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“We had a very diverse upbringing among many different people and cultures,” she remembers, “We also studied at international schools and spoke different languages. I was exposed to the arts at a very young age, music and dancing in particular, which were quite common at my home.”

Dina grew up in the UAE as part of a small Eritrean community that met regularly. “ My parents made sure that we knew of our heritage” she explains, “ They were very passionate about Eritrea”.

Her experience of visiting Eritrea for the first in 1993 at the age of 15 is similar to that of many Eritreans raised abroad who had only seen it in photos and videos.

“I was so proud to be a part of such a wonderful place. It was everything my parents had told me about. I was so happy to be around my own people and to find that my siblings and I weren’t the only ones who were raised elsewhere.”

After studying for her A levels in London for two years, which she counts as among the best years in her life, she eventually made her way to America, which has been her home for the last twelve years.

Dina’s love for fashion started from her young age. “I always loved clothes and models, thanks to my father. He was our personal stylist at home and I remember visiting gorgeous boutiques where he’d pull out all the clothes in front of me, showing me the details on them and how great every thing was made.”

Although she did some small scale modeling in UAE and UK, which she decided was not for her, it was a while before she reignited her love of fashion and it certainly was not the most obvious choice of career for her.

