

**THE  
STYLE**



**SHARON  
PATSIOTIS**



**“I was brought up in natural fibres from head to toe & developed a passion for textiles that wore well after washing.”**

Managing director of  
Melbourne luxury  
linen company  
Hale Mercantile Co



MIKE BAKER PHOTOGRAPHY

## Timeless textiles with a modern spin

Luxury linen merchant Sharon Patsiotis brings Australian design to an age-old European tradition. *By* **ELICIA MURRAY**

**Q: How did Hale Mercantile Co get started?**

**A:** I was brought up in natural fibres from head to toe and developed a passion for textiles that wore well after washing. My husband and I had been running a family business, which we took over 20 years ago. I really wanted to replicate what the previous generation had achieved but I was also craving a creative outlet. After several years of research and sourcing – getting our yarns right and setting up our European hub for quality control, production and development – Hale Mercantile Co launched in 2014.

**Q: How did serendipity play a part in those early days?**

**A:** During my first research trip to Europe, I was seated next to a textile production manager who

had recently started her own consulting business. What were the chances? To this day, she is my good friend and quality controller.

**Q: Why did you opt to manufacture in Europe?**

**A:** I'm an advocate for European quality. I'm concerned by how many Australian-designed products are manufactured in Asia. If we give no thought to origin, we will see manufacturing dry up in non-Asian countries that have been producing amazing products for centuries.

**Q: How do you distinguish between fine quality linen – and the rest?**

**A:** Quality linen has such a timeless appeal. It is hardy and requires little care yet is kind and rewarding, offering incomparable texture,

improvement with age and versatility. There are many other brands in Australia spruiking that their linen is European when it is not. Price is the first indicator. You cannot buy a French linen duvet cover for \$300.

**Q: Describe your style at home.**

**A:** Eclectic. I love the old and have collected antiques from all over the world that exude timeworn charm. Admittedly, most are for adornment, as I love modern practicality, too. I have a fetish for taxidermy and Australian art. And to really mix it up, I love European modernism for adding the wow factor.

**Q: What's next for Hale Mercantile Co?**

**A:** Since launching our first bedding collection, we have added waffle bathroom towels to our repertoire, along with kitchen towels, living room accessories and a furniture range. We are set for a growth spurt internationally this year. The best aspect of this is the opportunity it provides to represent Australian design abroad. [m](#)

[halemercantilecolinen.com](http://halemercantilecolinen.com)

Sharon Patsiotis is a big advocate for the incomparable texture of high-quality linen.