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# Shoreline

Issue 76

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# Artisan in the Emirates

Journalist **Andrew Strange** talks to a jewellery maker who is making the most of her international accounts

**J**ewellery maker Preethi Janice D'Sa is among a growing community of expatriate artisans that is thriving amid the rising tower blocks of Dubai.

As the Regional Communications and Marketing Manager for a global engineering and environmental company, she loves her job. However, D'Sa is one of the region's busy business people who are finding new ways to unwind from the stresses of the working day.

She relaxes by making jewellery and is a member of ARTE (Artisans of the Emirates), selling her creations both at the group's monthly soukh, which is held on the second Friday of each month in Dubai's Times Square Centre, and all over the world via the internet.

She enjoys the extra money the sales bring in and, as a Lloyds TSB International customer, holds US dollar, euro and sterling accounts with the bank, which are a real help because customers often want to transfer payments for the jewellery in those currencies.

D'Sa was born in India but her parents moved to Abu Dhabi when she was just 26 days old. She took a degree in biological science in India and then her masters in molecular biology in the UK. However, despite this scientific background she has always been creative.

**“LOTS OF EXPATRIATES ARE MOVING TO LLOYDS TSB INTERNATIONAL HERE”**

She says: “I've always enjoyed the arts, music and performing arts and have been involved in them at various points of my life. When I moved back to Abu Dhabi from the UK, I couldn't find any outlets for my creativity. Then, four years ago, I stumbled upon an internet group called Dubai Online Arts and Crafts. Soon afterwards ARTE was formed, enabling members to meet at the soukhs.”

### Creative streak

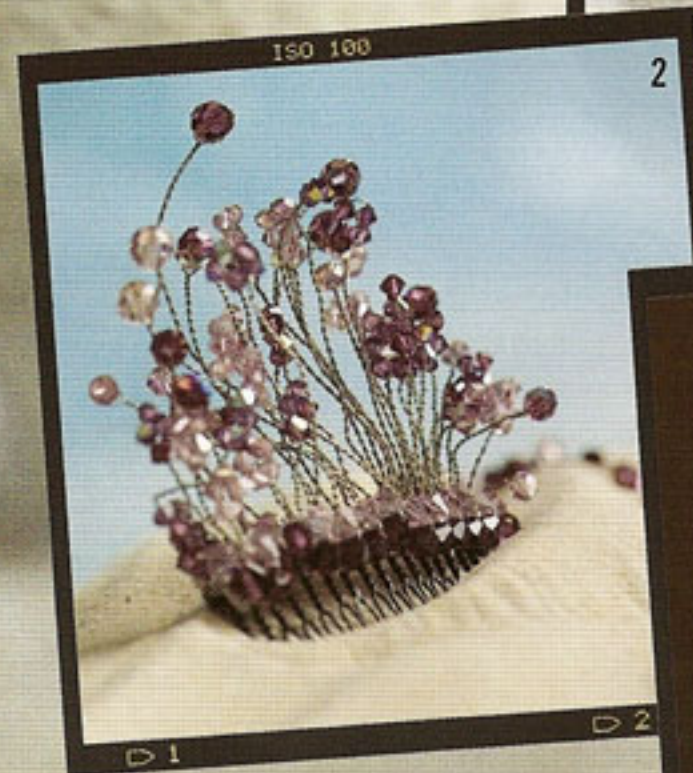
D'Sa makes her jewellery out of crystals and gemstones, which she discovered after a friend took her to bead shops in Hong Kong. She says: “When I saw bagfuls of beads I thought, ‘Wow! I want to buy them all!’ I bought loads of beads, but didn't do anything with them for a year. But one day I got bored and so I got the beads out.” She initially started beading using various stringing techniques but now specialises in crocheting crystals and wire to create one-of-a-kind jewellery and accessories. She also likes wire-work and has made tiaras and hair accessories. She calls her collection Janys Dé Couture.

In February 2008, D'Sa reached the finals of the Swarovski Abaya Competition, designing a one-of-a-kind abaya (clothing worn by Muslim women) using Swarovski crystals and crystallised elements. She used ▶

**Main image** A spectacular piece of D'Sa's jewellery in the sand.

**1** She uses Swarovski crystals to make her stunning pieces.

**2** D'Sa makes one-of-a-kind jewellery. **3** Preethi Janice D'Sa.



► her unique crochet jewellery technique to make major parts of the intricate abaya using hundreds of the crystals. There were about 60 entrants from across the Middle East region and D'Sa was among the 10 who were chosen to attend the finals.

"The finalists had to turn their designs into abayas and it was a challenging time for me, but a good step in the right direction of becoming an entrepreneur," she says.

### Beating the stress

D'Sa moved to Dubai from Abu Dhabi in April 2008 when she was appointed to her job. This means that she no longer has to travel down from Abu Dhabi to attend the ARTE soukh.

She says: "Tourists are always looking for handcrafted goods made in Dubai, even if they are created by expatriates. The ARTE soukh is a unique sort of event in the UAE because it is the first time people have got together and said 'OK, we are expats, we are creative and we want to do something together'.

"Living in Dubai can be very stressful. I hate being stuck in the traffic for hours on end. There are many ARTE members in high-flying jobs who want a way to de-stress and if you can sell something that you've created at the same time, it's a bonus. At this point

Main: Another colourful piece of D'Sa's jewellery.  
Below: The abaya.



### ARTE for art's sake

ARTE was founded in 2005 by felt maker Miriam Walsh and silversmith Paul Townsend and its members now include artisans from 25 countries. When it launched, many of the craft fairs around the Emirates included mass-produced, imported goods of varying quality. In contrast, ARTE aims to be a showcase for talented artisans in the Emirates who make their own goods.

Its members produce items as diverse as contemporary silver jewellery, haute couture clothing, wood and stone carving, and painting styles ranging from oils, watercolours and acrylics to pencil drawings. If you'd like to know more about ARTE, visit [www.arte.ae](http://www.arte.ae) or email them at [contact@arte.ae](mailto:contact@arte.ae)

### INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTS

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- Offshore PhoneBank and internet banking 24 hours a day
- No exchange fee from ATMs\*
- Competitive interest rates of up to 3.91% AER\*\*
- Expertise from a trusted British bank \*\*\*
- Representative offices around the world
- Added extras and discounts

\*When using debit card in a country which uses the same currency as your card is denominated in. \*\*Annual equivalent rate. \*\*\* Lloyds TSB does not guarantee the liabilities of its subsidiaries.

in my life, jewellery making and freelance writing are my de-stress vehicles."

D'Sa banks with Lloyds TSB International not only because she finds her offshore accounts very convenient but also because of the quality of customer service, which she believes is often lacking in many other banks based locally. Her new job will also take her overseas, where the accounts will be even more useful.

She says: "Lots of expatriates are moving to Lloyds TSB International here. The service is good, which is important because many banks based in the Emirates do not offer quality customer service. I can get on the phone and know that I will be speaking to reliable Lloyds TSB International staff at the other end."

D'Sa's work is available to buy and you can see more at [www.janysde.com](http://www.janysde.com) ■

### MORESHORELINE

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