



FAMILY GIRL: Violet-Anne insists her marriage is a partnership of equals but wishes she'd stayed in education longer



Proud to be a gypsy



Fat Gypsy Weddings bride Violet-Anne is proud of her roots, and wants everyone to know it.

let, whose wedding was filmed for the hit show, has had a backlash since it aired, with abuse hurled at her and her gypsies thrown at her in the street.

Violet admits her life could be easier if she wasn't a gypsy but says she's proud of where she comes from and never wants to change. "I'm a gypsy so what I think and say doesn't count," says Violet. "I like being a gypsy. I'm proud to be a gypsy. I don't binge-drink, I don't sleep around and I never have. My life is everything to us and even though we live far apart we see each other every week."

Violet says she's lived her life the right way. Since the show's been on I've been a bit of a target, had things thrown at me and been called a gypsy. But I'll take all that because I have to. I won't change my name."

Violet, 23, is down-to-earth. She describes herself as a tomboy and is far removed from the tanned girls on the show with their plastered make-up and fake nails.

Fury
Big Fat Gypsy Wedding has been such a hit for Channel 5 that they are already repeating it and have plans for another series following gypsy life. While it's got the whole nation talking, gypsies themselves are furious at how

by **NADINE LINGE**

Violet led a traditional gypsy life as a child, travelling with her family and leaving school at 14. Obviously bright, she admits she wishes she'd stayed in education to give herself more opportunities. "When I was young I lived with all my family together," she says. "We'd travel around, going out in a horse-drawn wagon collecting pieces of scrap for my dad. He'd go and weigh them in

● Pictures: **JEANY SAVAGE**
● Styling: **MARIE MCCAVER**
● Hair and make-up: **STEVEN SHANDER**



recently making chandeliers to go on sale in Harrods. "I loved that! Who would ever have thought a gypsy could work for Harrods?" "But I do regret not staying in school, going to college and doing something with my life. I should have had more education and learnt more." Violet knew her husband Larry, 21, through the traveller community and they were together three years before they

with the men or we'll go out together." Like most gypsies, Violet has faced prejudice, even on her own hen night. She says: "We went to a pub in Coalville, Leicester, and they told us it would be open until 4am so we could have some drinks and dancing. "I wasn't sure how many people would turn up, but it ended up being 120. We were really packed in tightly, then at 10pm

been a murder. But we were just a group of women on a hen night. "As soon as people find out you're a gypsy, they write you off. My boss at the Travelodge where I worked when I filmed the show said to me that if he'd known I was a gypsy he would never have employed me. "But at the Travelodge, I was a gypsy working with money and people's credit card details. Who would have thought that

has worked with Riverdance's Michael Flatley. "Everyone's got their own taste and not everyone has a huge dress," she says. "Our tradition is just a white dress. If you come into the church you have your head covered up. If you're a virgin you wear white and if you're not, you don't wear white. "Most brides are virgins. That's very important to us. "My cake was amazing. It was

up the first time you have a row." Gypsies are often branded thieves and scroungers. Violet insists that's not the case. "I've worked since I was 14," she says. "People ask where we've got the money to hold these big weddings, but most girls save for their dress. And anything you can make yourself, you do. I bought balloons in the pound shop. "When you're a gypsy, the

