

ARABIAN DREAM

Take a stylish trip with Claire Rosen through the sumptuous corridors of Jumeirah Zabeel Saray

PHOTOGRAPHER: CLAIRE ROSEN; PRODUCER: BELINDA MULLER; MODEL: BRONX OF BAREFACE AGENCY; STYLIST: CHRYSTEL PUSCHKE; HAIR AND MAKEUP: KATIE COUSINS USING CLOUD NINE AND ILLAMA SQUA; LIGHTING DESIGN: BOBBY LANE AND DAVID TEJADA; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT: DANNY CAMARENA; THIS PAGE TOP AND SKIRT: TEMPERLEY; RED SHIRT: HAIDER ACGERMANN @ IF BOUTIQUE; FEATHER NECKLACE: ANN DEMEULEMESTER @ IF BOUTIQUE; BELT: STYLIST OWN



JACKET: WHITE FOX COLLAR, HEADPIECE: BOOTS AND VELL-AMATO COUTURE; DRESS: CHLOE; SKIRT: SOFISTAFUNK SKIRT CO

THE OLD ADAGE 'A PICTURE TELLS A THOUSAND WORDS' RINGS TRUE IN CLAIRE ROSEN'S SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE LUXURIOUS JUMEIRAH ZABEEL SARAY.

The collection of beautiful pictures (highlighted within this feature), are inspired by the Dubai-based hotel Jumeirah Zabeel Saray and combines Rosen's love of fairy tales and fables with her passion for fashion and beauty. "I was inspired by the feeling I got when first entering the lobby; you are immediately struck by the scale and beauty of the space," she says. "I wanted to highlight themes of luxury, opulence, timelessness and fantasy using the lush regional decor within each restaurant to dictate the story."

Rosen was chosen for the shoot after hosting a workshop for aspiring photographers at the hotel as part of this year's Gulf Photo Plus photography event in Dubai. Not one to pass up a challenge, the New York-based photographer snapped up the opportunity and consequently captured the property's tone, aesthetics and Arabian influence in a timeless series of photographs. "The most satisfying aspect was being able to work with such a talented team of people for the first time and have everyone click creatively. The most challenging aspect of this shoot was the time constraints – I wanted to shoot everywhere in the hotel."

The series showcases seven of the hotel's restaurants; Lalazar, Voi, C Bar, Imperium, Amala, Al Nafoorum and the Executive Lounge. "I loved the whole hotel, but in the interest of time we decided to stick to only photographing in the restaurants with the most interesting room for me being the restaurant Lalazar."

For Rosen, her love of photography manifested after watching her first picture process in the dark room at college. "I took my first photography class in college and still remember watching an image emerge from a seemingly blank piece of paper floating in the darkroom chemicals. It seemed like magic and I was hooked right away."

After graduating from the Savannah Georgia's College of Art and Design in 2006 with a degree in photography, Rosen went on to manage the studio of renowned photographer Joyce Tenneson and assisted at the Maine Media Workshops in Rockport, Maine, for three years. Then, in 2009, "I set off on my own and have been working for myself since then," she confesses.

As she embarked on a competitive career in photography, Rosen received both good, and bad, advice along the way. "The best was figure out what you want to do first and then figure out how you're going to do it," she says. "The worst was shoot more like other people and make your work more like current market trends. The photography industry can be very competitive and demanding and you need to find ways to set yourself apart from the crowd to succeed. Focus on making strong work that you care about and the rest will come."

Drawing inspiration for her work is simple. "It usually starts with dreams I have had incorporated with things I have seen that day, week



DRESS: TEMPERLEY; HAT: MURMURE BY SPIRIT @ BLOOMINGDALES; SHOES: CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN

TOP: ALBERTA FERRETTI @ DUBAI MALL; AFRICAN NECKLACE WITH SHELL: STYLIST OWIN; WHITE BONE NECKLACE: KENNETH JAY LANE @ BLOOMINGDALES; TRIBAL: WOVEN SHORT NECKLACE: LUCY HUTCHINGS @ BLOOMINGDALES; YELLOW SASH AND WHITE SKIRT: SOPHISTAFUNK SKIRT CO.; TOP: SKIRT: MAISON RABH KAIRUZ @ IF BOUTIQUE; DARK GREEN UNDERSKIRT: IVAN GRUNDAHL @ IF BOUTIQUE; SHOES: VERSACE; BRACELET: MAWI @ BLOOMINGDALES; RING: KENNETH JAY LANE @ BLOOMINGDALES





DRESS: AMATO COUTURE; EARRINGS: MAWI @ BLOOMINGDALES



TOP AND SKIRT: TEMPERLEY; RED SHIRT: HAIDER ACKERMANN @ IF BOUTIQUE; FEATHER NECKLACE: ANN DE MEULEMESTER @ IF BOUTIQUE; BELT: STYLIST OWN; PINK BOW: KOKIN @ BLOOMINGDALES

or month,” she says. Films, fashion, design, illustration, interiors, nature and books; such as fairy tales, children’s stories, fables and myths, also inspire the die-hard fashion fan. “References from historical time periods (anything pre-1940s), and especially things that are bizarre and unusual (circus, burlesque, vaudeville, magic, curiosities, science, taxidermy) also inspire me,” she says.

One of the many appealing aspects of Rosen’s job is that everyday is “different” for the New Yorker, who sold her first photograph at a group gallery show in 2007. “I get to create stories and fill them with the things I like. Every day for me is different and I get to be around such a range of things from horses, old trains, beautiful dresses, unicycles and castles, to taxidermy animals, hot air balloons, bats, birds and abandoned mansions all around the world.”

With a handful of projects underway, Rosen is very much in demand. Alongside her usual editorial fashion shoots and advertising campaigns, she is currently working on numerous fine art photography-based monographs. “At the same time, I am completing my self-portrait book entitled *Fairy Tales and Other Stories*, and *Dolls in the Attic* a photographic documentation of historic dolls.”

So for a twenty something Rosen, the future looks bright. “I have no idea what the future holds but if anything was possible I hope to be living on a farm with only miniature animals, and travelling and photographing what I want with an unlimited budget.” For now, however, she says: “I want to tell better and better stories with my photographs – I think it is one of those goals that continues to move as you approach it.” ♦

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Camera
35mm Canon 5D Mark II

Favourite food
Sushi

Favourite film
The Fall

If you could photograph one particular thing what would it be?

I am dying to photograph an elephant or a giraffe with a model in a big dress.

If you weren’t a photographer, what would you be doing?

I would join the circus.

Finish this sentence...Photography is...

Photographer Diane Arbus explains it beautifully: “a secret about a secret. The more it tells, the less you know” (1923-1971).