



Thierry Journo, founder of IDLI, Jaipur

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Thierry Journo

The Tunis-born, Paris-raised designer’s colourful signature is writ large across his Jaipur-based lifestyle brand, IDLI

When Thierry Journo named his lifestyle brand IDLI, he wasn’t paying homage to the much-loved South Indian breakfast food. Instead, he was tipping his hat to the country in which it was born. “Not many people know that it’s simply an acronym for ‘I Do Love India’,” says the Tunis-born designer. The son of French-Italian parents, he spent the first six years of his life in Tunisia, before moving with his family to Paris, where he completed his schooling. As he got older, it was clear to him that his interest lay in art, more specifically in art history. He thought: what better place to learn it than the Louvre?

“There, I learned to paint, inspired by the old masters,” recalls Thierry. But the painting, he soon realised, was merely a metaphor for his creativity, which he had in spades. “It opened my mind to infinite possibilities.” What it also did was seed a strong proclivity for fashion. He went on to take courses at Studio Berçot, the well-known Paris-based private training institute for fashion design, and then collaborated with noted designers including Thierry Mugler, Angelo Tarlazzi and Andrée Putman. Then, an illustrating assignment for haute couture with John Galliano at Givenchy brought him to India. That changed everything.

“I was fascinated as soon as I arrived in India by the diversity of local craftsmanship: from pottery



and weaving to furniture and architecture, there was a perpetual abundance of extraordinary craftsmen,” Thierry recounts when asked what compelled him to stay. After a spate of creative collaborations (with such labels as Hot Pink, Jaipur and Rajesh Pratap Singh), he felt ready to breathe life into his own brand.

“It was always my dream to create a lifestyle brand inspired equally by fashion, furniture, lamps, carpets, porcelain and textiles. I was now finally ready to make it happen,” says Thierry, whose brand, though based in Jaipur, collaborates with artisans spread across the length and breadth of the country (including the master brocade weavers of Benaras).

Today, IDLI is as Thierry had always imagined: a fashion and homeware boutique with a sunny, Indo-French carnival-esque vibe. Here, trompe l’oeil canopies adorn the doorways, jewel-toned paper lanterns cascade from the ceiling, and raspberry-pink silk sofas and tropical palm wallpaper are par for the course. Thierry designed it all himself, along with the textiles and garments on display, which include cushions, bedding, fabric by the meter, silk dresses for women, and button-downs for men.

Next on the cards for Thierry is a collaboration with Good Earth for a collection of porcelain and table linen, christened ‘Mirage by Thierry Journo’. “I still have lots of plans for the future,” he says. “We’re just warming up.” ♦ @thierry_journo_idli_design_



From top: Colourful, tropical wall motifs give the boutique the air of a sunny carnival; A coral-inspired console with a lacquer-finished top. The artwork is by Thierry himself

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