



COMFORTING ELEGANCE

Salisbury is now home to French couture's best-kept secret

The UK's first Sophie Céprière boutique opened in Salisbury on the first floor at Fisherton Mill this month. Inspired after hosting a highly successful spring fashion show Juliette Scott, the owner of The Artisan Studio, is collaborating with the pioneering French designer to establish a dedicated space in this country.

While the spring show was her UK debut, Sophie Céprière is far from a newcomer. She has spearheaded the sustainable couture movement for almost three decades, selling her designs all over the world. Sustainability for Céprière is more than natural fibres and eco-aware processes. It means wellness for the wearer - physical comfort and ease thanks to the highest quality linens, wools and silks.

And also, just as importantly, the mental wellbeing that comes from garments designed for all shapes and sizes of woman rather than airbrushed unobtainable fantasies.

"These are clothes for women from all walks of life: from high-flying lawyers to creative professionals, and from local businesswomen to elegant retirees," explains Juliette. "I'm sure Salisbury will set the trend," she adds.

The increasingly popular concept of Slow Fashion is all about buying fewer, high quality garments produced by a supported and nurtured work force - garments that when lovingly washed and cared for, will last many years. One of Sophie's loyal customers talks about using her purchasing power selectively, like a vote.

The Salisbury boutique has been furnished with the customer's wellbeing as the main focus to reflect the designer's ethos. A calming and discreet atmosphere sets the tone for an enjoyable styling experience - the polar opposite of struggling into clothes in crowded mainstream retail stores. Warm and sympathetic advisors help ladies to discover the silhouettes and colours that work best for

them, in a friendly unhurried dialogue.

Niamh Cusack the well-known theatre and television actress encountered Sophie's clothes while on tour performing at the Salisbury Playhouse earlier this year. While visiting nearby The Artisan Studio in Fisherton Mill during a break Niamh was introduced to the designer by Juliette. Captivated by the Sophie Céprière look she was delighted to accept Juliette's offer to become the UK brand ambassador.

"I was flabbergasted but delighted to get such an endorsement," says Juliette.

So who is Sophie Céprière? She has inherited the exceptional skills of six previous generations of artisans specialised in couture and fine textiles: supplemented by her own *je ne sais quoi*.

While it is never easy to take a path which diverges from the mainstream, particularly in the world of fashion, she has stayed the course and counts a dedicated fanbase of continental women among her loyal



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customers - so loyal that they’re willing to cross the country to model for her.

In the words of the designer herself: “Everything I do is aimed at making the wearer feel good about themselves. I don’t want to disguise those who wear my pieces.”

The natural yarns are all woven in the Sophie Cépière atelier in rural south-west France, creating a whole gamut of superb textured fabrics exclusively for Sophie’s striking designs, meticulously controlled in terms of origin, quality and respect for both people and the planet. From the linen farmer to the wool producer, Sophie Cépière is uncompromising on quality. She maintains her pursuit of what is natural, gentle, reliable, and unique.

To accompany the launch of the brand in the UK Juliette has inaugurated the Sophie Cépière Members’ Club UK. Membership is free, and has a number of benefits: private styling consultations by appointment with many outside normal opening hours to suit the customer’s own schedule; invitations to fashion shows presenting two collections each year; price reductions on new collections and seasonal changes; new collection previews; as well as advance information on pop-up dates and locations.

The Autumn/Winter collection will be showcased at Fisherton Mill in late

October. As on the last occasion for Spring/Summer and in keeping with the ethos, the beautiful garments will be showcased not by professional models, but by women of all ages and of all body types. The numbers are limited so book your place early.

Living readers who would like to be the first to discover this alternative way of viewing their wardrobe should call in or contact Juliette by phone or email.

The shop opens with The Artisan Studio 10am-3pm Monday-Thursday and 10am-5pm Friday and Saturday. 

Sophie Cépière
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