

Masters of Maximalism: Abu Jani & Sandeep Khosla Celebrate 40 Years of Indian Couture

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When it comes to **luxury Indian fashion**, few names carry as much weight as **Abu Jani & Sandeep Khosla (AJSK)**. For **four decades**, the Mumbai-based design duo has defined couture with unapologetic maximalism, an unflinching devotion to craft, and a flair for storytelling that blends heritage with imagination.

The Birth of a Legacy

The duo's journey began in **1986**, when a shared passion for textiles and visual storytelling led to the launch of their brand. Starting with **one lakh rupees** gifted by their parents, they created their first collection in a boutique in Juhu called Mata Hari, designed to feel like a theatrical escape. Inspired by Abu Jani's collection of old Hollywood postcards, the boutique's peach-toned walls, mirrored alcoves, and cinematic ambience instantly attracted a loyal clientele, including **Dimple Kapadia, Jaya Bachchan, and Parmeshwar Godrej**.

Their debut collection of 80 garments crafted in **pure silks, chiffons, and organzas** marked the beginning of a new Indian design language—one deeply rooted in heritage, yet unmistakably inventive.

Reviving Craft, Redefining Couture

AJSK's work is defined by its **loyalty to Indian craft and artisans**. Their transformative work with **chikankari embroidery** is legendary. After witnessing the declining state of Lucknow's chikankari industry in 1992, the duo spent two years reviving 21 intricate stitches and reintroducing luxurious fabrics like chiffon and georgette. The result was a couture collection that elevated chikankari to the status of Indian bridal and luxury wear, influencing trends that endure today, from Deepika Padukone's wedding reception sari to countless bridal moodboards.

Beyond chikankari, AJSK celebrates **mirror work, zardozi, Ajrak, and other artisanal techniques**, blending tradition with innovation. Their approach transforms clothing into **layered narratives**, full of texture, symbolism, and storytelling—a signature of their maximalist vision.

Maximalism As A Movement

Maximalism is more than a design choice for Abu Jani & Sandeep Khosla—it's a philosophy. Rejecting minimalism as "sterile and restrictive," the duo embraces the notion that **more is more**. Each creation is **an ecosystem of craft, color, and culture**, a testament to the collaborative spirit they share with artisans.

Couture Beyond the Runway

AJSK's influence extends far beyond fashion weeks. Memorable moments include the glittering opening of **Lakmé Fashion Week Winter/Festive 2015**, Amitabh Bachchan's charity runway walk in 2017, and the creation of iconic wardrobes for films and global stars—from **'Devdas' (2002)** to **Beyoncé in 'Hymn for the Weekend' (2016)**. Their work consistently elevates Indian craftsmanship to the global stage, shaping the visual identity of Indian fashion worldwide.

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