

# CADENZA

## Marie Claire Meets Questions

### WORKING DAY

1. Describe your typical working day (from getting up to bedtime)

I wake up at 6.30 and I meditate for about 30 mins. It helps me a lot to manage stress and balance my day! I make breakfast for my kids and I workout for 45 mins. My workday in the atelier begins with checking and answering my emails, making phone calls. I have a long wooden table always full of different kind of leather, accessories, books, patterns... it is always a big mess but this is me! I cannot create in a sterile atmosphere! I guess I need this chaos to get creative! I work until 5pm and when the kids come home, my family life begins like for every other mum.

2. Tell us what you love most about your job... and what you hate?

I put my heart and my soul in my creations – this makes me love almost everything about my job! Besides the creative part I also love to present my collections. I love to meet people involved in the fashion business; from the women who make my bags by hand to the boss of a fashion firm, PR agent, buyers, sellers, producers and other designers... it is very interesting to watch their way of working, of thinking.

The part I like less is to manage the production timing with the material orders, delayed deliveries and other unaccountable problems you run into... this the really stressful part of my job. The sleepless nights are always about meeting deadlines.

What's your office pet hate?

My pet hate is fighting to get what you ordered on time! I'm obsessed with deliveries!

2. Do you use social media in your job – if so, which ones? Do you think they help? Are you addicted/bored of them?

Today you cannot avoid social media. So far I have a Facebook page and I use Instagram for pictures as well. These medias give an instant update and keep my followers posted with my designs and the latest news.

3. What's your dream way to spend a lunch break? With a friend over a seafood platter with a cold glass of wine on a sunny terrace.

4. Your PA is dashing out on a coffee/snack run – what do you order? Sushi. You see I love fish in every variations! It is a good feeling to know that we eat the fish and I use the skin to make precious accessories instead of throwing it away.

5. What's your office soundtrack? Brazilian music to chill and rock music for an energy kick.

# CADENZA

## AMBITION

1. What was your first job? I was 17 and I sold Stephane Kelian shoes in a fancy store in Guadeloupe (FWI).
2. Do you have a role model who inspires you? I think that would be Victoria Beckham. She fought hard against all the fashion world bias. She deeply believed in her no matter what the people said and she's now very successful, designer of the year, happily married and mother of 4. Respect!
3. What's the best advice you've ever been given? My mother told me: Believe in you, no matter what, express your passion, do what you love and never forget your life goal.
4. How did you get to where you are today? Tell us about your path to the top... What did you study/How did you get into your industry?  
I was seeking for a long time what I really wanted to do in my life, I tried several paths without real conviction or passion but all those paths were like a pieces of a puzzle who led me to know me better and make me realize what I wanted to do: make precious leather accessories using eco friendly, exotic leather. I looked for every kind of fish leather and I created my brand, my company. I did almost everything on my own, it was very hard sometimes but I really believed on my ideas, my spirit, on the fact that sustainable fashion is the future.
5. Did you have any set backs along the way? Sticking with it it during the recession in the early 2000s. The business is nowadays different than in the early 2000s. The customers think different, most people had a hard time during the crisis and are now looking for something more sustainable, more personal, soulful buying, as I call it.
6. What skills do you look for in new employees? I need skilled, motivated, loyal, well-organized employees that help me to take the next steps. People I get along with and that I can learn from!
7. What advice would you give someone trying to break into your industry? Follow your instincts, believe in your difference and work hard to realize your dream.
8. What did you buy with your first big pay cheque?  
A trip with my kids and my mother to California, where I used to live in the nineties. A really good feeling!
9. What did you want to be when you were a child? A dolphin trainer.
10. What's your plan B? I don't have a plan B, this is my one and only plan. I'm a very

# CADENZA

happy and positive person, I really believe in my creative potential and in the sustainable fashion.

11. Which career achievement are you most proud of? To have successfully taken the first steps in creating my own brand and doing what I really like.
12. What have you learnt along the way? Faith in me, my work, my creations.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

1. What's your favorite app? Hipstamatic.
2. Tell us which five websites you check every day... NET A PORTER, EUROPE1, FACEBOOK, LE MONDE.FR, STYLE.COM
3. If the Internet died tomorrow, what would you miss most?  
The instant communication.

## **STYLE**

1. What are your ultimate workwear wardrobe staples? Most of the time I work in my atelier. I wear a pair of jeans with boots or flats and a Tshirt or a slouchy sweater. If I have meetings or lunch, I wear a leather pencil skirt with a blouse and pumps or a skinny pant with a jacket.
2. How often do you update your work wardrobe?  
When I think I have nothing to wear! Several times a year!
3. What's your pay day splurge? A good massage
4. What are your handbag essentials? A blush, a lip gloss and my sketchbook to draw or write down my inspirations. I use my Iphone a lot to take pictures.

## **SOCIAL**

1. What do you do to unwind/de-stress after a tough day at work? I meditate in the morning and cook in the evening.
2. Do you count your colleagues as friends? Do you socialise with work? Some of my colleagues have become friends.
3. We're always obsessing over our work/life balance – how often do you manage to get out on time? Is it important to you? When you have kids and a family it is always very difficult to be there for both, your family and your work. My family is my absolute priority but I love my job. You have to be well organized, that the key to be a happy mum / wife and businesswoman at the same time.
4. Do you try and squeeze a workout into your day? If so, how? I workout everyday

# CADENZA

before starting to work. It is very energizing for me.

5. How would your colleagues describe you? Daring, fun, creative, wild, but also impatient and restless.

## **EXTRAS**

1. The best gift you've ever received? My first car from my dad.

2. Tell us about your three favourite restaurants...Extreme orient in Paris, best black cod ever, Mr& Mrs Bund in Shangai, best fusion food, Waterkloof in Sommerset West / South Africa for the creativity of their meal and the amazing view.

3. What are your wardrobe essentials? Skinny jeans, leather pencil skirt, white chiffon blouse, leather leggings, classic blazer and curve defining silhouette cocktail dress.

4. Name three beauty products you never leave the house without... Blush, lip gloss, 8 hours cream from Elisabeth Arden