

ethnic weave

Threads of tradition

Young label Aab's winter edit is giving *phulkari* a fresh vibe

A PANDEMIC-BORN label, Aab primarily focuses on blending simple yet elevated silhouettes with a thoughtful touch of traditional craftsmanship. The Amritsar-based brand's latest edit, *Matsya*, reflects strong sartorial accents with a fresh take on *phulkari*, a traditional craft from the state.

Made with recycled handloom fabric, *Malkha* from Telangana, and fine cotton handloom using natural dyes, *Matsya* is a collection of marine life motifs on contemporary silhouettes infused with the defining bright colours and geometric designs of *phulkari*.

"*Aab* means water. And just like water, Aab breathes in fresh life into heritage hand embroideries like *phulkari*," says Shreya Mehra, founder and designer of the label. "*Matsya* is inspired by mythology and celebrates the relationship of fish with water. Just like Vishnu took his first *avatar*, that of a fish, to save the world from doom, *Matsya* resembles new hope for a dying handicraft, a fresh lease of life for *Phulkari*," she adds.

What makes the homegrown brand stand out in the crowd is its thorough research-based motifs. All the designs are products of a deep dive into the rich legacy of antique pieces and *phulkari* stitches that are then executed by skilled artisans. Mehra turns the pieces into contemporary outfits by giving them modern silhou-

ettes and the peplum co-ord set and seaweed *booti* dress are examples in case.

One can also see the subtle use of antique *phulkari* on *khadi/khaddar* using bright silk thread and geometrical motifs in the edit. The young label caters to a wide age group ranging from young teenagers to women in their 50s. Check out their range of classic straight fit dresses to fit and flared ones. The flounce sleeves with cuff details are a major part of this collection and so are the versatile co-ord sets that can be easily dressed up and down. Also, Shreya has kept a fine blend of bright as well as muted shades; and checks and stripes to solid shades.

"The essence of the craft isn't in the design but in the technique and that is precisely what Aab is reviving. But to appeal to the new generation, we have taken a minimalist approach," she explains further.

Price ₹2,500 onwards.

aab-label.com

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Matsya collection from Aab





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