

Paul Anka

The legendary Canadian crooner gets candid about doing it his way with family by his side
By Suzanne Wintrob

Almost 70 years after hitting the big time with his number one song “Diana” and becoming one of the world’s most popular entertainers, Paul Anka shows no signs of slowing down. At 82, the grandfather of nine is looking better than ever on his *Seven Decades* tour, which rolls into Fallsview Casino Resort in Niagara Falls, Ont., on Nov. 3. At the same time, he’s working on a documentary of his life, preparing to host a podcast in January and setting his sights on bringing his story to Broadway.

“I’m very careful with what I eat,” the Ottawa native says of the secret to his longevity, citing celery juice, ginger and fish as staples. “And I fast once a week, sometimes twice. I exercise and stay flexible. The rest is in the hands of the gods!”

Lately, the “Put Your Head on My Shoulder” crooner has been feeling “like a kid again” as teenagers stop him on the street for autographs since discovering his music on TikTok and *The Masked Singer*. Here, Paul opens up to *Hello! Canada* about his six children, new love and famous son-in-law.

ODE TO OTTAWA

I’m from the west end of the city. I had a good upbringing, which I really appreciate and am humbled by because it got me ready for this crazy business I’ve been in all these years. I remember ice-skating, the Kiwanis Club. I was a hockey guy all my life and helped bring the Ottawa Senators to the city.

THE WRITE STUFF

I was destined to be a journalist. I wrote stories in high school, so my dad thought I had a future in it. I typed 70 words per minute in a class of 70 girls. But I hated shorthand.



I was thrown out of shorthand class and switched to music class!

MIKE’S MENTOR

Michael Bublé was brought to my attention [by David Foster] as a fellow Canadian. He flew down and met me in a Las Vegas ballroom. He was a nice fellow, and we sat down and he played piano. I said, “You’ve got something!” So I took him to L.A. and [helped him produce] his first album. I was thrilled. Whenever he needs me to talk things out, we do. And he’s raising a nice family.



FOREVER FRIEND

I go way back with Celine Dion and her husband, René, may he rest in peace. She’s not well. She’s a great talent, and my heart hurts for her very, very much.

DOTING ‘DAD MOM’

I had a lot of fun with a great woman [his first wife, model Anne de Zogheb], who helped me raise five amazing women. They’re now scattered all over the world. Then I was blessed with my son, Ethan. I’ve been a



“dad mom” to him for years. I have full custody. He’s 18 now and we play pickleball and tennis together. We travel everywhere together. He’ll be with me the whole tour.

FATHER OF THE BRIDE

I love my son-in-law [actor] Jason Bateman, above, with Paul and his family]. Foremost, he’s a good husband to my daughter Amanda. He’s a great daddy. He’s not a Hollywood guy. He stays home, he loves baseball and his friends, he’s out there golfing. He’s so easy to sit and talk with – just a lovable guy.



FAN FAVOURITE

On recent tours, women have been throwing support stockings onstage. [Laughs] I’m joking. They still throw keys. You get a bra here and there... With this TikTok thing, they run onstage and are holding up albums to sign. It’s a whole new generation.

LADY LOVE

I have the greatest lady in my life right now. Her name is Michele Nigro, a nice Italian girl from Newport Beach [above, in pink]. I’ve known her for about six years, and we’ve been very serious for about four. She’s a wonderful, giving person with a big heart.

STORY OF MY LIFE

Tom Cruise could play me in my 50s. He’s a great actor and an Ottawa boy [Tom lived in Canada’s capital from 1971 to 1974 while his dad worked for the Canadian Armed Forces]. Who would play the younger me? Maybe Bruno Mars! **H**

