

# Style

...NOT IN THISDAY STYLE? THEN YOU'RE NOT IN STYLE

SUNDAY,  
DECEMBER 7  
2025

## **HUDDAYA FADOUL-ABACHA** THE WOMAN, THE VISION, THE BRAND

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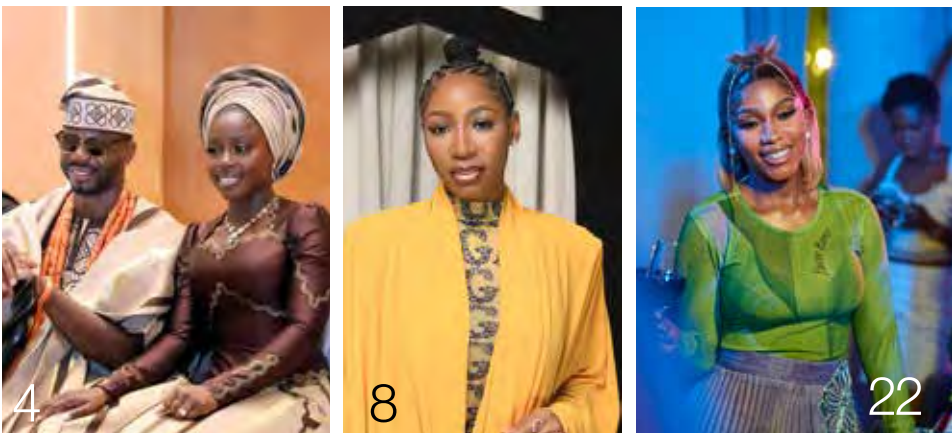
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Huddaya Fadoul-Abacha has built one of Nigeria's most distinctive fashion brands by trusting her eye, her discipline, and her commitment to refined craftsmanship. Over the years, her eponymous brand has grown from a small atelier in Abuja into a full-fledged design house spanning couture, bridal, ready-to-wear, home, and a fashion academy that continues to shape emerging talent. The evolution has been steady, intentional, and rooted in a clear point of view — elegance that is thoughtful, precise, and deeply considered.

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**Style**

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EDITOR'S LETTER



EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Welcome to December, we outsideeeeeee!

Finally, we've made it to the grand finale of the year — the month where calendars blur, champagne flows, playlists hit different, and Lagos traffic becomes a sport of its own. December always carries that peculiar energy — a mix of nostalgia, relief, and an almost reckless kind of joy. The “Detty December” energy has officially checked in, and whether you're attending concerts back-to-back, hosting family from abroad, or just watching from the sidelines with a cold drink in hand, there's no escaping the buzz.

For Lagosians, December means a few things: parties and concerts, spontaneous owambes, and, of course, the traffic that humbles even the most patient souls. But beyond the stress and surge pricing, there's something beautiful about the city in December. Hotels are fully booked, bars are alive, tailors are fully employed, and every creative in entertainment, fashion, or beauty has something to do. It's chaos, but it's our chaos — and it's great for the economy. Local businesses, from the small chop vendor to the high-end fashion houses, feel the pulse of this season. So yes, even the gridlock comes with its silver lining.

This week, we've put together something fun to get you in the spirit — The Detty December Starter Pack. Think of it as your unofficial survival guide to Nigeria's biggest month of the year. Whether you're looking for party inspiration, skincare tips for post-night-out glow, or simply trying to avoid burnout before Christmas Day, this one's for you.

Also in this issue, we're shining a well-deserved spotlight on the women who are transforming Nigeria's beauty landscape. Made in Nigeria: The Women Elevating Homegrown Beauty celebrates the fearless entrepreneurs behind some of your favourite skincare, haircare, and makeup brands. Remember when our shelves used to be dominated by foreign products? When “imported” automatically meant “better”? Those days are slowly fading. These women have taken the reins — building brands rooted in our identity, understanding our complexions, and using local ingredients that work for us. It's innovation mixed with passion, and it's something to be proud of.

As we wrap up the year, I hope you find moments to pause in between the parties, the laughter, and the endless to-do lists. December has a way of reminding us how far we've come, even when we didn't realise how fast the months flew by.

Take a breath. Check in with yourself. Celebrate how far you've come, even if you didn't tick off everything on your list. And please, as you enjoy the festivities, stay safe out there — on the roads, in the clubs, and in your spirit.

Here's to December — loud, colourful, chaotic, and deeply ours. Let's make it count.

Love,

Konye

SEVEN THOUGHTFUL WAYS TO REIMAGINE YOUR WEDDING DRESS

Wedding season in Nigeria is here again, and December brides are preparing to walk down the aisle in the gowns they've dreamed about for months — the fittings, the fabric debates, the endless inspiration photos, and that magical moment when you finally whisper, this is the one. But when the music fades, the makeup wipes off, and the celebrations end, one quiet question tends to linger: What happens to the dress now? For many brides, the wedding gown is more than fabric — it's a memory, a symbol, sometimes even a piece of identity. Yet after the big day, it often hangs untouched, taking up valuable wardrobe space. The good news? Your wedding dress can absolutely live a second life. Here are seven thoughtful ways to preserve, repurpose, or share the joy it once brought you.



