



BY SUREENA DALAL

FROTH & ALL THAT

Transforming art into utility is something we ought to learn from these ladies. Dharini Patel from Mud and moon, Ruchita & Ritika from Mollis Soaps and Laavanya Peshattiwar of Vanya Soap Co. aren't making just a bar of soap, but clubbing aspects of sensory notes with finesse. Look out for these cold-pressed soaps around you!

DHARINI PATEL

Founder, Mud And Moon

Based out of Ahmedabad, the design studio is acing at their interesting mix of techniques, concepts, traditions and themes. With zero use of plastic in their packaging and touching the sustainable route, the team strives for excellence in every aspect, every day.



WHAT'S MUD AND MOON'S PECULIARITY?

In terms of physical aspects, the cut and the finishing of the soap and the manner of packaging and in terms of the virtual aspects, it's the photography, how we display and sell is always greater than how many we sell. Eventually, I can say attention to detail is our peculiarity and that's something I can never compromise on.

HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT CHOOSING THE INGREDIENTS FOR THE SOAPS?

We choose ingredients in a way that the final colour, texture, and aroma of the soap compliments each other, telling a story that justifies the concept/ title of the soap.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAVOURITE SOAP FROM YOUR BRAND.

It has to be The Pride soap. We designed it when we participated in a pride parade in our city pre-Covid. It is inspired by the pride flag and was an instant hit at the parade. It represents the kind of work I want to do with mud and moon, a practical piece of art that fits in the context, spreads love and helps society be a better place one product at a time.

IF YOU TAKE THE MONTH OF OCTOBER AS AN INSPIRATION, WHO WOULD YOU COLLABORATE WITH AND WHAT KIND OF SOAP WOULD YOU MAKE?

I associate October with the start of something beautiful. Hence, there has to be a celebration. And celebration for me can be best represented with a burst of colours. Hence I would love to collaborate with an artist called Katie Rodgers who also owns a company of hand-crafted soft pastels. I always marvel at her colourful work as well as the process of making soft pastels.

PEPPERMINT, COFFEE, NUTMEG. WHICH ONE DESCRIBES YOU THE BEST?

Can I please calmly lie down between coffee and nutmeg?



DHARINI PATEL



RUCHITA SHAH & RITIKA SHAH

Founders, Mollis Soaps

Beautifully crafted and sustainably produced, Mollis Soaps are a fusion of exquisite raw materials and textures. The Brand swells with pride about sourcing their ingredients locally and with zero wastage in production.

WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND MOLLIS?

We are a homegrown brand from India, started by two sisters during the first lockdown here because of the Covid-19 pandemic. We were always fascinated by the art of candle and soap making and we started it as a way to learn a new skill since we had some free time on our hands during the lockdown. Gradually after a lot of hits and trials, we started getting some nice results and launched our brand. Individually we both also have our separate careers apart from soap making, I have a clothing line Basque and my sister, Ritika is a fashion photographer at Prithvi Pictures.

YOUR MOST FAVOURITE INGREDIENT AND WHY?

Our most favourite ingredient has to be the kinds of butter that we use - shea, kokum or mango. 90% of our recipes are three butter recipes as we want our soaps to be as nourishing as possible. Butters feel luxurious and moisturising on the skin and also help to make a harder bar of soap. Especially Shea butter has endless benefits - it's anti-inflammatory, safe for all skin types, helps in boosting collagen production and also promotes cell regeneration. The benefits are just endless.

WHAT'S THE MOST FASCINATING THING ABOUT SOAP MAKING?

Everything about soap making is not only fascinating but also so therapeutic... from the process to unmoulding it to see how it has turned out to cutting the bars. The cold process method has to be the most fascinating thing about it as you see all the plant-based oils and butters mix with sodium hydroxide and turn to soap. The cold process method also brings out all the properties of the raw materials used, making it the most sustainable way of producing soaps with zero wastage.

IF YOU HAD TO COME UP WITH A COLLECTION THAT WAS INSPIRED BY A CITY, WHICH CITY WOULD IT BE AND WHAT WOULD BE THE KEY INGREDIENT?

Smells always trigger some of the strongest memories. I studied fashion design from Milan and I just had to make a soap variant which reminded me of the aroma of not just a single cup of espresso but the entire street of open cafes brewing fresh coffee early morning on my way to school. I named it Milano morning and of course, the key ingredient had to be coffee...it brings back so many memories and a feeling of comfort when I think of the life lived there. Maybe one day I make a whole collection out of it!

PATCHOULI, GERANIUM, OUDH. WHICH ONE DESCRIBES YOU THE BEST?

Oudh describes us the best. I am a big fan of strong scents and Oudh just hits that sweet spot. It's a highly fragrant luxurious rich scent which is also unisex with warm and woody notes. We have three variants which are made with Oudh - Dunes, white Oudh and Oudh. And all three are our best sellers.



RUCHITA SHAH

LAVANYA PESHATTIWAR

Founder, Vaanya Soap Co.

Bringing forward age-old practices of crafting products, Vaanya Soap Co. has a simple goal in mind - live sustainably. Ever since 2019, they have produced and given a home to 2000+ handcrafted, plant-based and sustainably manufactured products, keeping it 100% plastic-free and with zero-waste.





LAVANYA PESHATTIWAR

WHEN CONCEPTUALISING INGREDIENTS FOR A BLOCK OF SOAP, WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR?

The most important for us at Vaanya is the quality of ingredients and where we source them from. We dedicate a lot of our resources to find the best vendors who have transparent processes. One of the main considerations for us, apart from the quality of the ingredients, is the source of origin. We try to ensure that most, if not all, of our supplies are sourced from within India. This, in turn, helps us support our economy first.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPOSTABLE PACKAGING.

Packaging is an extremely important part of Vaanya. We pride ourselves on being plastic-free since day one, and we will continue to do so! Most components of our packaging are compostable and all are biodegradable & recyclable. The water-activated paper tape we use, our cardboard boxes, recycled paper labels, soap wraps, to name a few, can all be composted. We also reuse newspaper as void fill for our packages and this helps us to include an upcycled component to our ever-evolving, yet always earth-friendly packaging!

WHAT ARE YOUR AESTHETICS LIKE?

Clean, minimal, sophisticated - that's all! I'm pretty sure this is very visible through Vaanya too?

A BRAND OR A PERSON YOU WOULD LOVE TO CURATE A COLLECTION WITH AND WHY?

I honestly feel like the brands and organizations we are currently in the process of curating collections with are the ones I always wanted to work with! It's quite surreal because these enterprises are owned and operated by women whose passion and talent know no bounds, and there's nothing more I could ask for! More will be shared in good time.

CINNAMON, TEA TREE, GRAPEFRUIT. WHICH ONE DESCRIBES YOU THE BEST?

Definitely grapefruit - no questions! I am obsessed with all things citrus!