



JUNE 12-18, 2009

Friday

It's a breeze!

How to combat the mane issues
of sun, sand and sweat **35**

00500



©2009 Time Inc. Magazine

■ SHAWARMA FOR THE SOUL

Hitting the bull's eye!



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Her idea is simple but it has been waiting to be born for ages. What woman has not had moments of frustration as she frantically fished in her maddeningly commodious handbag for a mobile phone, lipstick, wet wipes, perfume, hair brush, mirror, flash drives, car keys, house keys and other nameless keys, only to keep coming up with the not-needed-right-now item every time? Most women know the excruciating stress of being at the head of a mile-long queue in a shop and being held hostage by the credit card pouch that seems to be playing truant inside the Grand Canyon-esque handbag.

Patty Gay understands this stress only too well. Her handbag moments were getting increasingly hairy. She was constantly forgetting

some important item every time she switched handbags. Frustrated, she even stopped changing her bags for fear of forgetting something. "That was when I decided to do some research." She came up with the Drop It handbag organiser.

"It's basically a pouch which has around seven compartment-type pockets where you can load your essentials. This pouch fits into your handbag. The next time you switch bags, all you need to do is grab the organiser by its small handles and transfer it to your next handbag." Gay ensures that you will not waste precious time managing your handbag when you can spend that time doing more important things - like deciding on what shoes to wear on any particular day.

Gay experimented with different fabrics, shapes and sizes while designing the organiser. It helped that she knew the basics of stitching and the art of choosing fabrics. She owes her professional stitching skills to her mum and grandmother.

"My late grandmother was a brilliant dressmaker who made fabulous wedding gowns. She taught my mother to design and stitch and I, in turn, used to watch my mother. I really took an interest in fabrics, texture, thread and ribbons. I cut my first pattern when I was eight years old. By the time I was at university, my parents didn't have to worry about my clothes as I was making them myself, or redesigning my mum's old clothes into trendy ones."

Gay owes a lot of her creative passion to her upbringing and to her French and Moroccan influences, as well as her 17 years in Dubai.

"My parents taught me to appreciate what we have but at the same time, they encouraged me to dream big.

"Almost half of my life has been spent in Dubai. Undoubtedly, this has had a significant influence on me. The dynamism of Dubai is so infectious and inspiring."

No wonder she was happy to move back to Dubai from Morocco, with her French husband Thierry and daughter Isabela. "I discovered that I did not want to compromise the pleasure of being a mum by having a full-time job, so I decided instead to look for a creative outlet.

"France has also had a great influence on me [being married for 12 years to a lovely Frenchman!] and I embrace French culture with great enthusiasm. Most of my works are unpretentious but at the same time, they possess elegance."

Despite her surefire concept, she gives her husband full credit for her success. "I may have the technical know-how and a knack for choosing the right raw materials, but without Thierry's support, I wouldn't have made it. When you are in a positive environment, it's easier to be creative."

For more information, write to tpgay@emirates.net.ae or visit ARTE's Etsy shopping website www.arte.ae and www.goodideas-dubai.com.

- Preethi Janice D'Sa is a Dubai-based freelancer

After years of struggling to find things in her handbags, Patty Gay (top left) invented the Drop It handbag organiser (below).