1. Turn It Into an Anniversary or Reception Dress

A skilled tailor can breathe new life into your gown. Shorten the hemline, remove the train, or transform the bodice into something fresh and modern. Some brides restyle their dresses for anniversary dinners or vow renewals. It keeps the sentiment alive — and gives you another reason to wear something that already holds so much meaning.

2. Dye It for a Completely New Look

If you loved your wedding dress but want to reinvent it, consider dyeing it. Professional fabric dyers can turn white or ivory into soft pastels or deep jewel tones. Think navy, emerald, rose, or champagne. It becomes a dress fit for galas, red-carpet moments, or even a high-profile Lagos event — with no one guessing it once walked down the aisle.

3. Use Parts of It to Create Something New

Your dress doesn't have to stay whole to stay meaningful. Lace, appliqué, or beaded fabric can be transformed into clutch bags, headpieces, or even throw pillows. Some brides use them to craft baby christening outfits or bridal keepsakes. These smaller pieces carry the story forward without taking up half your closet.

4. Preserve It as an Heirloom

In many Nigerian families, tradition

runs deep. Some brides choose to preserve their gowns for future generations — daughters, nieces, or sisters. Have it professionally cleaned, restored, and packed in an airtight box. Even if it's never worn again, it might inspire another beautiful creation years down the line.

5. Donate It to a Bride Who Needs It

Few gestures are as generous as passing on your dress to someone who dreams of one but can't afford it. Churches, NGOs, and community groups often know of brides who would be deeply grateful. It's a meaningful way to let your joy ripple outward — turning one special day into many.

6. Rent It Out and Earn from It

With Nigeria's growing bridal rental market, your gown can become an investment piece. If it's still in great condition, you can rent it to other brides searching for designer gowns at a friendlier price. It's sustainable, practical, and lets your dress keep making memories.

7. Let It Inspire the Next Chapter

Some brides find creative or emotional ways to carry their dress into the next phase of life — using parts of it to make a baby's naming ceremony outfit or incorporating its lace into a family keepsake. It's a tender reminder that love stories don't end at the wedding; they evolve.

DANIELLA & OLUFUNBI TIE THE KNOT IN LAGOS

Lagos witnessed a remarkable celebration on Saturday, November 29, 2025, as the families of Daniella Mafe and Olufunbi Olowolafe hosted their traditional marriage ceremony at the Eko Convention Centre, Eko Hotel, Victoria Island. The groom, Olufunbi, is the son of prominent business mogul Dr Tunji Olowolafe, whose presence naturally drew an impressive gathering of influential personalities from across Nigeria. From business leaders to political figures and well-known creatives, the guest list reflected the significance of the occasion. The ceremony was as lively as it was elegant. Guests enjoyed stellar musical performances from Wande Coal, Johnny Drille, Shallipopi, Fireboy, and Odumodu Blvck, each bringing a unique energy to the festivities. The celebration continued late into the night with a vibrant after-party that kept everyone on their feet.



