

MUSKHANE ●  
in the mood for happiness



Press Kit

## FROM THE HEART OF HIMALAYAS, MUSKHANE

MUSKHANE was born in Nepal in 2003. In this Himalayan kingdom, one lives in the present moment, with simplicity and joy. Spirituality suffuses each action and gesture, and a myriad of colours nuances and beautifies the day-to-day.

This harmony laid claim to the hearts of Valérie and Thierry Billot. The discovery of traditional Nepalese savoir-faire in the working of felt and cashmere inspired the creation of MUSKHANE. Their brand offers clothing and decorative objects composed exclusively of these natural, renewable materials. The entire line is completely hand-made, locally.

Valérie and Thierry are guided by their desire to promote durable, sustainable production and to continue on this meaningful adventure with the Nepalese artisans they have come to know and work with so closely. These convictions have created ties of respect and trust among the entire chain of production, as well as promoting the value and ensuring the endurance of traditional, artisanal Himalayan craft. MUSKHANE's customers can feel good about the fact that every item we offer has been fabricated with the utmost attention and to the highest possible standards.

MUSKHANE is Nepalese for smile.

IDENTITY

## SOFTNESS, HARMONY & JOIE DE VIVRE

Nepalese harmony is the seed of Valérie Billot's inspiration and the source of her most revitalising energy. As the head of artistic direction for the brand, she designs clothing, accessories, and housewares which delight and comfort, beautify and stimulate the senses. Deliciously soft, they are designed to bring joy to our day-to-day.

With our line of women's fashion in 100% cashmere knit, supple and soft as a second skin, MUSKHANE brings you true luxury. Our array of velvety-soft accessories offer comfort for the whole family. Every piece is created to be mixed, matched, and layered. Even in summer, MUSKHANE's incomparably fine-knit cashmere is perfect worn against the skin—light and soft as a whisper.

For the home, Valérie has created a collection of felt objects infused with happiness and cheer. Clean, simple designs cuddle up with fun and whimsical items to bring a smile to the whole family, sure to please big ones and little ones alike. Many of MUSKHANE's signature pieces have become iconic in the world of design and decoration: the round rugs and chakati, the felt baskets lined in cotton piqué, the garlands and calebasses...



COLLECTIONS



Each year, Valérie reimagines MUSKHANE's colour palette to set the tone and create the soul of the Fashion and Home lines.

She draws inspiration from images, places, and ambiance, liberally interpreting trends and returning invariably to the source of her greatest visual influence: the energising, stimulating colours of Nepal.

Next, it is her intuition which provides the impulse. The seasonal palette of colours and tints begins to take form. This energy expresses itself through two forces, constantly present, yin and yang.

During this process, Valérie's desire for harmony is omnipresent, even obsessional... until at last the exact balance is struck and the perfect tones have been attained.

COLLECTIONS

## A GRAND ADVENTURE ON A HUMAN SCALE

MUSKANE was founded on the strong conviction that respect is essential.

It was on a mission to Katmandu for Handicap International that Thierry and Valérie discovered Nepal and the Himalayan region. When they completed their contract, the couple decided to suggest a project to that association: they would carry out a study of equitable commerce in the Himalayan region. This led them into contact and dialogue with the artisans of the valley of Katmandu—some of whom were to become their suppliers. Little by little, the pull to create something new and to live a meaningful adventure called them to Nepal, together with their desire to develop a stronger local economy and to celebrate the exceptional artisanal craftwork of the region.

They created MUSKHANE in 2003 and put down roots in Katmandu. Today, a small team coordinates the production and the preparation of orders, while the finishing of the products is assured by a precious trio of couturiers with magic fingers.

After 15 years in Nepal, Valérie, Thierry, and their children have come back to France, where they now pilot operations from the heart of the French Alps, in Annecy. The flagship Parisian boutique on the rue Pastourelle in the Marais was joined by a second boutique in Annecy in 2014.



## NATURAL, NOBLES MATERIALS CRAFTED BY HAND

MUSKHANE's products are hand-made in the workshops of the Katmandu Valley. They are composed entirely of natural, renewable materials -principally felted wool and cashmere-with stitching in sturdy cotton.

The working of these natural fibres is the special expertise of Nepalese artisans. Their handicraft continues to evolve technically, thanks to creative innovations and quality controls introduced by the brand.

Valérie trained in the working of felted wool and cashmere in these ateliers, and makes regular trips to the workshops in order to create prototypes and to test the functionality the objects that she designs.

The quality of the wools, the strict attention to detail, and the care that goes into each of MUSKHANE's products bring forth our line of unique objects, infused with softness and harmony.



