

Spin SYNC

The official DJ for international celebrities, Sassy Pandez talks about Bollywood, opening her own bar and naming a cocktail after her

JASKIRAN KAPOOR

WHEN international celebrities such as Beyonce, Jay Z, Nelly, Eminem, Lil Kim, Will Smith, Jamie Foxx and Fat Joe are in a mood to groove, they turn to Sassy Pandez. The official DJ for a host of international celebrities, the 29-year-old who is constantly shuttling across the globe — from Dubai to England, Egypt, US and India — is a celeb in the music circuit and an idol for those who have an ear for hip-hop and R&B, an unusual choice, especially when the world is dancing to house and electronica. “People told me I’ll never make it with this music, but I did,” says Pandez, who now has five mix CDs to her credit. Referred to as the “sexiest DJ in the world” by

Maxim magazine, Pandez also featured in the campaign Grammy award-winner Nelly ran for his new fragrance, Apple Bottom.

In Chandigarh for a gig at Kava restaurant and lounge, on Saturday night, Pandez seemed to have taken an instant liking to the city. “I’ve been to Mumbai and Delhi, but Chandigarh is perfect. It is so green and organised,” she says, sharing her itinerary that includes a visit to the Rock Garden, temples and watching movies. “I love Bollywood films, and if anyone is listening, I want to be in one,” she says, smitten by the dance and drama. Seated on a sofa and flaunting dark sunglasses, Pandez explains, “Deejays have bad under-eye circles, and with all the record scratching, the worst possible hands.” But the



SUMIT MALHOTRA

love for her job keeps her going. “I was seven when I scratched my first record,” she recalls. “I was never good at anything and had no clue what to do with my life, till I was called in by my cousin, Radamas, to babysit his dog,” she adds. That is when she discovered her talent. An equally famous DJ, who is also the official DJ for American rapper P Diddy, Radamas let Pandez play around with his turntables and soon she was playing at parties.

However, more than a decade ago, it wasn’t easy mixing and practising the religion of ‘turntablism’ in a man’s world. Looking good also went against Pandez. “Every time I’d get up to play on the console, the guys would take the needles off the deck, or worse, unplug the deck altogether,” she says. “To avoid trouble, I would enter the club with my hood on, wearing loose track pants and a baseball cap,” adds Pandez, talking about her

“teenage tomboy days”, when she started deejaying professionally in Miami, US. It was only when ace boxer, Lennox Lewis spotted her in the early ’90s and made her an official DJ for his parties that Pandez shot to limelight.

But life as a deejay is not easy. Pandez is always flying, is jet-lagged and lives out of the suitcase. “I am already missing my dogs,” says the vegan and animal lover, who changed her lifestyle in order to increase the number of years she can be a deejay. “I’m a pretty boring person, as I don’t drink, party or do drugs or any crazy stuff. On the contrary, I am quite domesticated, for I love to cook, be with my family, dogs, eat and sleep,” she laughs. Once she is back in London, she intends to work on her next CD and also open her own club, a VIP bar that only plays hip-hop, R&B and reggaeton seven days a week, and has a cocktail named after her, Sassy.