

Irene Pink FIT, FABULOUS AND FUNNY

Having lost 30kg, the Kiwi comedian can see the humour in her weight-loss battle

In the past, comedian Irene Pink's routines have been full of jokes about her weight. Tipping the scales at 120kg, she had plenty to draw on.

But, since joining a gym and taking control of her diet, the Kiwi funny woman has shed a huge 30kg, forcing her to reshape her comedic material, too.

'I had an opening line where I say, "I'm the Pacific Island's princess, even though it makes me sound like a cruise ship,"' the 38-year-old says. 'What I found was the audience started to not laugh as much. Even though I'm not skinny, people don't buy the fact that I'm talking about being really overweight.'

Irene - who reflects on weight loss in her solo show entitled *Metamorphosis*, part of the NZ International Comedy Festival - says moving home from London in 2005 was the catalyst for her drastic image change.

'I really like clothes, and in London you can buy plus-sized clothes for Africa,' Irene says. 'But coming back here, everything is either high-end expensive or low-end Kmart, and I couldn't get anything in the middle. It sounds really shallow, but I couldn't be bothered wearing clothes I didn't like anymore.'

In August 2008, Irene began her lifestyle transformation, enlisting trainer Marcus Steward at VO2 Gym in Ellerslie to help keep her on the right track.

'Basically, you have to expend more energy than you put in your body,' she explains. 'Marcus put me on the body builder-type plan, which is eating small meals often. I do tend to eat a little bit like a woodland creature now - a lot of fruit and nuts.'

Irene marvels at her feeling of wellbeing, a result of the daily workouts, including two 'torturous' weekly sessions with Marcus.



'Exercising is just a habit now,' Irene says. 'I wouldn't say I enjoy it but I enjoy how I feel. I find it fascinating that I can now run 3.5km a day.'

With exercise part of her life, Irene has her sights set on getting into size-14 clothes.

'I could stop now and say, "That's a good weight," but I want to get to a point where my weight is not an issue,' Irene explains, emphasising that slimming down is not a shortcut to self-fulfilment.

'I don't want to be one of those people who comes across as saying, "If you lose weight, suddenly your life is better."'

Life is good no matter what your size, you should have a laugh at everything.' ❦

By Trudie McConnochie

For more information on the show, and for your chance to see Irene on stage, see page 29.

THIS WEEK'S DON'T-MISS TV



SNOWDON AND MARGARET: INSIDE A ROYAL MARRIAGE,
SATURDAY APRIL 24,
7.30PM, PRIME

This documentary focuses on the failed marriage of '60s glamour couple Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon - but who was to blame?



SHORTLAND STREET,
WEEKNIGHTS 7PM, TV2

This week, Brooke Freeman resorts to some dirty tricks when she realises TK might just be slipping through her grasping fingers. She decides to take matters into her own hands, with some rather shocking results.



CORONATION STREET

TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS,
7.30PM, TV ONE

It's New Year's Eve on the street, but Becky is not in the party mood because Steve is planning a trip to Ireland with Michelle. However, she does have Jason pursuing her like a rather sad lost puppy.



THE COMEDY GALA 2010

WEDNESDAY APRIL 28, TV3
Get ready to laugh your heart out as the best national and international funny acts come direct to your living room. Comedians taking the microphone include Wilson Dixon, Dai Henwood, Jeremy Corbett and Ewen Gilmour.



KING KONG,

FRIDAY APRIL 30, 8.30PM,
SKY MOVIES GREATS
Kiwi director extraordinaire Peter Jackson puts his stamp on the iconic story of the gigantic ape, captured in the wilds and brought to civilisation. Starring Naomi Watts and Jack Black.