

social butterfly.

words jaclyn paul | photography calli b photography



LEANNE FITZPATRICK

Leanne Fitzpatrick is a genuine people person. Talking to people, helping them or supporting them – there's nothing she thrives off more. And as practice manager of Lavish Cosmetics, she's grateful to be able to live this passion in her everyday work.

"I love seeing the transformation of a patient from when they first walk in the door to when they walk out," Leanne says. "The difference in confidence is amazing."

And while she has worked in various medical practices, she loves the atmosphere of working in the cosmetic side of the industry. "It's refreshing to be able to interact with people who choose to come in because they want to be here, not because they're sick," she explains.

Leanne has always done her bit to support friends and family members diagnosed with cancer in the past. "I did a 20-kilometre walk from Coolom to Noosa Surf Club to raise money for the Breast Cancer Foundation," she says. "I had to do it for my sisters because it's really nothing compared to what they have gone through."

Clearly inspired by the positivity of her friends and siblings in the face of adversity, she tells me of one who completed half a hike in the middle of radiation.

Working in an environment with all female staff, Leanne admits that it's the most fun and rewarding workplace she's been a part of. "It's such a great atmosphere. All the girls have an adoring sense of humour, so there's never a dull moment at the office," Leanne says.

While she is quite the social butterfly, in and outside of office hours, Leanne is devoted to spending time with her friends and family when she can, going on outings and catching up on their lives. And having moved from Sydney seven years ago, she often pinches herself as a reminder that she really is living on the stunning Sunshine Coast. "I feel so blessed to be living here; it's the best lifestyle for me and the kids, not to mention the beach!"

Ironically, Leanne's friendly and down-to-earth character resembles the welcoming nature of our region, even though she wasn't born and bred here she is a people person, inside and out. ■

BRIEFCASE

The Sunshine Coast is full of amazing people – each issue we showcase two successful locals doing great things in their field.

risk taker.

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DEBORAH BAKER

Deborah Baker is living proof that if you're passionate about something, you shouldn't think twice about going for it. And starting up her own clothing line, Abakus Design, was Deborah's way of delving into her longing passion for creativity and aesthetics.

Being involved in the modelling industry in Japan where she temporarily lived and travelled extensively, this fashionista fell in love with the culture and wanted to interpret it into her designs for everyday people. "I've always loved fashion, and when you model, you get hooked to the other side of it ... the fabrics and patterns," she explains. "There's so much gorgeous culture in Japan and the different parts of Asia where I lived and I wanted to bring a piece of that to Australia."

After running her clothing store in Eumundi Square for the past seven years, Deborah says she's now ready to launch a new outlet on the Mooloolaba Wharf. "I'm always looking forward to a new challenge and I feel like this is the beginning of great things to come," she says fervently. With the job of creating wearable pieces of art, Deborah doesn't mind the long hours she puts into her business.

"I'm really fortunate because when you do something you love, it's not work, and thankfully that's what it's like for me."

While the most rewarding aspect for Deborah is being able to see her finished products worn on others, she has also kick-started her own exercise regime proving to be extremely rewarding for herself.

"Now that I'm 40, I figured I've got another 40 years up my sleeve and I need to look after my body and spirit," she confesses. "It's really opened my eyes to an active life where I run about 20 kilometres a week." And her stamina doesn't end there, earlier this year she took part in the gruelling Tough Mudder challenge on Phillip Island and she recently participated in the Bridge to Brisbane.

"When you commit to doing something, you have to put your heart and soul into it. It's about mind over matter," Deborah says.

It's safe to say she's done exactly that. If anything, this enthusiastic woman is a prime example that at 40, life has only begun. With a new store on the way and serious fitness goals to achieve, it's certainly the start of an exciting time for Deborah Baker. ■