

THIS COUNTRY CROONER FROM ALBEMARLE, NC IS THE GENUINE ARTICLE



# Being Kellie Pickler

Kellie Pickler has been a local favorite since she auditioned for American Idol in 2005. 'Pick Pickler' was her mantra as she wooed viewers to vote her through to the next round. Her talent, wit, and guilelessness won fan's hearts and a sixth place finish in the competition. Now 23 years old, Pickler lives in Nashville, is a successful BNA Records recording artist, and has two best-selling albums under her belt.

By Kristy Stevenson

Raised by her grandparents, she has become more worldly, experienced, and educated from her travels. "I've changed a lot since Idol," Pickler says, "I have a better understanding of who I am, and I've grown up a lot." Her confidence showed during a performance at the 2009 NC State Fair where she played to a sold out crowd. "You just want to make that show the best ever because you want to make everybody proud. It's fascinating to look out in the crowd and see people you went to school with or worked with – it's neat to see that support and love from your town." Pickler's 2007 show at Dorton Arena also sold out, but she is emotional about playing at home. These are the shows that make her nervous, as she doesn't want to disappoint.

Far from it, Pickler has earned three CMT Music Awards, two ASCAP awards, participated in two USO Tours, and both of her albums debuted at #1 on the country charts and Top Ten overall in Billboard (a feat equaled by only six other females in country music history). Despite her ability to relate to an audience and the energy she devotes to charity, Pickler is not comfortable with the term 'role model' and just tries to be the best person she can. "At the end of the day, I'm still Kellie from Albemarle."

So what does she look forward to whenever she returns to NC? "There were a lot of firsts for me back home, there's history there, and lots of memories. I always stay with what I call my adoptive family, and they get me stuff from the Sweet Shop ... the best cream horns and desserts...

they make it the way I like it!" Pickler also enjoys going with friends for Mexican chaser dip and margaritas. Still a Small Town Girl, she always visits her grandmother's grave and likes to just get in her car and drive around to see all the places she used to go.

### *Kellie's Style*

**Favorite shoe:** Christian Louboutin and Alexander McQueen

**Favorite article of clothing:** Anything from lululemon athletica

**Favorite color:** Red (like her "Red High Heels")

**Favorite nightstand item:** Journal

**Favorite makeup:** MAC Cosmetics

**Must-have beauty product:** Mascara

**Must-have item in her purse:** Kellie likes to always have something on her lips.

**Beauty regimen:** No meat, lots of water, no tanning, microdermabrasion and always cleans her face before bed at night

Pickler will continue on the Fearless Tour with Taylor Swift in 2010, returning to Raleigh for an RBC Center show on May 1. When asked whether she prefers a big arena production to being on her own in more intimate settings, she says she likes to switch it up. "You've got some people who feel like they need the smoke and mirrors and the bells and whistles, and then you've got some people who just want to get up there and sing a song. For me it's all about the fans and embracing country music. I can do that anywhere – whether it's in front of 20,000 people or 20 people."