

Vienne Cheung keeps it cool with VienneMilano hosiery

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A Woman's Sexy Little Secret

By Cheryl Fenton



Vienne Cheung
(Photos courtesy of Ted Ancher)

There's not much room for self-expression in most boardrooms, unless you count your laptop case color or how far you push the envelope on casual Fridays. With cubicles and dress codes, the corporate world isn't exactly the place to be "you." Longtime Boston resident Vienne Cheung couldn't stand it anymore. As a 30th birthday present to herself, Cheung left her compartmentalized cubicle as a product manager in corporate America. And as it turns out, the two legs she stood firmly on the other side of that office door ended up being a canvas for an exciting new enterprise. Armed with her MBA from Bentley University, Cheung combined her business savvy with her fashion sense to begin VienneMilano, a luxury hosiery brand and online boutique dedicated exclusively to thigh high stockings. From deciding on the brand's name in March 2011 to putting

on a pair of hose for the November launch party, Cheung's venture was realized in under a year — thigh highs made from Italy's finest luxury textiles in sumptuous shades and indulgent textures.

There's silver glitter, the à la Mad Men back seam, a rich mocha oval cut-out pattern, preppy but sexy argyle styles, and of course, every day neutral opaques and sheers. Each pair is made with a silicone thigh band for stay-up confidence, a trait Cheung herself boasts.

We met up with this Boston-via-Hong Kong fashionista to find out her style of success.

What fears did you have taking the leap into a new career?

I think the fear for most people, myself included, is will it succeed? But I couldn't let myself think about that. For getting over that hurdle, I just focused on what I needed and wanted to do. As a woman who isn't married, didn't have kids, wanted to learn, be challenged, and have always wanted to start a business particularly in fashion, I felt that turning 30 was the perfect opportunity. If I



didn't make the jump now,
I don't know if I ever could.

What are the joys of owning your own business?

First is the challenge. I don't know if many people can say that they've launched a brand in 10 months. I've enjoyed the journey and all of the things that I've learned from the people that I've met.

This leads to the second joy, which is friendship. It's been really awesome getting to know all of the amazing people around the world.

And third, I've enjoyed traveling to and from Italy. Just last fall, I was able to visit our engineer, who lives in Sicily.



You chose Milan, Italy, for your hosiery line — an obvious epicenter for the art of fashion.

Italy is the home of beautiful artwork, cars and all things fashion, including hosiery. It was the first European country I visited as a girl. One of the things I recall was the beautiful paintings. While in Venice, I remember staring at a piece of artwork from afar, trying to figure out if it was a statue or a painting. It looked so realistic. That's when I knew that it was an artisan country.

What empowers you?

I think empowerment is a way of life. You decide whether you want to stay happy, sad or mad. I empower myself by believing that I'm responsible for my way of life.

What empowerment do thigh highs bring, even under the stuffiest of business attire?

The intention of wearing a business suit is for a woman to present herself in a serious way, which can sometimes be restricting. Hosiery is often paired up with a business suit as it allows a woman to look more elegant.

VienneMilano's thigh highs are elegant, playful and sexy. There's something about having the band around your thigh that feels super sexy. It's like your little secret that you can choose to share. A woman chooses whomever to reveal the band to, which is very empowering.

What's your style?

For personal style, I am a relatively social person. I love to get to know people, where they come from, what makes them tick. For fashion, I love to accessorize, whether it's shoes, bags, jewelry or hosiery. You can really make a statement about yourself with the right accessories.

Describe your life since beginning VienneMilano in three words.

Keep it cool.



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