pamela Peeters proclaims on her birthday as she samples a passion-fruit bubble tea at Java n Jazz near Union Square. At the bottom of the cup are dozens of black tapioca pearls. Peeters treats even this minor event as yet another exciting adventure in her busy existence.

"I see every day as a new life, where you allow yourself to be a gift to other people while also allowing those gifts to come to [you]. Like, for example, having this new discovery," she says, taking another sip from the oversized straw. "This is an exploration for me. It's about discovering small, little things, exotic people, like the man out there with his hat on," she adds, looking out at Broadway. "It's amazing. It's the freedom of being unique."

Peeters should know about being unique. The striking young woman with long, dark hair and sparkling, penetrating hazel eyes — which constantly take in everything around her — is a television host, a writer, an environmentalist, a business consultant, an educator, and an actress. She's also a vegetarian, a yoga enthusiast, a world traveler, a pacifist, and a self-described "city explorer of urban ecology, community, and business news" who was born in Antwerp, lived in Holland, studied economics in Brussels, worked in India, speaks fluent French, English, and German, and now lives in the city.

Every other Monday night at 9:30, hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers tune in to *Our Planet* on Manhattan Neighborhood Network, where Peeters has been interviewing such famous celebrities and world leaders as UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Susan Sarandon, Hillary Clinton, and Richard Gere since Oct. 1, 2001.

"In every single interview, I try to tuck in those three pillars: social, environmental, and economic," Peeters points out.

One of her favorite guests was Stephen J. Cannell, the television producer (*The Rockford Files*, *The A-Team*) who is now a successful novelist.

"That interview for me was a breakthrough because I learned so much about the man," Peeters remembers. "He was dyslexic. But with amazing strength, he persevered. He worked so hard, not taking no for an answer, believing in himself, and that is exactly what I want to show in my TV program. If you really know your deeper core, your inner desires, that's where your passion is, that's where your future lies, that's where your hidden secrets are."

The very passionate Peeters lives life

in the fast lane, attending an art opening at the Frick one day, then jetting off to Europe the next.

"It's fantastic. 'Formula One races are happening in Monaco. Do you want to come?' 'Sure.' The Cannes Film Festival — you have to be there."

One of her pet projects is what she calls "sustainable development."

"Sustainable development, to me, is a path of growth for our planet," she says. "It's preserving all the knowledge and traditions of the past while discovering them today in a very virtual, exciting way, and it's



Passionate Peeters: Gallivanting globetrotter

also about making sure that the future will still be bright."

Peeters is also working on a book, *New Citizenship*, which will be published later this year.

"The book is actually a reflection of my career, my life," she notes. "Whatever I do, there is always a link to the environment, always a link to sustainable development. What I show in the book is just very practical examples of what I learned, what I contributed to our system, and what the system gave to me."

Her DVD is still in the concept phase. "It's fashion, it's food, it's film, it's science — it's all about trends, it's all about the 21st century, it's all about creative people who have made breakthroughs in their fields," Peeters says.

Most of all, Peeters believes in always trying "something new and daring." To celebrate her birthday, she was treating herself to a carriage ride through Central Park later that day. "I've never done that," she said with a wide smile.

"Life is a celebration," she added. "It's just my nature." ■

*Our Planet* next airs on April 14 on channel 67 on Time Warner, 110 on RCN (mnn.org, our-planet.org). For more information on Pamela Peeters, log on to pamelapeeters.net.

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