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Mali Marciano. Photo courtesy La Kasha.



Meet the French Designer Redefining the Travel Wardrobe

Mali Marciano is relaunching her family's heritage knitwear company, Le Kasha, for the modern traveler.

May 26, 2016 5:41 PM | by [Sam Walker](#)

Le Kasha originated in 1918 as a family-run knitwear company that championed the use of innovative blends of Kashmir goat hair, and made its name supplying fabrics to leading designers including [Jeanne Lanvin](#), [Coco Chanel](#), and [Jean Patou](#). Now, the company is taking a new direction with its young successor, Mali Marciano. Inspired by her love of traveling, Marciano has recently launched the first collection of her lifestyle brand that spans from cashmere sneakers and sleep sets to luxurious knitted jumpsuits. Here, we sit down with the French adventurer to discuss the relaunch of her family's company, her recent trip to Mongolia and the ideal travel attire.

Where do you find inspiration?

I find inspiration in travel, not only in my travel experiences but through photography, books and films. I believe it's important to grasp new cultures and understand how other civilizations around the world use different fabrics, such as cashmere.

For my first collection, "Cachemire de Voyage," I was inspired by my trip to Mongolia, which is where my most luxurious material is from. I felt I needed to go back to the source of the product to really understand the full creation process.

What was it like taking over your family business?

Le Kasha, originally created in France in 1918, has been part of my family heritage and I have always wanted to take it over and recreate an experience of my own. I always loved the [Geo Dorival poster designed for] Le Kasha: the iconic goat atop the Moutains of Central Asia, who looks as if he's wondering where his next stop should be.

My father has always been specialized in knitwear. As a child he would take me to explore new factories around the world and over the years I gained my own knowledge about cashmere. This experience has given me the ability to build this brand with confidence and to combine my heritage, my skills and my passions.

How does traveling inspire you? Tell us about your next trip.

The whole travel experience inspires me; my first collection "Cachemire de Voyage" is based on the concept of how to travel comfortably but in a stylish and elegant way with timeless pieces—how to travel light with a hand baggage only. My vision is to jump from a plane to a business lunch or a dinner without even changing.

My next big trip will take place in a wild and unexplored northern region of Japan, which inspired me to create a very special creative collection around it. Further on, India and Africa are on my Kasha radar.

What accessories trends are you seeing among women right now?

I believe that women are re-embracing the idea of less is more. I personally very rarely wear accessories. Only my cashmere eye mask when I travel...

How would you describe your personal style?

Casual, chic and effortless. Like most Parisian girls, you will usually find me in a pair of jeans, cashmere sweater and sneakers. And of course in London I throw on my trench coat!

Has there been a favorite moment since you launched?

The moment I saw a very elegant woman wearing a total Le Kasha look at Heathrow airport. Of course, the best part is creating and giving new life to something that has existed for 100 years, but when it comes full circle and you see a stranger wearing your creation that's a real satisfaction.

Talk about your plans for the future. What's next?

I will be opening my first Le Kasha "Boutique de Voyage" in the new Hotel Saint Martin in Le Marais in Paris. (The opening is planned for December 2016.) This is a new experience that will offer a wide selection of Le Kasha products—a whole universe dedicated to travel.

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