THE COUPLE, OLUFUNBI AND DANIELLA OLOWOLAFE



THE OLOWOLAFE'S FAMILY



AREMO OLUSEGUN OSOBA AND WIFE DERINSOLA



ZACCH ADEJEI



BOLAJI BALOGUN



MR. AND MRS. JACK RICH



BRIDE'S MOTHER, PATIENCE MAFE, ELAYE OTROFANOWEI AND PAT OTROFANOWEI



GROOM FATHER, TUNJI OLOWOLAFE AND BABAJIDE SANWO-OLU



GOV. OYEBANJI AND V. PRESIDENT, KASHIM SHETTIMA



FOLASHADE SIM-AFE AND ANNE OGBOKA



BAMIDELE OPEYEMI



ABIKE DABIRI-EREWALA



OLU OKEOWO



GROOM FATHER, TUNJI OLOWOLAFE AND NDUKA OBAIGBENA



ADE SHINABA AND FUNKE SHINABA



CHIKE OGEAH AND SAYYU DANTATA



DR. KAYODE FAYEMI AND ERELU BISI FAYEMI



GILBERT CHAGOURY & DAISY DANJUMA



OBA ADEYEYE OGUNWUSI & OBA OLUFOLARIN OGUNSANWO



DELE ALAKE, MOHAMMED BADARU, BASSEY OTU AND ABUBAKAR KYARI



SAM IWUAJOKU AND ALIKO DANGOTE



OLAWALE EDUN



L-R: DIPO SOFOLA, ANDREW KNOTT AND OLAKUSIBE OBIYAN

DANIELLA & OLUFUNBI TIE THE KNOT IN LAGOS



DAIPO BAMISAYE AND AMB. SEYI IDOWU



FOLASHADE ALLI, BOLANLE AUSTEN PETERS & YOMI ODUTOLA



TAYO AYENI AND PETER DAKUKU PETERSIDE



MR. AND MRS. OLAWALE OLALEYE



MR. AND MRS. PADE AND TAIWO DUROTOYE



MR. AND MRS. RAUF AREGBESOLA



STEPHANE ANTHONY AND ELOHOR OHIOMOBA



TRENOR AND MOTUNRAYO AKINDELE



TOKUNBO ABIRU AND DAPO ABIODUN



TAYO DONGO



SUZAN ITEMUAGBO, OMOWUNMI ADBAYO, BRIDE'S MOTHER, PATIENCE MAFE AND IHUOMA CHIGBU



TAYO AYENI AND RODA OPEYEMI OGUNSANYA



UCHE AJENE AND MRS ADEYINKA



UDOM EMMANUEL AND NASIR EL-RUFAI



ZAINAB USMAN AND LONPE ATUNRASHE

ISIMI LAGOS BRINGS POLO, STYLE, AND CULTURE TO LIFE IN EPE

The Isimi Lagos Polo Festival returned on November 29th with a showcase that blended sport, culture, and refined leisure against the breathtaking backdrop of Epe's rolling landscape. As Nigeria's first wellness and polo country estate, Isimi Lagos transformed its grounds into a vibrant gathering place for royalty, dignitaries, and tastemakers—including the Ooni of Ife, His Imperial Majesty Ooni Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi Ojaja II, and Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu. Held in partnership with Johnnie Walker Blue Label and supported by brands like The Singleton, PAC Asset, NORD, Guinness, Curators University, and Precise Lighting, the festival underscored the estate's growing influence as a cultural and sporting destination. At the heart of the day was the signature polo match—a fast-paced spectacle of horsemanship and teamwork that drew cheers with every strike. Set against the estate's sweeping views and late-afternoon glow, the match reaffirmed Isimi Lagos as an emerging force in Nigeria's polo scene. But the festival offered far more than sport. A curated fashion presentation highlighted contemporary Nigerian design with flowing silhouettes, textured fabrics, and elevated leisurewear that danced in the wind. Live performances carried guests from soulful R&B to high-life rhythms as the sun dipped and the estate lit up. A thoughtfully curated buffet—pairing continental favourites with elevated Nigerian classics—rounded out the multi-sensory experience. For many, the presence of cultural leaders touring the grounds signalled something deeper: Isimi Lagos is evolving into a landmark for wellness, tourism, sport, and creative expression. The success of this year's festival echoed a clear message across the crowd—Isimi Lagos isn't just developing an estate; it's shaping a new language of luxury and lifestyle in Nigeria.



DABOTA LAWSON



TOSIN SILVERDAM



WALE AVILARA



SANWO OLU



OBA ADEYEYE OGUNWUSI & ERELU DOSUNMU



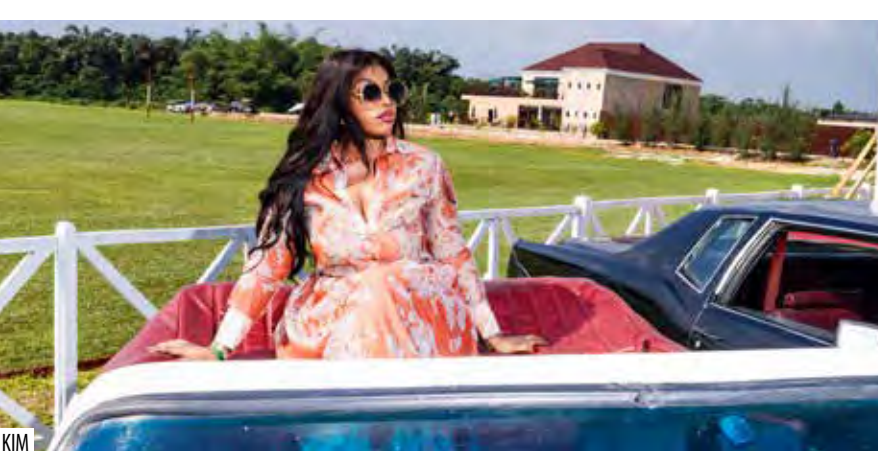
IDIA AISEN



JULIET IBRAHIM



ESO DIKE AND GUEST



KIM



SASHA P



OYIN OLUFeko

## YOUR GUIDE TO EVENT-SEASON DRESSING

Event season is here again — that wild stretch between November and early January when every calendar square suddenly grows an RSVP. Gala on Friday, engagement brunch Saturday, a wedding with 400 guests on Sunday masquerading as “intimate.” It’s a marathon... in heels. And while panic-shopping is tempting, you don’t actually need a whole new wardrobe. You need strategy — proper fashion-girl strategy. Here’s the guide that works, the one stylish women actually use.



AXR



MIMI ONALAJA



ELOHOR ELIZABETH



KALINE



MARIA CHIKE BENJAMIN

### 1. Build a Capsule That Can Morph, Not Just Impress

Event season is not the time to buy the loudest dress in the store. It’s the time to build a small collection of pieces that bend themselves into different moods. Think of your wardrobe like Lego blocks. A jewel-toned slip. A sharply cut blazer that can move from cocktail to corporate. A metallic heel that whispers luxury, not screams for attention. The formula insiders swear by: One strong piece. One quiet piece. One unexpected detail. Once you get this, getting dressed becomes... easy. Almost too easy.

### 2. Fabric Is Half the Outfit

Trends matter, yes — but fabric is the real MVP of event season. Satin says, “I’m here to make an impression.” Silk says, “I don’t need to try hard.” Velvet looks expensive even when it isn’t. Organza gives drama without noise. Lace — good, well-made lace, not the chaotic type — always feels romantic. If the budget isn’t budgeting for a full new look, upgrade the fabric somewhere else: a velvet clutch, a silk wrap, a pair of sparkly straps swapped onto your heels. Small fabric changes, big visual payoff.

