

Effortless Style, the Island Way

For decades, fashion in the Islands had been based on comfort, practicality and leisure instead of aesthetics, resulting in the loud aloha shirt and loose-fitting mui mui. But a recent surge of local designers have begun to incorporate these vintage looks with modern sophistication, creating a new signature look for Hawaii.

BY KRISTA SHERER

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Fashion designers in Honolulu have mastered the art of blending creative invention with successful business sense. In recent years, Island designers have set trends by incorporating elements of the wonderful natural and cultural beauty of Hawaii's with the cutting edge style of a bustling metropolis, and the results are impressive.

Anne Namha, a designer on the forefront of fashion in Hawaii, and a leader in local trends, has been designing clothes in Honolulu since 1983. Her style, which has been influenced by her Asian heritage and Honolulu upbringing, is a classic and contemporary combination of East meets West.

Her latest designs focus on a combination of Japanese kimono traditions as well as her original print collection, which create a sense of a hand look, bring new life to prints and also gives a great deal of versatility for the wearer with the style of the clothes.

Being responsive to Hawaii's shifting economy and the needs of her customers, Namha also knows that many of her regions are being so rapid, so what they might already own. "I know that some people like to get a new outfit every single time they go somewhere, but we are bringing a little more versatility within the line which helps your existing outfits by just adding a few pieces. This little difference can really extend the life of your wardrobe."

Namha is also known for her signature wedding dresses. The dresses are designed with a contemporary approach and a blend of modern fabrics that are incorporated with Japanese wedding Fujikoki fabric. The result is breathtaking and unique. Oh, the brides need to tie a kimono, we used as truss or tied in the traditional method, allowing a splash of color against the white of a bridal gown, adding a distinctive and timeless display of elegance.

Knowing the importance of recycling in this day and age, Namha laughed saying, "I've been mending old Kimonos since the beginning, I've been 'green' all along!" Visit her boutique in Honolulu. (201) 388-1111.



Two other well-trend in the green movement are owners and designers Ichi and Eric Masuda of Makani's Hawaii. With the dresses that are bought from their shops and a percentage of their gross sales going to local environmental causes such as the Seaside Foundation and the Community Conservation Network, the Masudas are committed to being a green company.

Built from a love of old Hawaiian style and the commitment to save the planet from unnecessary excess, Makani's Hawaii is not only built for a shopper, but their pieces are vibrant, fun and irreplaceable.

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