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# Shopping & Style



## Asiatique

Ivy Chelliah Foo, 41  
& Chin Chelliah Botellini, 40

Elder sister Ivy (left) did not share Chin's childhood ambition to run a shop until after it was set up, but they're now both very much into this living sanctuary. Contemporary pieces in a wide variety of textures like recycled and petrified wood, glass and stainless steel, with European and Asian influences, are bought in small quantities to preserve their limited-edition quality.

### What sets Asiatique apart from other furniture stores?

**CC:** Our pieces are not mass produced; each piece of furnishing can stand alone, or form part of a specific design style. [Our goal is to] create a living space for others that is beautiful, comfortable and will reflect their personality.

### What's it like working together as siblings?

**CC:** Our working relationship did take some getting used to. We have a professional working relationship now, yet

a sibling bond that makes it really special. We can communicate and share without feeling like we've said too much – and most of all, we don't have to prove anything to each other.

**IC:** Chin and I have a very open relationship. Contrary to common opinion that working with siblings is difficult, I find working with Chin really smooth and easy.

### How do your working styles complement each other?

**CC:** Ivy's the doer and I'm the thinker. Her calmness and approachability make customers feel at ease. She's also very open to ideas and ready to listen, which makes us a great pair too, because it allows me to constantly bounce ideas off her.

**IC:** Although Chin's younger than I am, I have the highest regard and respect for her – she's a great motivator and a big inspiration. Her passion rubs off on me and this pushes me beyond what I think I'm capable of.

14A Dempsey Rd (6471 3146, [www.asiatiquecollections.com](http://www.asiatiquecollections.com)). Daily 11am-7pm. Prices: mesh nickel candle holder \$89; carved wooden mirror \$590; tall cabinet \$2,900.

## Carrie K. Artisan Jewellery

Geraldine Kan, 42  
& Carolyn Kan, 39

Carolyn (right) was in advertising for almost 12 years, while Geraldine was a journalist with *The Straits Times* in the '90s and now has her own PR company that markets this silver-jewellery line. Carrie K. houses seven collections that make use of organic stones, leather crafted bracelets and liquid metal.

### What sets Carrie K. apart from other jewellery lines?

**CK:** All the designs used in my pieces are centred around staying true to yourself... We believe every piece of stone has its own personality and when people buy a piece, they get to choose their stone before we set it. It is something that's unique to them.

### What's it like working together as siblings?

**CK:** Because I used to be in advertising and worked with a lot of PR agencies, I found Geri so focused. I'm just really glad I've got her insight and input because she's like a scalpel, she

really just cuts through all the bulls\*\*t. That's what's fantastic – we're different but we complement each other. Our work ethic is also very similar – she doesn't stop working and I don't stop making.

**GK:** I think she's pushed me to broaden my ideas and views as well – to push the boundaries a bit more.

### Has working together pulled you guys closer?

**CK:** I get withdrawal symptoms when she's out of the country. The day she got back, I immediately rang and bribed her to come over for dinner with home-made soup. Various stockists including *Asiatique* and *The Society of Black Sheep* (6246 0916, [www.carriekrocks.com](http://www.carriekrocks.com)). Prices from \$100; signature range earrings over \$3,000 (inclusive of 42 diamonds and gold).



## Sisters of mercy

In the changing world of family businesses, sibling rivalry is so out of vogue. Cherylene Chan speaks to three enterprising sister duos who run a tight ship



## The Society of Black Sheep

Lin Li Yen, 45 & Lin Li Hsien, 47

A former journalist, Li Hsien (right) has been running the Crumpler (bag) stores and a street fashion store called Garage for ten years with Li Yen, a software company head. Now The Society carries a wide range of brands, everything from Injury's edgy goth pieces to House of Holland's cocktail dresses that show a softer, feminine feel.

### Why did you start The Society of Black Sheep?

**LH:** When we were college students in London, we loved wearing things [that were] a bit edgy. Now that we've hit our forties, our tastes have evolved – [we want] edgy, but more wearable and functional fashion. We found there weren't any specific shops for people like us, who have developed a more sophisticated taste and have a really busy lifestyle – so we started our own.

### What's it like working together as siblings?

**LY:** We've learnt to acknowledge that we might be at different levels in the

hierarchy of the organisation, but when we come back home, we're all the same. I'm the more daring business person. Li Hsien is more analytical, more detail-oriented and very methodical.

**LH:** She's more of a risk taker, whereas with my lawyer training, I tend to look at the potential downsides [first].

### Do you run into any disagreements?

**LH:** All the time. Because it's a constant discussion, we're always disagreeing about how things are going to be done.

**LY:** We won't bring it back to the family home though...

**LH:** It just bores the pants of the rest of the family, and running the business isn't something that personal. I think the thing about being siblings is you accept that you already have a relationship. You won't just walk away.

#B1-64, The Shoppes At Marina Bay Sands, 10 Bayfront Ave (6688 7223, [www.societyofblackssheep.com](http://www.societyofblackssheep.com)). Daily 10am-10pm. Accessories \$100-\$150; leather jackets and shoes from \$1,000; sunglasses \$250-\$400.