### 3. Know Your Silhouette and Exploit It Relentlessly

This is the real secret: silhouettes matter more than colour. Maybe you shine in bias-cut slips. Maybe your power lies in corseted bodices. Maybe you’re that girl who kills a wide-leg tailored trouser. Or maybe A-line midis make you look like you belong on a runway. Once you know your silhouette, you can build outfits that sit on your body like they were born there. And once your outfit feels right, you stop adjusting and tugging — and that alone elevates your presence more than any amount of sparkle.

### 4. Shoes Are a Statement... and a Potential Emergency

We’ve officially entered the “Quiet Shoe, Loud Dress” or “Loud Shoe, Simple Dress” era. Choose who you want to be and commit. Platforms are fun until you look like you fought someone backstage. Skinny sandals are beautiful, but will disgrace you if the floor is uneven. Mules? Gorgeous — until you have to walk ten metres too fast.

#### Do yourself a favour:

- Test your shoes on your actual floor.
- Carry tape.

- Carry band-aids.

And always have flats in the car — not for the event, for the journey back to your sanity.

### 5. Accessories Are Where You Flex Taste, Not Budget

The difference between looking stylish and looking “trying to be stylish” is always in the details. You don’t need diamonds; you need decisions. Chunky gold jewellery elevates the simplest black dress. A sculptural clutch whispers fashion editor energy. Hair accessories — bows, pins, jewelled combs — are having a grown-woman moment. Nothing childish, everything intentional.

A well-placed accessory is the difference between “nice outfit” and “who is she?”

### 6. Glam Needs Range, Not Layers

Event season glam doesn’t mean full beat every time. That era is gone. Think of makeup as mood language.

Dewy and fresh for daytime events. Clean glam for cocktails. Smoky eyes for nights when you want to look like you have secrets. And sometimes? Just glowing skin, brows, and a killer lip — an underrated combination. Let your glam support the outfit, not fight it.

### 7. Don’t Dress for the Event — Dress for the Room

This is the silent code. Before choosing an outfit, ask: Who is hosting? What’s their crowd? What’s their taste level? A high-fashion creative event allows risks — colours, textures, sculptural shapes. A corporate crowd requires polish, not costume. An artsy crowd loves thoughtful minimalism. And a Lagos crowd? Lagos will let you be dramatic — just do it well. When you dress for the room, you never stick out for the wrong reasons.

8. The Best-Dressed People Always Look Comfortable... Even When They Aren’t Let’s be honest: we are all suffering in silence. Snatched into shape, pinned into place, balancing on shoes that don’t love us. But fashion is illusion — and the illusion is effortless. Test your zippers. Sit in your dress. Walk in your drama. Bend, reach, dance a little before leaving the house. You’re not aiming for pure comfort — you’re aiming for control.



NICOLE CHIKWE

1. Start With Skin That Looks Like Skin

The secret to soft glam starts long before the foundation—it begins with skincare. You want skin that glows naturally, not one that looks glazed over. Cleanse, exfoliate gently, and hydrate with a lightweight moisturiser. If your skin feels good, your makeup will sit better. Before foundation, use a dewy primer or serum to give your skin that lit-from-within effect. Think of it as setting the tone—soft glam is about freshness, not flatness.

2. Pick a Foundation That Breathes

Soft glam isn't about full coverage. The goal is realistic skin with a hint of polish. Reach for a light to medium coverage foundation or even a tinted moisturiser. Blend it in with a damp beauty sponge or brush until it melts into your skin. If you need more coverage, apply a bit of concealer only where necessary—under the eyes, around the nose, or on small blemishes.

3. Think Creamy, Not Powdery

Everything in soft glam land is creamy, blendable, and natural-looking. Swap heavy powders for cream blush, bronzer, and highlighter. These products melt into the skin, giving you a dewy finish rather than a cakey one. If you are light skinned, a rose-toned blush adds a healthy flush, while a touch of cream bronzer warms your complexion. Add a subtle highlighter to the high points of your face—your cheekbones, nose bridge, and cupid's bow—but resist the urge to go overboard. You want glow, not glare.

4. Neutral Eyes That Still Pop

Soft glam eyes are all about soft-focus definition. Think warm browns, champagne golds, or dusty pinks—shades that blend easily and complement your skin tone. Sweep a medium tone through your crease, add a

shimmer to your lid, and define your lash line with a smudged brown pencil. Finish with mascara—two coats if you're feeling fancy. False lashes are optional, but if you wear them, pick styles that look like your lashes, only fuller.

5. Brows That Frame, Not Shout

Overdrawn, ultra-arched brows? Retire them. Soft glam brows are feathered, lifted, and natural. Brush them up with a spoolie, lightly fill in sparse areas, and set with a clear or tinted brow gel. The trick is to keep them looking like hair, not ink. Your brows should balance your face—not dominate it.

6. Lips That Whisper Softness

For lips, stay away from harsh lines or overly matte finishes. Instead, think buttery and blurred. Outline your lips with a nude pencil that matches your natural tone, then fill them in with a satin lipstick or tinted gloss. Soft pinks, beige nudes, or peachy corals work beautifully for day-to-day wear. If you want a little more drama, choose a deeper nude or rose shade—but keep the edges soft.

