

Glamazons UNITE

When **Carmen Jenner** met the Real Housewives of Melbourne right here in Perth she was swept away by their charm and class (no, really).

IN A HAZE of Dior, Louis Vuitton, Scanlon and Theodore, Michael Kors and Jimmy Choo, in breeze the Real Housewives of Melbourne.

Well, at least three of them. Pettifleur Berenger, Chyka Keebaugh and Jackie Gillies exude polished glamour from head to toe. Our TV screens simply don't portray just how beautiful and classy these ladies are inside and out.

It's a pleasant surprise given the show hones in on their extravagant lifestyles peppered with scandal, gossip and arguments. I'm assured the drama is real, and the show is unscripted, but when the cameras aren't rolling, like many women, their success is attributed to incredibly hard work and the loving support of their families.

Both Chyka and Jackie proudly declare their husbands are their rocks while Pettifleur has other ideas.

"I don't feel as supported as I much as I would like, but that's my fault as I give the impression I don't need it," she says.

A hugely successful property developer and author, Pettifleur's petite frame and warmth belies the feistiness which lays within. She believes the message the show sends is positive.

"It highlights women as empowering, dynamic and inspiring. But with so many strong personalities thrown into the public eye, of course, there's going to be clashes."

The routine of a "Real Housewife" compared to your average one isn't as different as you would think, and Chyka offers: "Every day is different and includes the gym, running our business, friends, blogging and sometimes we're shooting the show, so we have hair and make-up.

"Work often takes me out five nights of the week. And then on top of that are the usual family demands."

Chyka runs The Big Group, one of



Australia's largest catering and event management companies, with her husband Bruce. She admits she's had some struggles working on the show which has taken her away from the family business.

"It was an adjustment excluding Bruce from certain elements of my life for the first time." She cringes when he's asked to move out of the way for photos.

Professional psychic and co-owner of beverage company La Mascara, Jackie isn't exactly a stranger to the limelight given she's married to Silverchair drummer Ben Gillies – the photographers and fans often make a beeline for Ben when they're out together. She offers the following advice when becoming involved in a reality TV-show.

LADIES WHO LUNCH The Real Housewives of Melbourne have returned for a brand new series in all their glamorous glory.

"Do it! But be honest and authentic." Pettifleur chips in: "Don't overthink it and be honest about the reason you're doing it. And get support. Know who you are beforehand."

There's no doubt putting your life out there in the public arena takes guts. And doing so while looking fabulous, is so impressive I'm compelled to ask about their beauty regime. The following tips are spouted out in unison: a good breakfast, 3x15 squats every morning, the gym, body brush for cellulite, Bio Oil, Vitamin C serum, sunscreen, steam, sauna, hair treatments, laser surgery for freckles, cleanse, tone and moisturise.

It's clearly working, without a whiff of

Botox either.

And suddenly our time is up. Just as they appeared in a cloud of glitziness, they seemingly vaporise into their chariot and are whisked off to the airport for the next onslaught of publicity; and questions they'll no doubt answer as graciously as they've answered mine.

Pettifleur was right – the show does send a strong message. Stylists, flashy houses and private jets aside, never underestimate the power of a driven woman or at least the Real Housewives of Melbourne.

The Real Housewives of Melbourne Season Three screens every Sunday at 8.30pm on Foxtel's Arena. PL