

Niki Breger celebrates 31 years of Nicci Boutiques this August



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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Nicci Boutique, founded by Niki Breger, was established 31 years ago as a family business and has grown to become synonymous with contemporary fashion, from clothes and shoes to bags and accessories. All of the items you find in store are hand-selected from the fashion capitals of the world by Breger herself. Breger operates 17 boutiques nationwide, and the brand is known for its style, elegance, and pizzazz with a passion for delivering cutting-edge fashion designs that inspire and empower individuals to express their unique style.



Niki Breger. Image supplied

Being a woman in business means navigating complex landscapes where gender biases and stereotypes persist. It involves facing unique challenges and overcoming obstacles that are often rooted in gender inequality.

This Women's Month, we find out from Breger herself...

■ ***Tell us a bit about yourself and your background***

My name is Niki Breger. I studied fashion design. Nicci Boutiques started as a family business over 30 years ago. It is now run by my husband and myself. I have three children.

■ ***What does a typical workday look like for you?***

A typical work day involves a lot of juggling with many balls in the air at all times!

It normally starts with a meeting with our marketing team. We brainstorm ideas and discuss an array of topics that include upcoming impactful strategies and campaigns, charity collaborations, projects and new developments. Planning our regular photo shoots is also a major task.

I liaise with overseas suppliers regarding upcoming orders. Conduct fittings and styling meetings with our production manager/styling team for our Nicci locally produced label.

Planning our weekly fashion packs and filming social media content for the week ahead plays a big part of my day. In between this, I check my emails and respond accordingly.

Of course, it is important to note that every day in the fashion industry can ring unexpected challenges, last minute changes or exciting opportunities. Adaptability is crucial in this fast-paced environment. It is all about prioritising tasks.

■ ***What do you love most about working in the retail/fashion sector?***

I love the creativity and the excitement of working with ever changing products that include clothing, shoes, accessories, and bags. I adore seeing the latest and newest products on offer and the incredible stimulation that our buying trips afford us.

On the occasion when I am in a store, I find it extremely rewarding when I put an outfit together for a client that makes them look and feel 10 years younger! Fashion is an incredible tool and cannot be underestimated. It is not called Retail Therapy for nothing!



Nikki Breger. Image supplied

■ *What do you see as the major challenges and opportunities ahead in the retail/fashion industry?*

• Challenges

The fashion industry faces rising costs, including the weakening Rand, increasing prices of production, labour costs and raw materials. Retailers need to carefully manage costs in order to maintain profitability.

The retail fashion industry is highly competitive, with numerous players all competing for the same customer base. This creates a need for constant innovation.

One also has to face the challenge of constantly adapting to changing consumer preferences and trends. Fashion retailers need to stay agile and keep up with these changing preferences in order to remain relevant.



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• Opportunities

With increasing consumer demand for eco-friendly and socially responsible products, there is an opportunity for fashion brands to adopt sustainable practices and promote ethical fashion.

The rise of e-commerce has also revolutionised the fashion industry, providing opportunities for brands to reach a far larger market.

Collaborations with other brands, celebrities or designers can help generate a buzz and expand the brand reach. Such

partnerships can foster cross pollination of ideas as well as creating unique and exclusive ideas.

■ ***Where, do you believe, does the value lie in a diverse, inclusive work environment, particularly in terms of female representation?***

The value in having diversity in the workplace, which includes women, is that with a variety of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences brings a wider range of ideas, insights and experiences. It also helps a company approach challenges from different angles. Different viewpoints can lead to innovative solutions. This diversity fosters a culture of innovation.

A diverse workforce which including women, also helps companies better understand and cater to a diverse customer base, leading to increased market share. Women bring unique experiences, insights and perspective to the decision-making process.

Furthermore, when women see other women in leadership positions, they are more likely to feel valued and motivated to success within the company.

“ *Women who have achieved success in their career, can act as powerful role models for younger women and girls. They inspire others to believe in their abilities and strive for success. This can nurture the next generation of female leaders.* ”

Having a reputation for inclusivity also helps organisations retain employees and attract talent.



Nikki Breger

■ ***Based on your experience, what advice would you give to women pursuing a career in fashion/retail today?***

Acquire a strong educational background in fashion by pursuing relevant degrees or certifications. This knowledge will serve as a foundation for your career and provide you with the tools to excel in the fashion industry.

Fashion is a highly competitive industry, so it's crucial to gain practical experience through internships or apprenticeships. Work for established fashion houses, designers, or publications to develop your skills, learn from industry experts, and build a strong resume.



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Be persistent and resilient: The fashion industry can be challenging and highly competitive. It's important to remain persistent, resilient, and adaptable to overcome obstacles and setbacks that may come your way. Stay focused on your goals and continue honing your skills and expertise.

📌 *Do you have any pearls of wisdom to share this Women's Month or words of encouragement?*

A winning recipe for success is a combination of passion, positive attitude and resilience. Ultimately, remember to stay true to yourself, follow your passion, and believe in your capabilities.

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