

Pure as the Earth

by Aimi Hautau



I'm always on the lookout for gorgeous fabrics that, although purchased for my clients, often end up in my own wardrobe. It was while shopping at Tanglin Mall that I came across Pure Earth.

Chatting with husband-and-wife team Rashmi and Atul Gogna, I discovered that they moved to Singapore five years ago. Rashmi is a textile designer with fifteen years' experience in the region, and Atul is the business brain of the partnership. In addition to a number of family members who are involved in all aspects of the business, they have a staff of ten.

FASHION DISCOVERY

Rashmi and Atul say that they appreciate the ease of doing business in the region, but also feel that discerning Singaporeans love Rashmi's designs and welcome the high quality of her products. She has a keen eye for fashion trends, and her talent was recognised in 2006 when she was presented with the "Spirit of Enterprise" award and later featured in the 2007 Singapore Fashion Week. Her collection ranges from cool cotton tops for tropical daywear, to superbly crafted silk evening dresses.

"Pure Earth is a fashion label of ethnic chic and flair designed for the sophisticated, confident woman who wishes to express her individuality," says Rashmi. "The range is produced in India, and a great deal of love goes into each garment. Fine handwork and embellishment is lavished on each article of clothing – nothing is mass-produced. You will find around 200 designs in our collection at any one time, and only a handful of each design will make it into our boutiques," she explains.

Because the modern woman has to fill a myriad roles in her daily life, she needs a varied wardrobe that includes everything from casually chic outfits to semi-formal, formal and evening wear, says Rashmi. The Gognas believe that Pure Earth meets women's needs by providing them with high-quality clothes that are stylish, comfortable and easy to maintain, which is why their loyal customers return time and time again. Some of their customers even travel from India to shop in their Singapore stores, saying that it is impossible in India to find the combination of quality and style that is available here. Rashmi says her customers' needs are her inspiration.

Rashmi and Atul feel strongly about keeping their range of products as natural as possible, and are committed to keeping alive the traditional crafts and dyes used in India and Singapore. The two are very hands-on and fly to India on a regular basis to keep a close eye on quality.

They are also firm believers in the ethical business model and donate part of their proceeds to charities that benefit deprived villagers in India.

There are even more exciting times ahead, says Rashmi, who is planning to expand the accessories range to include more jewellery, stoles and sandals. ■

Pure Earth designs are available at its three outlets: Centrepoint #02-48, Tanglin Mall #02-28, and Holland Village Shopping Centre #02-06, in sizes 36 to 52. Evening dresses are priced from \$289 to \$589, and casual tops from \$79 to \$159, in sizes 36 to 52. www.pureearth.com.sg