7. Hair and Outfit: Keep It Cohesive

Soft glam doesn't stop at makeup—it's an entire vibe. Pair your glowing skin and neutral tones with hair that feels just as effortless. Think loose curls, a low bun, or a slick ponytail. When it comes to clothes, this look loves neutrals, pastels, and soft fabrics. A crisp white shirt with jeans, a flowy midi dress, or even a monochrome co-ord can all complement your makeup beautifully.

8. Don't Forget the Attitude Here's the thing: the real secret to soft glam isn't makeup—it's energy. It's the quiet confidence that comes with knowing you look good without trying too hard. It's that "I'm not rushing, but I'm not waiting either" kind of poise.



SOFT GLAM FOR EVERYDAY LIFE: HOW TO NAIL THE EFFORTLESS LOOK THAT WORKS ANYWHERE

There's a reason everyone is talking about soft glam. It's that perfect in-between look—less "I'm off to a red carpet" and more "I just happen to look this good all the time." It's polished, glowy, and easy to wear whether you're heading to brunch, a meeting, or even just running errands. It's the kind of makeup that makes people say, "You look amazing!" without being able to tell exactly why. So, how do you pull off soft glam without it looking flat or taking two hours? Here's your step-by-step guide to looking effortlessly put-together every day.



LINEN MODE: THE HOT-WEATHER ESSENTIAL EVERY MAN NEEDS NOW

When the weather starts acting up, and the sun seems to have something to prove, one fabric quietly steps up — linen. It's cool, light, and effortlessly stylish, the kind of fabric that lets you breathe without sacrificing polish. The secret, though, is in how you wear it. Done right, you'll look sharp and unbothered. Done wrong, you'll look like you just escaped the laundry line. Here's your guide to mastering linen this heatwave season.

By Funke Babs-Kufeki

1. Nail the Fit — Comfort with Structure

Linen already carries a laid-back vibe, so your fit should balance ease and elegance. You want clean lines, not clingy ones. Too tight and you'll feel like you're wrapped in cling film; too loose and you'll look like you're on your way to a beach resort in Badagry. Go for that in-between — structured but relaxed.

2. Embrace the Wrinkles (Within Reason)

Linen creases, and that's okay. In fact, that's part of its charm. The goal isn't to iron them away completely — it's to manage them. A light steam or a quick once-over before you head out keeps it neat without making it stiff. Remember: soft wrinkles say effortless cool, deep ones say I slept in this.

3. Stick to Colours That Breathe

The Nigerian sun doesn't play, and neither should your colour choices. Neutral shades like white, beige, cream, olive, navy, and charcoal help reflect heat while keeping you looking crisp. If you want colour, try muted tones — sage, dusty blue, terracotta. Avoid loud prints or neon hues; linen works best when it whispers sophistication.

4. Build a Small but Mighty Rotation

A few linen pieces can carry you through the hottest months. Start with a sharp linen button-down that can go from work to weekend brunch. Add a soft linen-blend tee for laid-back days. Tailored linen trousers instantly elevate your look, while linen shorts keep you cool and casual. For night events or dinners, a lightweight, unstructured linen blazer is your best bet — stylish without suffocating.

5. Keep Styling Minimal

Linen doesn't need much to shine. Pair it with chinos, tailored shorts, or dark jeans. Avoid chunky shoes or heavy accessories — they kill the look (and your comfort). Instead, opt for clean sneakers, leather sandals, or loafers. Keep it simple and let the fabric do the talking.

6. Groom Like You Mean It

A great outfit can't hide bad grooming. The heat brings shine, sweat, and humidity, so keep things fresh. Maintain a neat haircut, trim your beard, and use a lightweight moisturiser with a matte sunscreen. Stay hydrated — inside and out.

7. Layer Lightly (If You Must)

If the occasion calls for layering, keep it breathable. Try an open linen shirt over a tank or a tee — it adds shape without trapping heat. For cooler evenings, throw on a linen-blend blazer. Effortless, not extra.

8. Smell the Part

Hot weather amplifies scent, so go easy. Choose fresh, crisp fragrances — citrus, aquatic, or light woods. You want to smell clean, not cloying. At the end of the day, linen isn't just a fabric; it's a mindset — one that says you understand ease, style, and comfort even when the heat is determined to humble everyone else.



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# HUDDAYA FADOUL-ABACHA

THE WOMAN, THE VISION, THE BRAND

BY KONYE CHELSEA NWABOGOR

**H**uddaya Fadoul-Abacha has built one of Nigeria's most distinctive fashion brands by trusting her eye, her discipline, and her commitment to refined craftsmanship. Over the years, her eponymous brand has grown from a small atelier in Abuja into a full-fledged design house spanning couture, bridal, ready-to-wear, home, and a fashion academy that continues to shape emerging talent. The evolution has been steady, intentional, and rooted in a clear point of view — elegance that is thoughtful, precise, and deeply considered. Her recent show in Abuja marked an important moment for the brand: a declaration of scale, vision, and confidence from a designer who has spent years perfecting her foundation. And with her latest collection, Silent Opulence, Huddaya steps into a new chapter, exploring luxury through restraint, texture, and quiet depth. In this interview, she opens up about her beginnings, the realities of building a fashion house in Abuja, the inspiration behind her newest work, and the future she is shaping for herself and the next generation of designers.



