

Duo cultivates fashion at Pineapples boutique

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NADINE KAM / NKAM@STARADVERTISER.COM
A halter maxi dress with shell detail in a black-knit print, from Pineapples' Margarita line, is \$95.

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Geri Berger was working as an outreach counselor with homeless teens in Waikiki when motherhood

called and she ended up taking a few years off to raise her own child.

Once she was ready to return to work, a meeting with 17-year clothing manufacturer and wholesaler Sandra Tierney, whose husband was a longtime friend of Berger's husband, turned both their lives around.

Tierney had already made the life-changing move from Florida to Hawaii about four years ago and was toying with the idea of making the leap to retail. In Berger, she found someone versed in contemporary fashion and she welcomed her input. Today, the former counselor is the chief designer and consultant for Tierney's Pineapples boutique in Haleiwa.

"It came up really casually," Berger said. "Next thing you know, she dragged me to the North Shore and showed me an opportunity to create a unique store."

Although the boutique carries a handful of mainland labels such as Hale Bob and Funky Planet, Tierney wanted to create her own lines to avoid the trap of looking like every other boutique in town. So Berger has her hands full coming up with designs for the store's four collections:

- » Bali Batiks Resort wear, featuring dresses made with hand-dyed and batik designs.
- » Margarita Resort Wear, using herringbone rayon fabric in a variety of prints for everyday, resort or work wear.
- » Zen Knits, a contemporary line comprising casual dresses and separates in solids, prints and tie-dye. It also encompasses the Zen Party Collection of special

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» The Pineapples Collection, which comprises a Tie Dye Voile Collection and embroidered Cutwork Collection of dresses.

The boutique makes the rare attempt to make everyone happy by offering something for everyone at every price point. The resort-style clothing ranges in size from XXS to 3X, and most pieces fall in the sweet spot between \$20 and \$98. Despite the reasonable prices, there is quality in the fabric used.

"We were looking for quality, but at a good price," Berger said. "It's hard to find the median, and we wanted uniqueness as well. We live on an island and nobody wants to walk down the street and see the same dress on someone else."

BERGER'S background in health education didn't put the Mrs. Hawaii International 2004 on track to be a designer, but she said, "It comes from the heart. I've been shopping since I was a little girl. It's a passion and I try to translate what's going on in the fashion industry to something that will work with Hawaii's climate and culture.

"I wear a lot of it, so a lot of it reflects my taste. I wear a lot of pants and tops so I'm working on a denim line. It's something I'm excited about. But what's cool is that there really is something for everyone. Our Zen Knits line alone has more than 125 pieces in 25 color choices."

The boutique also carries a large selection of accessories and jewelry, from inexpensive capiz shell earrings starting at \$8 to silver-and-stone jewelry from Nepal and other stone jewelry that costs a few hundred dollars.

There are also bath and body products, small decorative kitchen and household goods, and gift items.

Pineapples Boutique is at 66-200 Kamehameha Highway. Call 637-8477 or visit www.pineapplesboutique.com; get info on the latest deals at the boutique's Facebook page. Pineapples is offering a Black Friday promotion on Nov. 26 of 20 percent off everything except sale items, which are already 50 percent off.

Check out more of Style Editor **Nadine Kam's** shopping finds in a special Surf's Up! North Shore 2010 report at www.honolulupulse.com, where you'll also find

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