SAVOIR-FAIRE



MUSKHANE's emblematic material, felted wool, is also known as boiled wool. Since the 7th century BC, the shepherds of Central Asia have used it to create coats, hats, rugs, and tapestries, as well as water-resistant coverings for the roofs of their yurts.

Its fabrication is entirely artisanal. Beginning with carded wool, soap, and water, a long process of pressure and friction brings about the interlacing of the wool's fibres.

The result is a supremely soft fabric, extremely weather-resistant and sound-insulating. Felted wool also boasts hypoallergenic, anti-bacterial, and dust mite-resistant properties, without emitting any harmful substances.



The high quality luxury fibre of cashmere is MUSKHANE's other favourite resource, sourced from the wool of the Capra Hisca goat which lives in the high mountain regions of the Himalayas and on the frigid plains of Mongolia.

When we choose to wear cashmere, we offer ourselves a bit of true luxury. The downy texture of cashmere is simply without parallel, and the reassuring warmth it brings stands likewise without equal. The exceptional character of cashmere has earned it the name of "diamond fibre".

MUSKHANE produces its cashmere in a workshop equipped with manual knitting machines, which consume no energy. The Nepalese artisans work this fibre from threads both fine and thick, in close-knit or open weave, to give life to Valérie's designs.

## RESPECT IS ESSENTIAL

Respect for employees and partners, respect of the environment, respect for our customers. Respect is the conviction by which we operate every day, and the value which guides us always.

MUSKHANE is a socially and environmentally engaged brand. We strive to leave a minimal footprint on the environment whilst making a positive impact on the lives of our partners through fair-trade and sustainable commerce.

It is this optimism and this engagement which we hope to share with our clients, by offering ecologically-minded products, sustainably produced.



SPIRIT

## Fair trade and responsible commerce

Respect for the rules of responsible commerce is our ethos, and the driving philosophy behind the story of MUSKHANE.

MUSKHANE was created as the result of a study by Handicap International which focused on the realities of fair-trade practices in India and Nepal. Except for one of our ateliers, our entire network of suppliers and producers is made up of people we met during that study. Many of them are directly affiliated with the Fair Trade label, and others are family businesses which respect the principles.

Our aim is to create the conditions whereby everyone can give the best of themselves.

Thanks to our team in Nepal, on site year-round, our relationship with our suppliers is based on proximity and a durable, on-going dialogue. We know of the all workshops with whom we work , and they all come with the development of our brand.

On our side, we are committed to giving a fair price to the artisans so that they can achieve a comfortable living wage. Rather than negotiate a low price, we ask our suppliers to deliver high-quality materials within the stipulated timeframe. We also finance over 50% of fabrication so that our artisans and suppliers will not have to risk becoming indebted in the process.

## Sustainable development

A daily, comprehensive management of resources to ensure nothing is wasted.

Water conservation and management in Nepal is a daily preoccupation. Water shortages and power outtages are a permanent occurrence in Kathmandu. These conditions have led us to examine the ways in which our means of production are as respectful of resources as can possibly be.

All of our products are hand-made from the finest natural and renewable materials available: sheep wool, Nepalese cotton and paper for our deco line, and superfine wool of the Capra Hisca goat for our cashmere fashion items.

### Innovation and Fidelity

Our products are exported to France by plane, the only mode of transport available from Nepal. To compensate for the CO2 emissions, we are member/contributors to CO2 Solidaire. The funds we've made available to the organization benefitted "1000 energy-neutral buildings", constructing solar-powered habitats in the Himalayas and India.

We are also members of the Sustainable Development Collective, whose objective is to educate and raise the awareness of consumers and media outlets about the politics, economics, and environmental impact of Sustainable Development.

## Social engagement

Since its creation, MUSKHANE has been active in the support of social work in Nepal, especially in the domaine of education.

Since 2006, we have provided logistic and financial support to the DEM association in Nepal, who head up a program in the Kathmandu valley aiding poor families and providing educational grants to students.

Since 2013, MUSKHANE is also a supporter of the Planète Enfants association, which works to protect the rights of children and fights against their exploitation.



WHERE TO FIND US



MUSKHANE maintains two boutiques: in the Marais district of Paris and the Porte Sainte Claire quarter in Annecy, where MUSKHANE's founders Thierry and Valérie Billot now live.

MUSKHANE spreads lightheartedness and joie de vivre far and wide! You can find our products on offer in boutiques as far-flung as Serendipity in Paris, Bobo Kids in London, Norrgavel in Stockholm, or Love and Sense in Tokyo.

Our online boutique makes it easy to plunge into the world of MUSKHANE no matter where you are. Treat yourself or a loved one to a bit of softness and joy.

SELLING PLACES

# MUSKHANE ●

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