

Raising the Bar

She's been famous in her native Israel since she started modelling at eight months old. But with a burgeoning film career and Leonardo DiCaprio on her arm, Bar Refaeli's star is on the rise.

Catch her if you can, says **Lydia Slater**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **NICKY EMMERSON**
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Israel is a country in which Nobel prize-winners are ten a penny, but it's distinctly short on international glamourpusses. Which is why the bronzed and beautiful 22-year-old model Bar Refaeli has found herself the country's national darling. So when the ES team arrives in Tel Aviv, even the granite-featured Customs officials get excited when they hear who we're photographing. Bar herself, casually clad in Citizens of Humanity jeans and T-shirt, and sprawled leggily on a chair in her favourite hairdressing salon, appears to find all the fuss a bit wearisome. 'It can get a bit annoying, when you have to go out wearing a hat, but I generally try to avoid places where I know the paparazzi are going to be,' she says. That is harder, however, when they come to you, but fortunately for Bar, she has the sort of natural, beach-goddess looks that don't mind being caught unawares and unmanicured.

The embodiment of the Girl from Ipanema, she's appeared in campaigns for Victoria's Secret and Ralph Lauren. She was the first Israeli to make the cover of the iconic *Sports Illustrated* magazine and, over here, has just been made the new face of Accessorize. She's also dipped an elegant toe into film - her first movie, *Session*, in which she stars with *Traffic*'s Steven Bauer, is out this year.

In fact, so in demand is she that she barely spent eight weeks at home last year. 'I'm jet-lagged almost all the

