

Experience and exposure

Natasha Vora succeeds at Indocara by blending her past with the future

By Amanda N. Wegner

Whenver I walk into Indocara, I wish money grew on trees; I want to take home at least one of everything.

Located on West Washington Avenue, Indocara, one of just a handful of stores of its kind in the nation, is home to a fine collection of modern Asian furniture and accessories. Featuring clean lines and rich textures, exuding beauty, warmth and personality, Indocara's collection of global home furnishings would fit nicely into any home — modern, transitional, contemporary or otherwise.

And helming this home furnishing's empire is an entrepreneur, someone as beautiful, warm and full of personality as the goods she sells: Natasha Vora.

Determination, dedication and style

I first met Vora, 32, a few years ago and was immediately struck not only by her welcoming demeanor but by her dedication to the store and its success. But it wasn't until I sat down to chat with her — really chat — that I learned where she gets her keen sense of style and dogged determination for her business, of which she is the sole owner.

Effective entrepreneurs often draw on their past, plucking an idea from their youth, hobbies, upbringing or education and melding it with an idea with universal appeal to achieve success. All those aspects came together with Indocara, albeit in a unique way.

An international life The daughter of an Indian father and French Canadian mother, Vora cultivated a strong cultural awareness at a young age. During college, she studied in both France and Spain, and speaks both the languages. The first company she worked for out of college, Rayovac, now Spectrum Brands, promoted her to

the position of international operations analyst after just one year. In that position, she spent time traveling to South America to coordinate the delivery of raw materials to the company's manufacturing plants.

Perseverance, with style A figure skater from the age of 10, Vora developed her dogged determination in competition. And she credits part of her sense of style (at least for textiles) to the ornate costumes she designed and donned.

Entrepreneurial spirit Vora says both her parents are entrepreneurial. Her dad owned a polymer plant, and Vora remembers, at a young age, running around the reactors that melted plastic into liquid, watching the laborers and engineers and noticing the effort her dad put into his work.

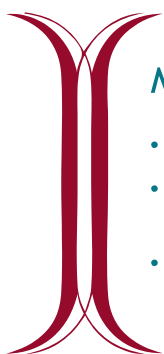
An eye for lines Vora, who was born in Los Angeles and grew up in Racine, attended the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Prairie School. While she learned the three Rs, she was surrounded by "the clean lines, natural stonework and circular architecture that Wright was known for," she says. "All those elements really came together for me. This is a result of exposure and experience."

Appeasing her sense of style

Vora recognizes that Madison-area residents are pretty lucky to have a wide variety of quality furniture stores available. But when she took a job with Lands' End and moved to Madison from Boca Raton, Florida, she realized they didn't suit her personal décor fancy.

In fact, there were very few places offering what she needed to appease her sense of style.

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More on Natasha

- Single, Vora loves hanging out with her friends. And, don't get her started on the dating scene.
- Don't believe modern Asian will work in your home? If it works in Vora's 104-year-old east-side Victorian, it'll probably work in yours.
- "Indocara" is a word Vora made up. It means Asian ("indo") and face ("cara" is Spanish for face). What's it mean? With Vora's rich family heritage, people often have difficulty determining her ethnicity, and "Indocara" reflects that.



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