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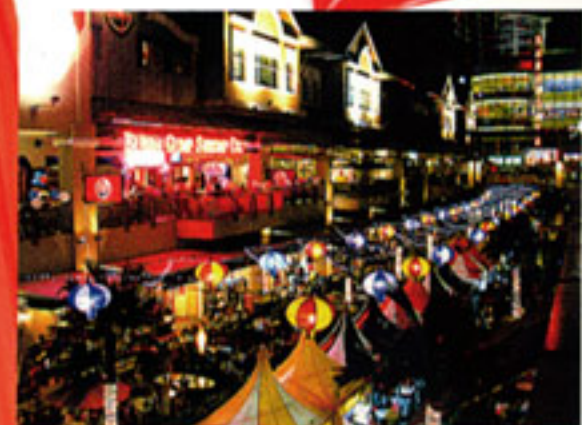
BOUTIQUES



INTERIORS



MARKETS



MADE IN MALAYSIA

Malaysian designers are making waves in the fashion world, both at home and internationally.

Adeline Chua and **Nahda Suleiman** speak to the talented men and women who are making their mark in the scene



The fashion pro Eric Choong

Shot at Eric's boutique / www.ericchoong.com

With more than 20 years of experience in his field, Eric Choong is known for his lavish designs and faultless attention to detail. Luxuriously fine fabrics, intricate embellishments and extravagant finishing touches made with Swarovski Elements form this impressive designer's creations which are modern and sophisticated while still maintaining a classic twist. Eric's designs are firm favourite with both young and old and his Bangsar boutique, a haven of tranquility, is constantly filled with chattering ladies in search of that perfect outfit.

What was the first item of clothing you bought?

I remember I was 16 or 17 years old and I bought a pair of turquoise-blue Versace jeans. Those were my first pair of jeans!

Which is your favourite stylish city and why?

I'll tell you what, I don't like cities! I'm more of a kampung boy. I love the culture of places like Chiang Mai, Cambodia, Bangkok and Pakistan. But if you ask me about a city that inspires me, I have to say Paris. I

love Paris because she has such a raw, beautiful and natural environment that blends together seamlessly.

Do you think Malaysian women's fashion sense is on par with the rest of the world or have we got a lot to learn?

We are definitely not a fashion city yet. If you compare us to London, Milan and Paris, we still have a long way to go. Malaysian women are getting better at knowing what they want. And Malaysian designers do not want to follow the same route anymore, they are becoming more creative.

I think we are moving forward in terms of fashion, but we still need to work harder.

What advice can you offer young fashion designers?

You need to have passion, and work very hard. You cannot slow down, or you will be left behind. Being humble is also very important. If you have a big ego and think you know everything, you will not learn. I always tell young designers that they should always maintain their name, quality and service.