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contributors

Atlanta native **BRET LOVE** has been covering arts, entertainment, restaurants and travel for 18 years, interviewing everyone from presidents and mayors to rock and movie stars for publications such as *AirTran's Go*, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *Destination Marriott* and *Rolling Stone*. In addition to his award-winning freelance work, he is also music editor of *Georgia Music Magazine*, editor-in-chief of *Green Global Travel* and co-founder of improv comedy company Groupmind Productions. For this issue's Culture section, Love ventured OTP for a taste of new farm-to-table concept Seed Kitchen & Bar.



DANA HAZELS SEITH is an award-winning journalist. She is a former CNN producer and DailyCandy Atlanta editor who interviewed rug maven Asha Chaudhary for the story "Princess of Prints" in this issue's Domicile section. "The business model behind Jaipur Rugs is so interesting to me," Seith says. "I found through my interview with Asha that it is indeed a company filled with gorgeous textiles and elements for the home, but, really, at its core Jaipur is also a philanthropic company set on connecting people... which is really remarkable."



Writer and editor **PHEBE WAHL** began her career in magazines in New York City at *Vogue*, and now enjoys discovering all of Atlanta's hidden hot spots. For this month's issue, she checks out the swanky new shops of Buckhead Plaza. "I live around the corner, and new spots like Drybar and Huff Harrington Home are welcome additions to the neighborhood," she explains. "I feel like I am back in New York!" Wahl is a former editor of *PaperCity Atlanta* and DailyCandy Kids Atlanta. She has contributed to *The Atlantan*, *Atlanta Peach*, *flower* magazine and *Time Out New York*. In addition to writing for *JEZEBEL*, Wahl is the editor-in-chief of *The Atlantan Brides*.

Born and raised in Georgia, the only thing keeping photographer **JIMMY JOHNSTON** from being a true Southerner is his lack of a Southern accent. Johnston got his first taste for photography taking cheap 35mm cameras to concert venues not much bigger than your living room. He went on to study photography at The Creative Circus, where he now teaches in addition to his freelance work. This issue, Johnston captures the rootsy aesthetic of five-piece band Homefront and snaps a portrait of financial whiz Suzanne Durbin in Culture.





Atlanta Asha Chaudhary rules the handcrafted rug industry.

Princess of Prints

Asha Chaudhary and her clan are rug royalty.

It's easy to see why Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams' proprietors have a penchant for working with Jaipur rugs, often using the pieces in their Buckhead showroom displays. The luxury line of stylish floor toppers—with U.S. headquarters in Norcross—offers a color palette ranging from muted to bright, with motifs such as eye-catching botanicals and interesting patterns that are often years ahead of trends. But this local success story easily transcends its aesthetics. Jaipur's foundation is about more than the starting point of a well-designed room; it comprises a rich family heritage as well.

A line of pillows and textiles are slated for an April 2012 launch, with accent furniture to follow shortly thereafter. Jaipur also will push for aggressive growth in production in the next three years, augmenting its work force with 55,000 new artisans, bringing their numbers to an impressive 100,000. Until then, Asha and the company her father created will continue to masterly balance their own history with modern integrity, bringing about social change and global awareness, one rug at a time. 888.676.7330, jaipurrrugs.com

—DANA HAZELS SEITH

Jaipur's moniker comes from the home city of the company's founder, N.K. Chaudhary. Dubbed the Pink City, this jewel of India boasts some of the most iconic images of architecture in the world. No wonder Chaudhary found so much design inspiration here. The ethically minded entrepreneur helmed Jaipur for 32 years following its founding, finally placing his daughter, Asha, in charge of the U.S. division in 2006. Happily, she shares her father's fresh approach and global values, with the added bonus of modern business acumen.

"My dad always says we're not in the business of making rugs, but of connecting craftsmen to consumers," Asha says. The heart of her world is collaboration, relying on the fundamentals of hard work and passion, giving these rugs a much deeper meaning than sheer decoration. While Asha may be versed in the more modern conceits of social media marketing and contemporary design, her father was instrumental in forging a philanthropic component for the business—one he maintained with every rug he produced.

In India, Jaipur spearheads a manufacturing process that's revolutionizing the floor covering industry. District managers go directly to the homes of the artisans who produce rugs for the company by hand—all told, some 45,000 (mostly women) weavers—and extend financial support to their families for as many as eight months. The charitable model has worked so well it's got top economists talking, and a Harvard University case study on Jaipur is in the works.

Jaipur also is creating a cottage industry in the process. Examining a Kala rug, Asha describes the craftsmanship used to create it. "It's almost an art," she says. "Making these is not easy; some of the hand-knotted rugs, such as an 8-by-10-foot size, can take anywhere between five to 10 months to create."

By linking families, artisans, designers and customers in a seamless way, Jaipur somehow makes the world seem a lot smaller. And on the design front, the company is actively adapting to the changing times, churning out items that are "traditional with a twist," Asha says. Gone are the tired designs of old; today, it's all about new takes on classic motifs.