

# Find Your Style at MUSE

Treat your inner diva at this eclectic clothing store in Memphis. BY DONNA FLORIO



The shop's 3,000 square feet allows plenty of space for extra-large dressing rooms.

Step into MUSE, Inspired Fashion, and you may think you've wandered into a New York or L.A. boutique. The clothes and accessories are cutting edge, the displays creative, and the atmosphere artsy.

A love of fashion led owner Lisa Doss to open MUSE six years ago in the South Main Historic Arts District. "This has always been my passion," the Memphis native says. "I got a degree in public relations from The University of Tennessee mainly so I could do PR for a fashion institute or plan fashion shows."

Lisa now combs the major apparel markets as well as smaller markets and shops, searching out fashion-forward clothing for men and women that Memphians won't find elsewhere in town.

**Fresh and Exciting** "I buy what I think my customers will like," Lisa says. "They'll spend hours here trying on things they might not usually try on." She's quick to admit that her lines are not conservative. "I really go out of my way to find lines no one else has," she adds. "It's hard to do. I don't want my customers to see themselves coming and going. I don't try to be trendy—I want to be unique."

Lisa maintains exclusivity by highlighting up-and-coming and specialty designers. She cites An Ren's coat line as an example. "She's a wonderful lady with a little shop in New York's SoHo," Lisa says enthusiastically. "She only makes coats—she doesn't want to be huge." Another designer, Robin Kaplan from California, is one of Lisa's favorites. She also favors local artisans for jewelry and accessories. But the most popular jewelry line is Virgins, Saints, & Angels.

The distinctive clothing enjoys an equally hip setting. Lisa's flagship store (she now runs another location in New Orleans) is a renovated warehouse featuring 20-foot-tall brick walls and 10 x 10 dressing rooms enclosed by red velvet drapes. A 1962 Baldwin piano holds a place of honor. Local blues artist Di Anne Price gives the instrument a good workout on the last Friday of every month, when shoppers enjoy music and a glass of wine with their retail therapy.

**Dressed for Success** Lisa's personal life has grown along with her business. She and husband Steve are the parents of a 4-year-old fashionista named Adelaide. "She tells me what she wants to wear and which shoes," Lisa says with a laugh. "And she knows the difference between pink and fuchsia, and blue and turquoise."

Adelaide clearly inherited her mother's sense of style and love of looking good. "My whole concept is that if you look good in something, then you should wear it," Lisa says enthusiastically. "Fashion should be fun. You should be able to adorn yourself with beautiful clothes and have fun getting dressed in the morning."

If Lisa has her way, her customers will experience that pleasure every day. ●

MUSE, INSPIRED FASHION: 517 South Main Street, Memphis, TN 38103; [www.museinspiredfashion.com](http://www.museinspiredfashion.com) or (901) 526-8737. HOURS: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday and noon-4 p.m. Sunday.



Lisa Doss



ABOVE: Lisa has carved out her own fashion niche. "If it's unique, it sells," she says.