



Karma Style Salon: So, keepMe was founded in 2005. What was the inspiration behind the line?

Ali Kay: The inspiration is the idea of being cute & cozy at home, which stemmed from all of my amazing summers at sleepaway camp, sleepovers with close friends throughout middle school and high school, as well as my experience living in a college dorm. I always needed cute, flattering and fun clothing to hang out in that wouldn't look too risqué like lingerie, or too frumpy like an old t-shirt. Plus, I have always cherished my alone time - the time I spend in bed watching movies or reading a book- so it's great to have incredibly comfy, colorful items to lounge around in while I am enjoying my downtime!

KSS: Downtime must be a real treat for you these days... So, what's the design inspiration for the pieces?

AK: This past season was inspired by my summers in sleepaway camp at Crane Lake Camp in West Stockbridge, MA. The sporty shorts are a rendition of the running shorts I used to wear to play soccer, and I would wear simple lounge items around camp all summer until they were just worn to pieces! We made a conscious effort to veer away from the designs of traditional pajamas- i.e. boxy, printed, flannel, button down sets. We wanted to "re-design" the pajama and give it a new, more modern look.

KSS: How did the line come to be?

AK: I thought of the idea and then approached Anne [Anne Desbarres, oversees production of the line] and Olga [Olga Shvayetskaya, the designer], both of whom were thrilled about the concept and are still behind it full throttle!

KSS: And how long did you guys conceptualize before taking action?

AK: We spent almost a full year conceptualizing the line and then figuring out the particular designs.

KSS: Time well spent! Did you always want to go into fashion design?

AK: I didn't always want to, but I always had an entrepreneurial spirit and knew I would one day own and operate a company. The fashion design part came in when I realized that staple pajama pieces were something my wardrobe was completely bereft of, and something I couldn't seem to find in any stores...that niche was waiting to be filled.

KSS: Can you tell us which pieces are customer favorites?

AK: The racer tank is definitely a crowd pleaser, as are the sporty short and button short. People went wild over the sporty short in Miami [available at Intermix] and we had so many reorders for the short as well as the racer tank that we're reintroducing these pieces next season.

KSS: What about celebrity fans?

AK: I was told that Cher bought a lot of pieces in our night color at Henri Bendel... also the model Linda Vojtova and model/actress Jeannine Kaspar are great customers.

KSS: And surely look scrumptious in their keepMe pieces. And what are your favorite pieces?

AK: My favorite pieces are the racer tank (in night and berry) and the button short (in deep sea and berry), both of which I happen to be wearing right now (and that's the honest truth 😊).

KSS: Where do you see the line going in the future?

AK: I want to develop a premier brand for the home. I want people to be able to come to us for everything they need to make them comfortable in their homes... and to have fun sleepovers with girlfriends! keepMe is definitely about fun & comfort in the home.

KSS: Sounds good. And your plans for the future?

AK: I plan to expand keepMe into an entire lifestyle brand. We are also building a party model and an affiliate program so that people can make money, while promoting the keepMe ideal. I know I always needed extra cash throughout high school and college and I want to give others the opportunity to make money and have fun PJ parties by leveraging a concept that we have taken the time to develop.

KSS: More on that later, we hope.

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