**Congratulations on your show Hudayya. You started designing at a very young age, long before your brand became a household name. What has the journey being like so far?**

Thank you! The journey has been nothing short of incredible, a true testimony of grace, passion, and perseverance. It hasn't always been easy. There were seasons of doubt, sacrifice, and moments where I had to start again. I've had to learn, unlearn, and evolve not just as a designer, a woman, and an entrepreneur. But every challenge strengthened my vision. And each stage of the journey taught me something essential about craftsmanship, discipline, and the power of building something with purpose.

**Your fashion journey wasn't linear — you studied Biology and only later returned to design. What was the turning point that made you abandon the conventional route and build your own path?**

After my NYSC, I had a very clear moment of self-realisation: I wasn't cut out for a regimented life. I'm spontaneous by nature. I love freedom, creativity, and being in complete control of how I spend my time and where my energy goes. Biology was a beautiful chapter, but it wasn't my calling. What truly excited me was designing, touching fabrics, sketching silhouettes, styling women, and bringing beauty to life.

The turning point came when I understood that fulfillment matters more than following a conventional path. I knew I wanted to build something of my own, so I followed that instinct, took the risk, and chose fashion.

And looking back, it was the best decision I ever made.

**So the journey so far?**

It has been humbling. It has been beautiful. It has been grace upon grace. And honestly, I feel like we are just getting started.

**One thing Hudayya is known for is a blend of modesty, structure, and luxury. How much of that aesthetic comes from personal identity, upbringing, or faith?**

It's really a blend of all three — my personal identity, my upbringing, and my faith. By nature, I'm a conservative person, but I've always loved looking stylish, modern, and beautifully put-together. So when I started designing, I created pieces that reflected that balance: modesty without losing femininity, structure without losing softness, and luxury without losing comfort. I wanted clothes that made me feel confident, but also pieces that any woman, regardless of her personal style, could wear in her own way. That's why the Hudayya aesthetic is so distinct: it's rooted in who I am, but designed for every woman to interpret and embody in a way that feels true to her.

**Again, back to your show. What did it represent for you and for the brand?**

For me, this show was a revelation. The moment everything I've poured into this brand came full circle—years of quiet work, growth, resilience, perseverance and refining my craft. Building a brand is not for the faint-hearted; there were days that stretched me, tested me, and demanded more than I thought I had. But giving up was never an option, not when the vision was bigger than the challenges.

Standing there felt like stepping boldly into a new chapter. It wasn't just a fashion show; it was a statement of who I am becoming as a designer and the standard of excellence I choose to uphold with every piece, every stitch, every collection. For the brand, it was a declaration that Hudayya is evolving and expanding. It showcased our craftsmanship, our attention to detail, and the depth of creativity that has shaped our journey so far. So yes, the show was a celebration — but it was also a promise. A promise that this is only the beginning, and the heights ahead of us are far greater.

**Let's also talk about the Silent Opulence collection. Where did the idea begin?**

The idea for Silent Opulence began with my long-standing belief that true luxury doesn't need to shout. I have always been drawn to subtlety. For me, luxury is intention, not excess; quality over quantity has always been my design philosophy. I wanted to create pieces that embodied that spirit. Luxurious, timeless, and able to stand the test of time. Pieces that feel modern yet classic, quiet yet powerful, simple yet deeply sophisticated. It became the foundation of the collection.

We went deeper into the craft by developing our own fabrics: custom silk organza with barely-there patterns, rich silk taffeta, silk crepe meticulously pleated for fluid movement, and printed textiles that added depth and dimension.



Every accessory in the collection was handcrafted and dyed to match our curated palette, ensuring a seamless finish. I wanted textiles and details that felt rare, festive, and elevated, yet still incredibly comfortable for the woman who wears them. Every choice from fabric to finishing reflects the essence of Silent Opulence: refined, intentional, and unforgettable.

**You've created a fashion ecosystem: couture, bridal, RTW, home, and a design academy. Was this growth strategic, or did it unfold naturally over the years?**

I would say it unfolded naturally, but with intention. Every part of the Hudayya ecosystem was born from a real need, either something I couldn't find or something I deeply wanted to give.

The Ready-to-Wear line began very personally. I struggled to find modern, modest pieces that were fashionable and truly resonated with my lifestyle, so I started designing for myself. Before long, I discovered a community of like-minded women, the Hudayya Women, who wanted that same balance of elegance, ease, and contemporary modesty. The demand shaped the brand's voice.

Couture, on the other hand, came from my love for creating one-of-one pieces, the kind of festive, statement looks that allow you to be creative.

And the Academy came from purpose. I didn't attend fashion school, and I made so many avoidable mistakes starting out, mistakes that almost made me quit. I wanted young designers to have what I didn't: structure, guidance, and mentorship. People rarely talk about how tough this industry is, but with the right support and mentorship, you can persevere. Today, I'm proud that many of my students are now thriving designers and business owners. That, to me, is the true legacy. In the end, we're not remembered for what we have, but for the lives we touch, which has always been at the heart of the Hudayya ecosystem.

**Running a fashion house in Nigeria means navigating everything from sourcing to artisanal labour. What are the behind-the-scenes realities most people don't see?**

Running a fashion house in Nigeria is a beautiful journey, but the behind-the-scenes reality is far more complex than most people realise. One of the biggest challenges is sourcing. It's unfortunate that we still have to produce and print most of our fabrics abroad, which directly affects timelines, access, and, of course, the final price of luxury pieces. Imagine building a Nigerian luxury brand with a global vision, yet relying on international systems to bring your ideas to life.

