

# DRESSING UP IN A DOWN ECONOMY

MEET THREE NEW FASHION/BEAUTY ENTREPRENEURS  
BENT ON SURVIVING ... AND THRIVING

by SANDRA FONG YOUNG photography by JOHN DOLE

Given the tough times in this country right now, most people wouldn't consider opening up a new business in the current economic climate. Those who do decide to weather this storm and start anew are considered crazy — or in the case of a San Diego boutique owner, fashion designer and hair salon owner, they may just be crazy passionate about what they do. As they establish themselves within the fashion/beauty industry locally and beyond, they continue to ignore the naysayers and hope that customers are willing to swipe their credit cards.

### The Fashion Designer

Janice Jaraicie has a feeling. She has a good feeling that the economy will pick up this year. She also has high hopes for the fashion culture in San Diego, but has noticed that San Diegans

often have trouble reconciling their surfer ways.

"I see people with nice clothes on and flip-flops," comments Jaraicie. "[San Diego] is still very laid-back." In contrast, Jaraicie's clothing line, nelli, is full of flirty dresses, blouses with ruffles and structured print jackets — and unless she's at the gym, which she admits is a rare occasion, she is almost always in heels. Influenced by Jaraicie's background (born in Hong Kong, grew up in Saudi Arabia and Montreal, Canada, and now lives in San Diego), as well as her love of old Hollywood glamour, nelli is a distinctly romantic and feminine clothing line found in boutiques worldwide. Locally, the Hotel del Coronado carries some of the nelli collection.

Through her travels, Jaraicie has noticed that people are being more cautious about what they buy and how much they buy. As a result, she has started keeping the price of each garment in mind as she designs it. Before she knew that "people wouldn't even look at the price," but now she might choose one type of silk over another or add a few less embellishments.

Yet, Jaraicie emphasizes, "A fashionista doesn't become a recessionista. They're not going to start shopping at Kmart." nelli's international customer base continues to seek out classy, quality clothing. Noting the emergence of high-end boutique hotels and new venues with dress codes in San Diego, Jaraicie also predicts that, locally, the flip-flops will soon be gone — or at least put away for a night or two.

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