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Sakina Ahmed brings concept saris to Dubai

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Bangalore-based designer Sakina Ahmed will be showcasing her stylish takes on the traditional Indian sari at the Modern Woman Show, a lifestyle exhibition that kicks off at Dubai World Trade Centre today. From a humble start with a single artisan in her own garage, Sakina's creative flair for blending the traditional with the modern and her expertise with zardozi work have catapulted her into the spotlight with the creation of multi-national designer label Needle Eye, that caters to clients worldwide.

In a chat with *City Times*, Sakina spoke about the collection she's bringing

to Dubai, which includes lehengas, anarkalis and fusion Western dresses, as well as concept saris. "A concept sari is basically a new twist to the traditional sari, lending it a more contemporary touch and bringing different variations in its form, without losing the essence of its basic look. It's ethnic, yet chic; easy-to-wear and comfortable to carry. These new-look saris have embodied the same elegance of the traditional attire, but they do allow one to be a little more experimental with the way it's draped," she explained.

And how long does each sari take to create? "It depends on the design and embellishment that is done on the sari. For example, a design that involves embroidery work can take anywhere

between two days to 15 days depending on the intricacy of the work. And a non-embroidery sari can be completed within one to five days, depending on the drapes set."

When asked if she sees her work as a reinvention of the traditional six-yard sari, she said, "Definitely. As mentioned earlier, the entire concept is a reinvention of the traditional style. We use almost the same amount of fabric in our designs, and at times even more to bring that sartorial flow and elegance. The beauty of our concept saris, which are priced between Dh\$1,500-25,000, is that while they have a modernised look, they still cling to the original design creating a beautiful fusion."

Is this an attempt to make the sari popular among the

younger generation? "Great question. Yes, we are certainly trying to get the younger generation excited about the sari and keep them closer to our culture. Youngsters nowadays are very fashion savvy and love to experiment. Yet, they don't want to be encumbered with clothes that are not easy-to-wear. In concept saris they have found a combination that values comfort as much as style."

Beauty & Style Stop

The Modern Woman Show will be held at Za'abeel Hall 4, Dubai World Trade Centre from today to Saturday, April 22, from 12 noon-10pm.

[Part 2]



Designer Sakina Ahmed (inset) says concept saris are ethnic, yet chic