

# VIEW

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# TWO



DENIM

SPORT

ARVIND

LEISURE



Technology at the heart

From footprint to heartprint



A short sojourn in India's West and an inspiring conversation amid the backdrop of woven landscapes, left us with the very Hygge realization that we treasure what we love...

ARVIND



It's a beautiful, sunny morning, and we've chosen to spend it in the sprawling, 450-acre campus of the Arvind Group Textile Park, Santej. It is a befitting introduction to a legendary Indian enterprise that specializes in innovative fashion textiles for shirtings, indigo denim, khaki, knits, printed voiles and technical textiles – as well as being an inspiring experience of contrasts. The facility itself feels futuristic, yet it sits on the outskirts of the quaint, but booming city of Ahmedabad in the Gujarat: indeed, it's a company and a city both equally committed to the future, but with a strong sense of history!

Founded in 1931 by Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Arvind is today helmed by the fourth generation of his family. "Heritage, innovation and sustainability is in the DNA of Arvind," says Mr. Sanjay Lalbhai, the Chairman and Managing Director, as we set off to witness the production of fabrics that will become sophisticated, quality fashion products sold all over the world.

"Arvind's ethos, from idea to product is woven into everything that we do; and this has made us the world's leading and most flexible, multi-fibre, fashion solution provider in the world," says Mr Lalbhai. "It's a footprint and a heartprint that you will find in over 300 million meters of fabric and 40 million garments produced for international fashion brands and retailers around the world, by roughly 30,000 team members of the Arvind family."

The customer list is incredibly long and, in some cases, strictly confidential. In addition to textile parks in Ahmedabad and garment factories in Bangalore, Arvind owns sites in Ethiopia. The Group also possesses several in-house fashion brands and international licenses.

"It's been a conscious and long journey: from manufacturing to controlling the entire product lifecycle, from the cotton seed to garment finishing," Mr Lalbhai says. "We are able to control the most inherent qualities of our product, and have arrived at complete traceability. We know where every single meter of our fabric was made and how."

The production at the Santej Park is an archetypal, time-honored mix of machines and handmade processes in a fine balance of tradition and future-forward technology. There is a palpable sense of purpose in the air: the staff greet us warmly, enthusiastic and proud about the roles they play in the creation of masterpieces and patents such as the BlueTech, Sprint, Yin-Yang, Aizome, Super Doux and many more to fulfill the most demanding fashion aesthetic and functional needs of customers across the globe.

Tradition and technology may be the warp and weft of the Arvind success story, but the magic that is produced here is neither flat, nor two-dimensional. The smorgasbord of fabrics is a reminder that when technology is sufficiently advanced, dreams can come out of machines in unlimited, multi-dimensional variations. Different threads, colours,







'Fundamentally Right' is Arvind's bespoke approach to sustainability, which focuses on cotton, people, money, energy, water and chemicals. Arvind has been conferred several awards for sustainability initiatives at every stage

**"We know where every single meter of our fabric was made and how."**

of the production process. It supports the small scale, hand-woven Khadi industry and runs the SHARDA Trust, an organization committed to helping the urban poor by improving basic physical infrastructure, secondary and tertiary healthcare, as well as upgrading and enhancing skills and abilities.

Apart from Arvind, Mr. Lalbhai, who is also a torchbearer on the academic front, is working on his dream of curating the first ever Indigo Museum in the world. Retracing the journey of a 6,000-year-old textile dyeing process is something we are hoping to witness and experience on our next visit to Ahmedabad.

materials and techniques can be used to transform a regular fabric into one with optical effects and peculiar shapes.

For the amateur eye, apart from design and durability, there's the test of touch of course: fabrics, depending on whether they're single or double ply, can feel vastly different. Finishing processes at the various washing steps and mechanical procedures are aimed at fixing colors and optimizing the hand-feel. Finally, after these last stages, the fabric is ready to be quality-controlled, before heading off to become a shirt, trouser a jacket or a dress, that will be either washed down to achieve a casual vintage aesthetic or kept clean for a dressy look.

When wandering through Arvind, it's the contrast between the sci-fi style plant and the backdrop of a natural environment, where deer and antelope graze quite nonchalantly, that sets the tone for how incredible this unassuming conversation has been. We loved the inspiring Innovation Lab and the archive room where historical fabric journals are stored, again an embodiment of all that Arvind stands for: heritage, innovation and sustainability. A particularly amazing experience was seeing the 'Look-Book', that is curated by the Innovation Team every season and modeled by the in-house, shop-floor staff, to be shared with key clients across the globe as a source of inspiration.







Recycled Denim



the  
artisan  
project



YIN-YANG



Denim  
HOMESTEAD



Aizome



SUPER  
DOUX



Denim  
HOMESTEAD



INDIGO  
MADRAS



Aizome



THE  
SPRINT



BLUE  
TECH



INDIGO  
WOOL

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