



NEW ZEALAND

Designer fashion industry in New Zealand

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Overview

New Zealand fashion is increasingly appreciated by a global audience and designer clothing continues to be one of New Zealand's great creative success stories.

New Zealand's stunning landscapes, a unique Pacific location, and a blend of indigenous Maori, European, Polynesian and Asian cultures, inspire talented individuals to develop designer fashion for discerning customers around the world.

Labels such as Karen Walker, Trelise Cooper, Zambesi, Nom*D, WORLD, Sabatini and Kate Sylvester are helping to brand the country internationally as a nation of new ideas and new thinking.

At the prestigious Rosemount Australian Fashion Week 2008, international buyers and media described New Zealand design as fresh yet sophisticated.

A raft of talent from New Zealand is quickly spreading its footprint and sales internationally. Labels such as Cybèle, Stitch Ministry, Federation and Lonely Hearts Club are being worn around the world.

New Zealand's fashion designers have begun producing eyewear, jewellery, footwear and accessories to meet growing demand for their labels.





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Fast facts

- New Zealand exported fashion and apparel items worth NZ\$326 million in 2007.
- Each year for the past three years fashion and apparel exports grew by over NZ\$10 million.
- New Zealand fashion is sold in Australia, North America, Asia and Europe. There is also growing interest in New Zealand clothing from the Middle East and Eastern Europe.
- The Air New Zealand Fashion Week is recognised as one of the most exciting emerging events on the fashion calendar.
- New Zealand fashion schools are increasingly recognised for their talent creation.

International innovations

[Karen Walker](#)

Karen Walker products have been sold in New York for many years, but this season the full Karen Walker concept of clothing, eyewear and jewellery was on show in a dedicated Karen Walker retail environment in New York's east village. This is part of an ongoing pop-up store concept by top New York retailers Odin in The Den – a space that changes its brand and concept every three months.

[Trelise Cooper](#)

The influence of Trelise Cooper's luxury fashion clothing continues to grow. The Trelise Cooper brand is now recognised worldwide. It is stocked in 350 stores in 14 countries across the globe. The award-winning, Auckland-based designer now exports goods worth more than NZ\$8 million per year and is currently working towards expanding in Europe and Dubai.

[Sabatini](#)

The family-owned Sabatini business continues to prove its timelessness. Operating since the 1950s, Sabatini maintains pace with technology, direction and style. It embraces modern design techniques and uses only the finest yarns from around the world. It is recognised as the market leader in knit design. Sabatini is stocked in exclusive boutiques around the world.

[High Society](#)

More than 40 years after it was founded, High Society – one of New Zealand's most influential and commercially savvy fashion companies – continues to expand its horizons. High Society already exports more than half its product to Australia and has recently entered the United States market. The company designs, manufactures and distributes four very distinct labels – Catalyst, Obi, Chocolat and Mosaic. All four labels are designed and made in New Zealand.



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International collaborations

[iD Dunedin Fashion Week](#)

The organisers of iD Dunedin Fashion Week work closely with Italian institution Mittelmoda in awarding prizes to top emerging designers. Mittelmoda is one of the most sought-after international fashion competitions open to young designers in search of their own path in the tough world of fashion.

Sustainability achievements

[Starfish](#)

Starfish sources locally-produced, organic fabrics wherever possible and pressures suppliers to do the same. The company employs rigorous recycling practices and is committed to waste and packaging reduction. Carry bags are made from recyclable chlorine-free paper with vegetable-based ink, and surplus fabric is donated to community groups. All clothing under the Starfish and Laurie Foon labels is made in New Zealand. Starfish's initiatives were recognised at the 2007 NZI National Sustainable Business Awards.

[Karen Walker](#)

Karen Walker is working with Levis to produce Levi's® Eco jeans from 100 percent organic cotton, grown without synthetic fertilisers or pesticides. All external packaging is made from organic fabric or recycled paper and printed with soy-based ink. The range uses recycled buttons, rivets and zippers. The dye is chemical-free and is made from a process involving natural indigo, potato starch, mimosa flower and Marseille soap.

[Miranda Brown](#)

Miranda Brown Conscious Cloth is a sustainable New Zealand crafted label for high end women's fashion and lifestyle. The hallmark of Miranda Brown is her innovative use of shibori dyeing and print work on natural fibres such as organic cotton and New Zealand wool. Miranda Brown's design work and philosophy have garnered audiences around the world.

Inter-industry development

[Otago Polytechnic School of Design](#)

New Zealand's design, fashion and textile tertiary education institutes work closely with third parties. The Otago Polytechnic School of Design, for example, has an exchange agreement with the prestigious Istituto Europe di Design in Milan, which has been the breeding ground of designers for the leading luxury goods brands in Europe. It is also the only New Zealand institution to be full members of IFFTI, an international organisation promoting good practice and research in fashion design education.



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[Textile and Design Laboratory](#)

AUT's School of Art and Design receives industry support for its Textile and Design Laboratory (T+DL) from, among others, designer Kate Sylvester and textile artist Miranda Brown. T+DL's expertise and facilities are available to local industry and other tertiary education organisations for research and development, product development, sampling and small-scale production, as well as training and education. T+DL has also invested in new Shima SDS One CAD systems, seamless knitting machines and digital textile printing technology.

Industry contacts

[Fashion Industry New Zealand](#)

Fashion Industry New Zealand (FINZ) is an industry fashion group launched to undertake co-operative ventures. FINZ is the key point of contact for New Zealand's fashion sector and wider apparel industry.

[Air New Zealand Fashion Week](#)

Air New Zealand Fashion Week provides a forum for New Zealand's leading fashion designers to show their autumn/winter collections to international and local buyers and media.

[FashionNZ](#)

FashionNZ is the cluster site for the New Zealand fashion industry. It brings together all types of fashion businesses from designers and retailers to modelling agencies and industry services.