



TADASHI SHOJI

The Modern Artisan

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Tadashi photography by
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Sure the hours are long, and fashionistas on occasion can be a challenging group. But if there's anything successful designers learn, it's their strengths, passions and audience. The ever-charming Tadashi Shoji has mastered all of these corners in his life and designs, and these days he has a devoted clientele to prove it. His designs have won a loyal following of well-dressed women worldwide, including celebrities such as Tyra Banks, Halle Berry, Celine Dion, Queen Latifah, Bai Ling, Claudia Schiffer and Shakira.

But Tadashi is so much more than a celebrity pleaser or haute couture fixture. He is a fan of women and of making them look their best so that they feel their best when it matters most. Known for his draping and ruching, the designer knows how to layer fabrics to fit every figure. Tadashi's romantic, feminine silhouettes that focus on fit make women feel they are wearing the dress, not like the dress is wearing them. This is never truer than with his latest designs recently

launched at New York's Fashion Week.

And so, it is very fitting that Tadashi's designs allow us to focus on that ever so particular individual – and no, we're not talking about the bride. We're talking about the mother of the bride. Tadashi's collection has a wide variety of options for moms because, as he duly notes, "They're a special group and they're a category that has changed dramatically over the years. Today, designs for the mother of the bride need to reflect how diverse this niche really is, as this category can run from age 35 to 70. And depending on the geographic and cultural origin of the mother, this category can vary that much more."

Initially, when he broke into fashion, the mother of the bride category was something that troubled Tadashi. Because women had few options for special occasion dresses in the contemporary market, Tadashi quickly identified this niche. With his fine art background, he set out to design for this very specific and underserved group of



women. Tadashi's success in this arena is also due to the inspirations he receives (which he doesn't categorize or limit) when designing for his clientele – be they bride, mother of the bride or pure fashionista.

For every design, Tadashi uses the fabric to inform his creation. The way a fabric lays in his hand, the way it drapes when he is musing on an idea – these are the keys to the construction of his designs. Another facet of his inspiration lies in the color of the fabric, which he takes into his creative process and evaluates before he creates something new. "I keep my designs in my head. A lot of designers like to sketch, but I like to mull. I keep it up here," Tadashi says as he smiles and points to his noggin. "When I come across something I like or find interesting, my assistants ask me, 'Are you sure you're going to remember?'" Tadashi laughs. We can confirm, as can the rest of his ardent admirers, that Tadashi remembers. Today, almost 25 years after its inception, the TADASHI COLLECTION is available in more than 4,000 upscale department stores and specialty boutiques worldwide. With a passion for details, he's an artisan that weaves innovation with fabric and color, a designer that uses his brain to do justice to the beauty of fashion.

The TADASHI label can be found at Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's and Macy's. Internationally, the brand is available at high-end retailers such as Isetan, Epoca the Shops and Anniversaire Omotesando. To view his latest collection go to tadashicollection.com.

In addition to a thriving wholesale business, TADASHI maintains its own retail operations with two signature boutiques in the United States. In March 2004, TADASHI opened the first of its flagship boutiques in Southern California's prestigious South Coast Plaza. Close on its heels, a second TADASHI retail boutique was unveiled at the world-renowned Forum Shops at Caesars in Las Vegas. 🌸



SCENTED CANDLES



LUXURIOUS BED SHEETS

2006 marked the launch of the **TADASHI HOME COLLECTION**, which features products in the home accessory categories, including personal care, bedding and bath. The HOME COLLECTION introduced its first product, a line of aromatic soy candles, in upscale department stores and fine boutiques worldwide, including Fred Segal, Planet Blue and Takashimaya. Additional accessories for the home are expected to be introduced this year.

On the horizon, Tadashi's collections will continue to expand with the launch of the TADASHI SHOJI signature collection in Fall 2007. The line will feature high-end, one-of-a-kind pieces created with luxurious fabrics and hand embroidered detail.