

Bishopston Trading Company

Indian miniature inspires latest range from Bishopston Trading

The latest range of clothing from ethical retailer Bishopston Trading reflects the colours of India as we head into autumn and winter.

Director Carolyn Whitwell says: "I have based our latest range on on an Indian miniature painted in 1590. Here we find tones of garnet and saffron, orchid and raspberry along with shades of green such as spruce, forest, slate and aqua, and purples and blues including tapiz, grape, wine and damson."

Clothes in the new range include FairTrade certified organic cotton kaftan tops, cotton jackets with applique details on the cuffs and collar, printed tops and fitted blouses.

This season, the company has also introduced a man's white, fitted work shirt in organic cotton.

Most clothes from Bishopston are made in the village of KV Kuppam village in Tamil Nadu, India.

All profits from the company are used to benefit the p KV Kuppam through the company's registered charity, the South India

Rural Development Trust. This trust has funded an architect-designed factory in the village offering excellent working conditions for the staff.

Bishopston currently provides employment for more than 200 tailors, cutters and craft workers and 300 weavers. Many of the tailors and hand-finishers are women who can take advantage of the on-site creche at the factory.

Bishopston Trading has a head office and five retail shops in the west of England, including Bristol, Glastonbury and Totnes. In addition, the company has stockists across the country plus a mail order catalogue.

Most fabric used by Bishopston starts as a non-GM seed grown organically in the Kutch area of Gujerat in North India. The spun cotton is transported by lorry to South India where it is dyed (using non-Azo dyes) and then handwoven at KV Kuppam.

The main fabrics used by the company are handloom cotton, denim and calico, certified as Fairtrade by the Fairtrade Foundation.

Carolyn adds: "In the early days, people in India would often say to me 'It's not charity we want, but work,' and that is what I have tried to provide. Trade is much more valuable than charity."

The latest range of clothes will be available in Bishopston shops, some UK stockists and via the mail order catalogue.

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Background Notes: Bishopston Trading Company has five retail shops in the West of England (Bristol, Bradford on Avon, Glastonbury, Stroud and Totnes) plus stockists throughout the UK and Europe and a mail order catalogue.

The Bishopston Trading Company is a member of IFAT (The International Fair Trade Association) and BAFTS (British Association for Fair Trade Shops) and licensees of the FairTrade Foundation.