

**Time Out** tells you about two new labels that specialise in children's clothing and accessories.

## Eight Thousand Miles

Architect-turned-designer Shweyta Mudgal found inspiration to start her kids clothing and accessories label Eight Thousand Miles when she happened to travel to 14 countries, with an infant in tow, in the span of a single year while living in Singapore. Eight Thousand Miles offers whimsical dresses, tunics, jumpsuits, rompers and more, for little tykes, with special emphasis on cuts, fabric mixing, print combinations and interesting use of upcycled elements.

"Eight Thousand Miles' raison d'être is self-expression with a boho-chic design aesthetic," Mudgal explained. "The name is the diameter of the earth and also the distance that separates our two home cities: Mumbai and New York. Though based in Mumbai now with a day job as an architect, Mudgal discovered her love of fabrics while rehashing her daughter's clothes. "I am never embarrassed to say that I have used them till their last stages! I would cut up pants and make them into shorts, or make T-shirts out of overalls," she said.

The philosophy of the label is whimsical and global. "All of us are free-spirited wanderers, but it is society that binds and restricts us. And children, anywhere, cannot be forced to conform at all. My idea is to give kids fabulous cotton clothing with happy prints and colours, and make them wander around with lovely shoes. It is my way of breaking out the box. So, don't polyesterise them yet!" Mudgal said.

Her first venture, a line of children's clothing for one- to six-year-olds, fell into place last year. For this, she sources pure cotton fabrics from all over Mumbai, scouting for small yardages with quaint and adorable animal, bird, floral, paisley and geometric prints in pop colours

that can lend well to basic shapes. Underprivileged women of the Mumbai

NGO

Aadhar Skill Development Trust then craft the fabric into sleeveless frocks, elasticated

rompers, unisex lounge pants, lungi shorts, mandarin- and round-collared kurtas with generic prints,

loose shorts, half-sleeved shirts, gypsy skirts and baby blankets.

"The baby rompers with elasticated chest band and thigh holes, and drawstring at the midriff, grows with the kid," Mudgal claimed.

Eco-fashion is another angle to her creativity. "I source old South cotton saris, which I upcycle into double-sided (40x40-inch) baby

blankets. Satin piping and polyester wadding are the non-cotton elements in these," she explained.

Mudgal, who is also targeting the US market, plans to add fall jackets for her New York clients and pajama sets to her line. Future plans also include extending Eight Thousand Miles as a lifestyle brand and including kids accessories, home décor and women's fashion. Prices start from ₹600. **PS Bhavana.**

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## Hopscotch

While working at Diapers.com, a US-based online retailer for baby-related paraphernalia, in 2010, executives Lisa Kennedy and Rahul Anand quickly realised that there was a vast potential market lying untapped in India. Working on this insight, the duo decided to set their sights on Mumbai, with a website called Hopscotch.in in 2012 that would create a "unique shopping experience for Indian moms".

"After I graduated from Harvard Business School, I spent a few years living in New York and worked at Diapers.com. As most of my friends were starting families at the time, I found myself constantly carrying baby things back home. Moms in India seemed to lack access to good quality merchandise at reasonable price points," Anand told us in an email interview. "We spent some time researching the market in India and launched Hopscotch because we believed the shopping experience for mothers here was uninspiring. Stores are cluttered, offerings are limited, and the prices paid are higher than abroad. We believed moms deserved more as they entered this lifestyle, and we built a business around this need."

Evoking the playfulness of childhood in the brand name Hopscotch, the duo works on a business model that looks at changing offerings on the site every day. "Our vision at Hopscotch is to entertain moms each day. We feature hard-to-find brands sourced from around the world in limited time flash boutiques. As we introduce new boutiques each day, old ones conclude, and the assortment is fresh and exciting. While most retailers in the country charge a premium for international brands, we've developed supply chain capabilities that allow us to offer products at their international equivalent

pricing," Anand explained.

In fact, the tagline of the website says "Find something new everyday". It promises a whole host of international brands for babies, toddlers and mothers, such as Carter's, OshKosh B'Gosh, Petit Bateau, aden + anais, Little Me, Juicy Couture, Melissa & Doug, H&M apparel and more. The website's interface is helpfully divided into categories such as boutiques, shop by age and shop by category, and a calendar gives you a schedule of brands that will make an appearance on the site in the upcoming weeks.

We spotted cute onesies, rompers and dungarees with polka dots, animal prints and vibrant colours from labels such as Carter's and OshKosh B'Gosh. Awerganic is a 100 per cent organic cotton brand from Gurgaon that offers well-constructed jumpsuits, dresses, pinafores and more. We adored the chevron, paisley and striped pajama sets for boys and girls (ages 0-9) by desi brand Frangipani, too. For expecting and new mothers there are easy-breezy kaftans and tunics from

The Beach Company,

shift, skater and A-line dresses in stretchable lycra from

brands such as Anee Mathew, H&M and Maternal America.

There is also pregnancy-related innerwear, forgiving

leggings, jeggings and treggings, costume jewellery and handbags on offer. You will even find baby bags, storage bags for diapers, door shoe organisers, storage boxes, furniture, toys and kitchen accessories in online inventory, since

Hopscotch, according to Anand, wants to include everything that is "mom-focused and offer a mother everything that she needs for her home, herself, her baby and family". Prices start from ₹400.

**Amrita Bose.**

Shop online at [hopscotch.in](http://hopscotch.in)

