



meet a shopkeeper

Shannon Kitchens

Sage | Atlanta | www.sageclothing.com

What she sells: Items that generally retail for less than \$100, including girly going-out clothes, elegant basics, trendy shoes, and handmade jewelry by local designers. The store carries a range of styles that appeal to women ages 15 to 50.

Why she opened the shop: “In the mid-90s, I was studying fashion merchandising and design in Los Angeles,” says Kitchens, 33. “I went to all these great little shops on Melrose filled with cute stuff that was affordable. Back in my hometown of Atlanta, the only boutiques were really expensive. I’m a southern girl at heart, so I moved home and started this store. My goal was to create that same boutique atmosphere, but without the boutique price tag.”

Her biggest challenge: “Learning to delegate. When I started the store, I had to do everything myself. But as the business grew—I now have two stores in the area—it became impossible to oversee every aspect. I’ve realized that I have to trust other people

to do certain things, and that even if they don’t do something exactly like I would do it, I have to be OK with that. I try to look at the big picture and not get too overwhelmed by the little stuff.”

Her favorite things: “That changes constantly. One of the things Sage is known for is getting new items in every Friday. I travel to Los Angeles about once a month to buy directly from several small companies based there. Since I usually only get about six of every item, you’re never going to see yourself everywhere. But there are a few staples, like Miss Me denim jeans, which sell in my stores for \$79 to \$99. I probably own 10 pairs. The fit is great, and I’ll literally wear them until they give out. And I get wonderful T-shirts that are perfect for layering from Alternative Apparel, a local company.”

What’s next: “Selling the store’s merchandise online. It’s definitely something I foresee happening in the future, but since I am just starting a family, it’s on hold for the moment.”

inside the store



Stylish, original jewelry from up-and-coming local artists is a hallmark of the store.



Sage stocks classics (like turtlenecks), as well as runway trends (such as jersey dresses in vibrant colors).



Acclaimed designer Annika Salame, of By Boe, crafts these cocktail rings with chunky vintage stones.

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