Then there's the issue of artisanal labour. Nigerians are some of the most naturally gifted artisans in the world; their hands are magic, but there's a shortage of properly trained talent. Most of the Hudayya team and artisans have been with me from the very beginning, and only a few joined in the last five years. That stability is rare in most businesses, and it's part of what gives our work its soul. Meeting demand can be tough when you're balancing production timelines, quality control, limited local resources, and the need for international sourcing. Yet, despite all this, Nigerian creativity continues to rise. The challenges force us to innovate, to build resilient structures, and to operate with a level of grit that shapes who we are as designers. And honestly, that's what makes Nigerian luxury so unique—it's built with heart, intention, and tenacity that the world can feel in every piece.

**When you think about the future of African luxury, what do you believe Nigeria — and brands like yours — are bringing to the global narrative?**

When I think about the future of African luxury, I truly believe Nigeria is shaping a new chapter in the global narrative. Our strength lies in our authenticity the way we blend culture, craftsmanship, creativity, and contemporary design in a way that is entirely our own. Nigerian luxury isn't trying to imitate anyone; it is rooted in identity, emotion, and storytelling. What we offer the world is a rare balance of cultural and

modern design that feels global yet remains deeply true to who we are. Our creativity comes from navigating real challenges and transforming them into beauty that resonates with women everywhere. And more importantly, we are defining our own standards and our own narrative. We are showing that luxury is not defined by geography; it is defined by excellence, refinement, and originality. We are building our own ecosystems and global communities of women who champion, wear, and celebrate us with pride. So when I look ahead, I see Nigeria as a powerhouse and brands like mine contributing designs, stories, craftsmanship, and an authenticity that the world is more than ready to embrace.

**The Abuja woman has a very specific mindset towards fashion — elegance, confidence, discretion. How do you design for her?**

That's an interesting question, but I'll be honest, I don't design with "the Abuja woman" specifically in mind. I design for any woman whose spirit aligns with the brand, whether she lives in Nigeria or anywhere else in the world. Naturally, many Abuja women gravitate toward the brand because they embody elegance, confidence, and discretion, but the Hudayya woman is not defined by geography. She is defined by her taste, her depth, her lifestyle, and the way she carries herself. My role is to create pieces that honour her world. Refined, intentional, beautifully made pieces that make her feel seen, understood, and celebrated.

**What is the biggest misconception about luxury fashion in Nigeria that you wish people could unlearn?**

One of the biggest misconceptions about luxury fashion in Nigeria is the belief that a high price tag automatically equals luxury. It doesn't. True luxury is not defined by cost; it is defined by quality, craftsmanship, intention, and value. You experience luxury in the finishing, the fabric, the fit, and the experience, not just the number attached to it.

Another misconception is the idea that certain designers "own" specific styles. No one has a monopoly on fashion. Style evolves, trends shift, and every designer draws inspiration from somewhere. What truly matters is how you reinterpret that inspiration through your brand's DNA — your creativity, your perspective, your craftsmanship.

**If you could describe the business of fashion in one truth most people don't know, what would it be?**

Fashion is 20% design and 80% business. The business of fashion is far more grit than glamour. Most people don't realise that the real work happens behind the scenes, managing production, artisans, overheads, logistics, clients, and an endless amount of problem-solving. The artistry brings the vision to life, but it's the structure that keeps the brand alive.

**When you imagine the next decade of Hudayya — what excites you the most?**

I'm excited about growing our ecosystem, elevating our couture, expanding our ready-to-wear, evolving our home line, and scaling the Academy so we can train and empower even more young creatives. I want Hudayya to be a symbol of excellence, not just in Nigeria, but across Africa and the world. But beyond the business, what excites me the most is the impact on the lives we touch, the upcoming designers we will train, the women we will inspire, and the legacy we will build. The next decade, for me, is about purpose meeting expansion, creativity meeting global recognition.

**If you hadn't become a designer, what other world do you think you would have built for yourself?**

If fashion hadn't claimed me, I would have been designing homes, curating spaces, and telling stories through interiors. It's another world where I feel completely at home.

**And finally, when the world looks back at the Hudayya years from now, what would you want it to remember most?**

When the world looks back at Hudayya years from now, I want it to remember far more than the clothes — I want it to remember the impact. I want people to say that Hudayya stood for excellence, intention, and craftsmanship at the highest level. I want them to remember the women we inspired, the upcoming designers we trained, the dreams we nurtured, and the legacy we built through consistency, purpose, and grace. But above all, I want them to remember how Hudayya made them feel — seen, celebrated, and genuinely special. Because long after the clothes have faded, the feeling remains.

