



Photos of handbags by Cole Fennel Photography | Photos of celebrities and actresses Celebrity Black Card | Photos of wallets, clutches and backpacks by Fricaine

FASHION with **GLOBAL**

Locally-owned brand, Fricaine, celebrates humanity through fabrics that are essential parts of identities around the globe // BY HALEY BRADFORD BATEMAN

Stephen Kayode has always been fascinated by the way many countries and groups of people around the world seem to adopt fabrics as a part of their unique local identities, traditions and culture. A seasoned traveler who emigrated from Nigeria to the United States in 1999, Kayode was raised in a country where people traditionally don vibrant colors and purchase clothing that is tailored or custom-made. Unlike in the United States where people can visit a retailer and select an item from a shelf or rack for purchase, people in Africa often visit a tailor who custom makes their article of clothing and then return a week later to purchase the item.

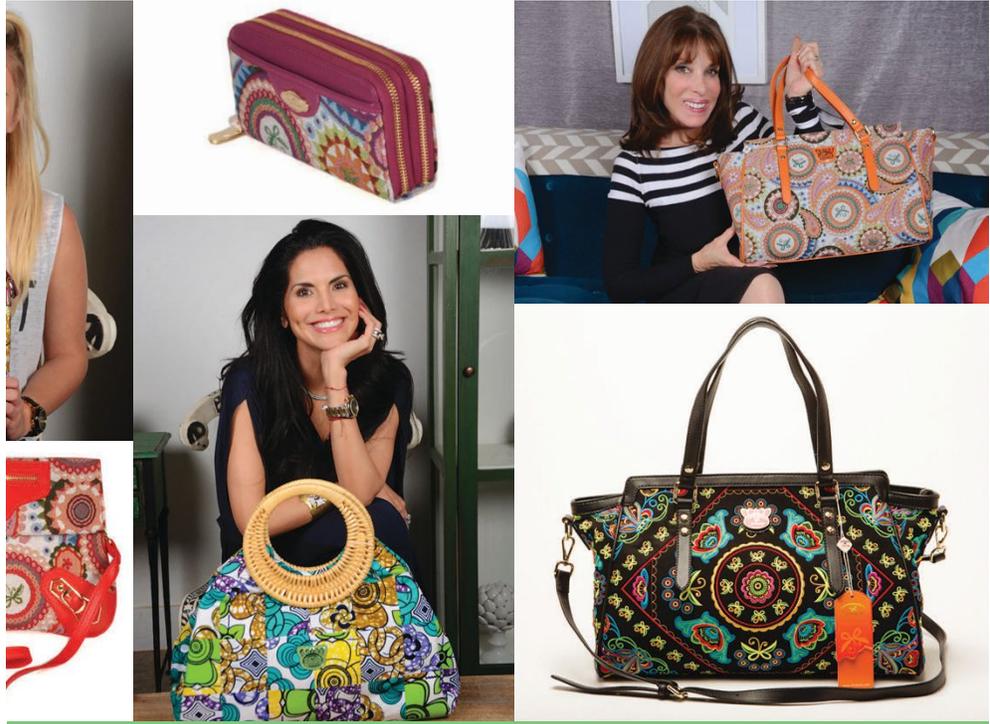
After moving to the United States, Kayode wanted to find a way to share these beautiful, vibrant fabrics that were native to Africa, as well as others he encountered during his travels abroad, with people in America. However, he knew that the method of custom-tailoring clothing items for purchase was less common in the United States. Instead, he wanted to find a way to share these exotic fabrics through refreshing designs that would be both locally appealing and still include

an exotic flair. In 2007, he created a concept that did just that.

He constructed a business model for taking some of the vibrant, rich fabrics that were native to Africa, as well as ones he had encountered in places like India, China and parts of Europe, and worked with designers to develop styles that would appeal to a western market in the United States. In doing so, he hoped to share the unique gems he had encountered in his travels with the rest of the world, without the limitations of geographic boundaries. In the process of his research and the establishment of his business, his brand, Fricaine, was born.

While the business eventually evolved to selling only handbags for now, the mission of Fricaine — which is derived from the French word “Africaine,” meaning African — is the same as the day he started: providing high quality fashion products from globally-sourced exotic fabrics that accentuate the tastes and preferences of the company’s customers.

After carefully selecting unique and superior quality fabrics, Fricaine redesigns and interprets the colorful materials in a different way to



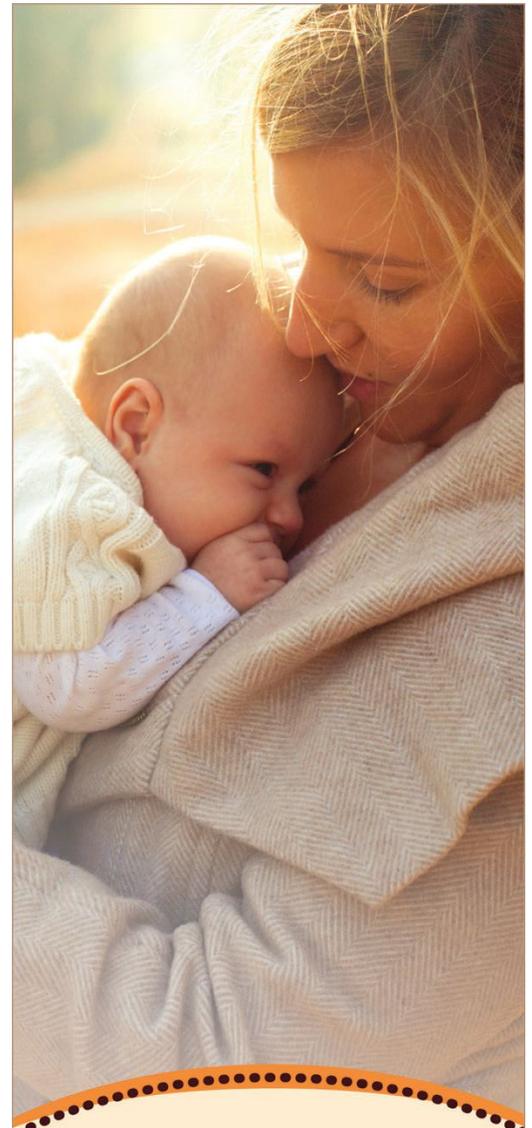
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produce an authentic, custom-made, durable handbag. The company also recently added other items to its portfolio to complement the handbags, including beautiful wallets, clutches and backpacks.

“The real spirit of Fricaine is to make what is local exotic with a global appeal,” Kayode explains. The company’s website, which is where the bags are currently available for purchase, invites customers to open their eyes to a hidden array of expansive cultural fabrics that have created an exciting new brand of fashion offerings. While Fricaine’s unique products are available through this online marketplace that ships to both the United States and China, Kayode hopes to one day expand the company’s portfolio to include other clothing and accessories that will be sold in standalone stores.

“We are still growing the brand and introducing people to it,” Kayode says. “But the response has been very, very encouraging. ... With our products now widely available for global enjoyment, we invite you to empower yourself and let Fricaine expand your access to a robust platform of carefully-selected exotic and otherwise unreachable fashion products.”

To learn more about Fricaine and to shop, visit www.fricaine.com. 



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