



Couture designer Isabelle Randall has designed gowns for clients across the globe

BEAUTIFUL BESPOKE

Couture designer Isabelle Randall creates one-of-a-kind bridal and eveningwear for her clients from around the world in Aberdeen

Words by Danica Ollerova | Photos by Sam Brill, Janie Barclay and Jonathan Addie

Launching her eponymous brand 15 years ago, couture designer Isabelle Randall handcrafts bridalwear and eveningwear in her Aberdeen atelier.

Now happily settled in the north-east and operating near Kittybrewster, Isabelle spent her youth residing in various cities in Europe.

“Living in Monaco and seeing all the elegantly dressed ladies sitting in the casino square is my first memory when it comes to fashion,” said Isabelle. But it was the first fashion show she attended with her mother at the age of 12 that cemented her career in the vibrant industry.

Isabelle said: “I sat there in awe of the creations being modelled on the catwalk and marvelled about who the talented people behind the scenes designing these incredible garments were.”

Four years later, Isabelle was thrilled to be accepted



Couture designer Isabelle Randall

into a fashion design course at Batley School of Art near Leeds.

She said: “It was such an honour to be accepted. I knew this was the start of the rest of my life. Diane Bloom was the head of the fashion department and was a real visionary.”

The prestigious art school was oozing with talent. Christopher Bailey, who worked for Donna Karan and Gucci and was the chief creative officer and president of Burberry for 17 years, is one of the school’s most famous alumni.

After graduating from Batley School of Art, Isabelle went on to study fashion design at the famous Royal College of Art (RCA) in London.

She said: “I was extremely fortunate to have some inspiring tutors and visiting lecturers such as John Galliano’s pattern cutters, Karl Lagerfeld and designers from Nike. After leaving the RCA, I worked for Roland Klein in his atelier.

“This was the first time I had ever worked for a

couture house and was involved in producing his collection to be showcased at London Fashion Week. “The team worked backstage making sure all the models, including Naomi Campbell, were dressed and ready to strut their stuff on the catwalk. I went on to work for Bella Freud and Hussein Chalayan and helped out backstage for their shows as well.” The successful designer, who moved to Aberdeen to be closer to her family, set up isabelleRANDALL after getting in touch with the owner of The B’s Knees, a

boutique in Oldmeldrum which stopped trading in 2012.

Isabelle said: “I showed the owner my first womenswear collection called Cherries & Berries. “She loved it and ordered a number of sizes in each design. From there, I ventured further afield to Edinburgh and Glasgow to visit boutiques with the hope they would buy my collections.

“Soon after, I was approached by individuals for bespoke commissions which shifted the business from selling wholesale to offering an exclusively designed bespoke service instead.”

And in 2010 she launched her first bridalwear collection Roses. Isabelle’s business is now predominantly focused on bridalwear but the talented designer also creates eveningwear and provides tailoring. Offering a bespoke service to all her clients, each of Isabelle’s creations is made to measure and fits to perfection.

Isabelle said: “I offer a free consultation, which is a great opportunity to meet in person and discuss at length design ideas. I sketch out designs as we talk and we look through my fabric sample books. My aim is always to capture the essence of my client.

“Once the commission starts, I take measurements, draft the patterns and make the toile which is a mock-up/prototype of the garment.

“The number of fittings all depends on the complexity of the design. It can be between three to six fittings. The client is involved in the entire

process from start to finish.

“I have found that the north-east can be very conservative, but my clients have always embraced an original design exclusively made for them.

“I have met so many wonderful clients over the years and have received glowing testimonials telling me what a joy it has been to wear their bespoke creation. “Conducting fittings over Skype for my clients living as far away as Australia has been great fun.”

And Isabelle’s drive comes from her passion to create timeless elegant clothing which lasts.

She said: “I focus on proportions rather than size and my designs flatter and elongate the figure.

“Using high quality natural fabrics such as silks and wools, all sourced in the UK, adds greatly to the look and durability of the finished garment.”

Isabelle is really proud of her latest collection called Tartan Forever.

She said: “The tartan was designed by Chris McLeod of Alex Scott Kiltmakers. What I loved most about this tartan was the meaning behind it and how it represents Aberdeen.

“Black is for oil, blue for the sea, grey for the granite Aberdeen is famous for, and red and gold are taken from the Aberdeen City shield.

“I feel extremely passionate about this collection as it shows off my skill set as a tailor as well as a designer.”

Visit www.isabellerandall.com for more information about Isabelle’s work

“ My clients have always embraced an original design made exclusively for them ”

Go to www.societyaberdeen.co.uk for more fashion and beauty news