

...& shop

Township

**New Cape Quarter,
27 Somerset Rd, Green Point**
Vibrant SA-inspired fashion
and textiles

'I did not know much about SA but befriended a South African lady when travelling in Brazil,' says Nicole-Marie Iresch. 'She invited me to visit her and introduced me to her country with great passion.'

During her initial trips to Cape Town, Nicole-Marie met women in Khayelitsha who asked her for support to create their own jobs. 'So I quit my job in Paris to start a project with them. I guess I was able to see what other people could not see: the life, the vibrancy, the hope, the inner beauty of the whole place.'

'We had to leave Algeria when I was very young because of the war,' Nicole-Marie says. 'I grew up in France and travelled the world, living in England, Spain, Germany and Greece.' She eventually found her calling in South Africa, settling here in 1990.

Her first venture with the Khayelitsha women was to make bags for supermarkets and the conference industry. After completing a photographic study of the



Nicole-Marie is all smiles

women's houses and township streets, Nicole-Marie partnered with a textile-design school in Paris to create patented fabric designs, which were released in 2009. She then spent last year designing the first clothing collection and launched the store in December with Zolani Mahola, of Freshlyground, as her ambassador.

All items in the shop, including the decor, are inspired by the townships. The range of clothing includes skirts, dresses, men's shirts, boxer shorts, sandals, pumps and accessories such as belts and scarves. The shop has a lovely verandah, where customers can enjoy a cup of tea and meet some of the embroiderers.

All garments are made in township cooperatives from 100% African cotton. 'We are Fair Trade accredited and our relationship with the cooperatives is solid, alive. We are proud of the quality products we're producing together,' says Nicole-Marie. 'I feel great about what has been accomplished ... a long journey, but it's not finished!' 021-418-0388



Zolani Mahola in
a Township dress...



... and a Mitrio Bag
from Township

photographs: amy hopkins; supplied



The Bay Bookshop



Anpa jewellery

NICOLE-MARIE'S FAVOURITE NEIGHBOURS AT CAPE QUARTER

- **BICCCS:** 'When it's hot, I go upstairs for an Italian *chinotto* drink!' 021-418-0725
- **Lazari:** 'On cooler days, I love the different soups here!' 021-419-9555
- **Anpa:** 'Their jewellery is irresistible and made in SA!' 021-418-9622
- **The Bay Bookshop:** 'To de-stress, I like spending time in a comfortable armchair here. They have amazing books on fashion and photography.' 021-421-1301
- **Café Origin:** 'Nothing beats starting the morning here, surrounded by beautiful people. It feels like Europe.' 28 Hudson Str (around the corner), 021-421-1000

WE LIKE:

- The Mitrio bag at Township
- Hand-embroidered stuffed, used coffee bags at Township
- Ballerina pumps in blue, red and green by Township
- Two-wood and silver ring from Anpa
- *Dawn of Bunny Suicides* book by Andy Riley at The Bay Bookshop
- The croissants and ice-cream at BICCCS