

VOGUE

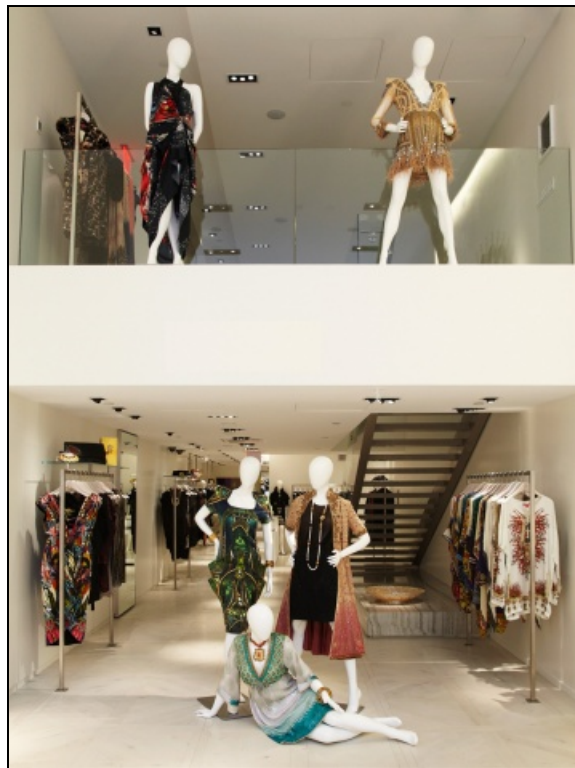
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VOGUE DAILY

FASHION

Soigné Kothari's New Madison Avenue Boutique Is a Passage to India

By Chioma Nnadi



Dressed in a chic, sixties-inspired shift dress with a swirling orange-and-brown motif, **Soigné Kothari** is remarkably calm and collected on the eve of her Madison Avenue store opening. Is her ensemble Pucci? “Actually, it’s Prashant,” she says, beaming. “He does some fantastic prints; just wait until you see the skyscraper patterns he’s made this season.” If you didn’t already know, Prashant Verma is a talented upcoming designer from New Delhi, and just one of the many Indian labels Kothari is showcasing in her namesake boutique, **Soigne K**. A successful jewelry designer in her own right, Kothari

moved to the States from India fifteen years ago, and her vision for the store combines rich, handcrafted tradition with the fresh and fast-moving trends emerging from New Delhi and Mumbai. “I think people have these preconceived notions of Indian fashion. It’s always a colorful peasant skirt or a sari,” she says. “They don’t imagine that we have looks for fall!”



Noteworthy autumnal finds on the store’s first floor include hand-sewn, sequined LBDs and cyber-print leggings by fashion radicalist Manish Arora. The Eastern staples are there, too, like baby-soft shamina shawls and bejeweled minaudières. Upstairs is where Kothari houses all her showstoppers, lavishly embellished one-of-kind pieces by the likes of renowned designer Tarun Tahiliani, who created the stunning red sari Liz Hurley wore to wed textile mogul Arun Nayar. “Every Indian bride wants to be dressed by Tarun,” Kothari says. For her own wedding fifteen years ago, she wore a Tahiliani gown that took six months to make and was hand-encrusted with thousands of Swarovski crystals by local artisans known as karigars. “It was magical,” Kothari says. “But it weighed 50 pounds! Needless to say, I did a lot of sitting.”

***Soigne K, at 717 Madison Avenue, was leased by Faith Hope Consolo and Joseph Aquino of Prudential Douglas Elliman's Retail Group.**