# MADE IN NIGERIA: THE WOMEN ELEVATING HOMEGROWN BEAUTY

By Funke Babs-Kufeji

Nigeria's beauty industry is expanding faster than ever, and at the centre of this evolution are the women redefining what beauty means for the modern Nigerian consumer. In 2025, beauty is no longer just about the products on the shelf — it's about culture, creativity, education, and aspiration. These founders are shaping how women experience beauty, building brands that reflect who we are today while staying rooted in our identity. Across the country, the industry is shifting towards inclusivity and sustainability. Nigerian women now expect formulas that work for their skin tones, hair textures, climates, and lifestyles — and these entrepreneurs are meeting that demand with intention and innovation. Through digital communities, influencer collaborations, and authentic storytelling, they are creating brands that connect deeply and directly with their audience. What makes this movement special is not just the products, but the experiences these women are creating. From labs dedicated to textured hair, to luxury spas celebrating African ingredients, to makeup lines crafted for melanin-rich skin, each founder brings her own perspective to what beauty can be. Their work is making the industry more distinctive, more confident, and undeniably Nigerian.

Today, we celebrate the women at the forefront — pioneers, innovators, and bold thinkers who are raising standards, shaping trends, and challenging expectations. They are building businesses that resonate globally without losing their authenticity at home. These founders are more than beauty entrepreneurs; they are cultural architects, pushing the industry forward with

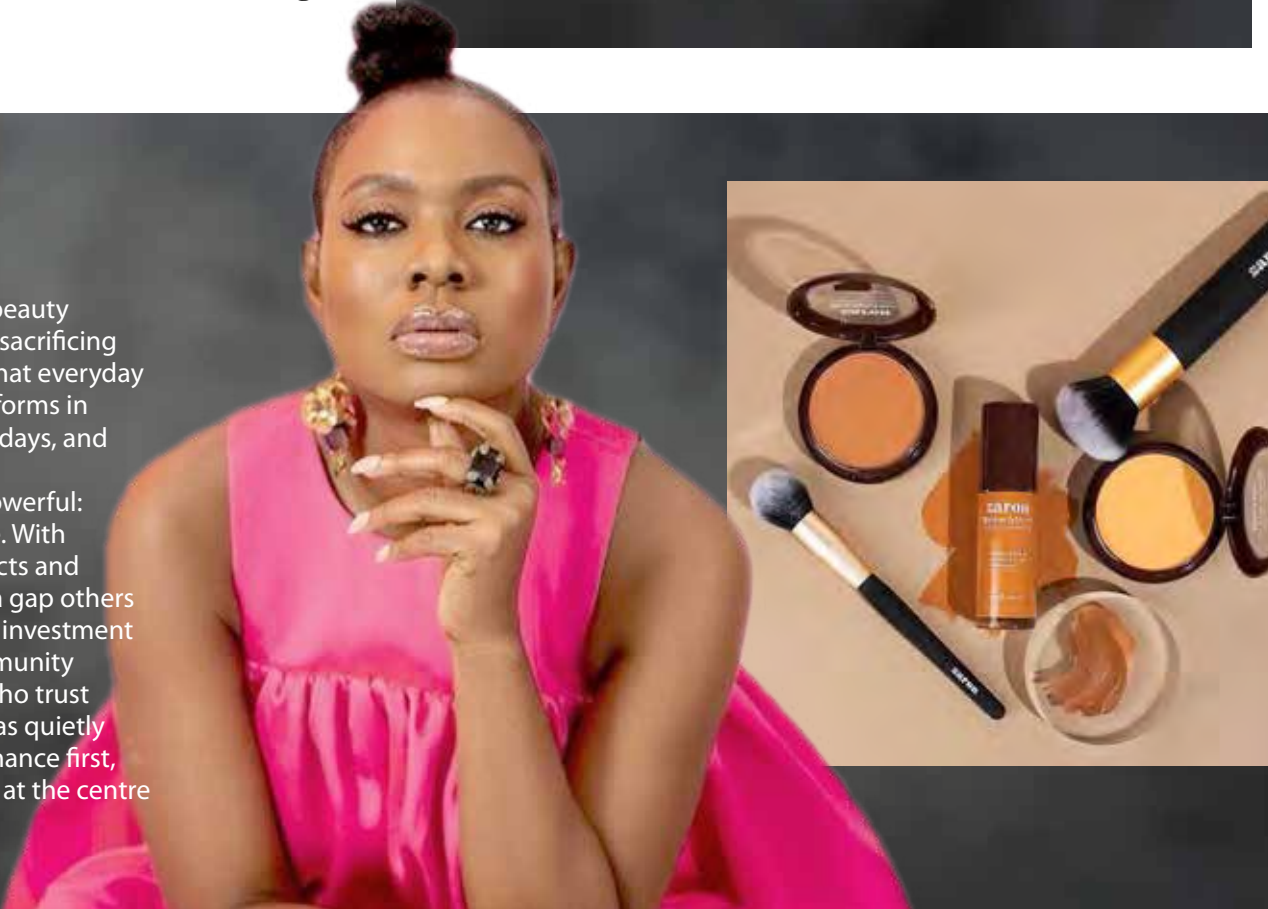


## Tara Fela-Durotoye – HOUSE OF TARA

Before the beauty boom, before content creators and YouTube tutorials, there was Tara. Her impact is everywhere — in the artists she trained, the brands she inspired, and the market she helped define. With House of Tara, she didn't just build a makeup studio; she built an industry blueprint. Her Makeup Academy has trained more than 10,000 artists; her studios operate across 11 states; and her beauty reps (over 15,000) continue to find financial independence through the brand. From the Orekelewa range to Tara Eyeshadow Duos and her professional kits, she introduced a generation to makeup that understood Nigerian faces, lighting, and lifestyles.

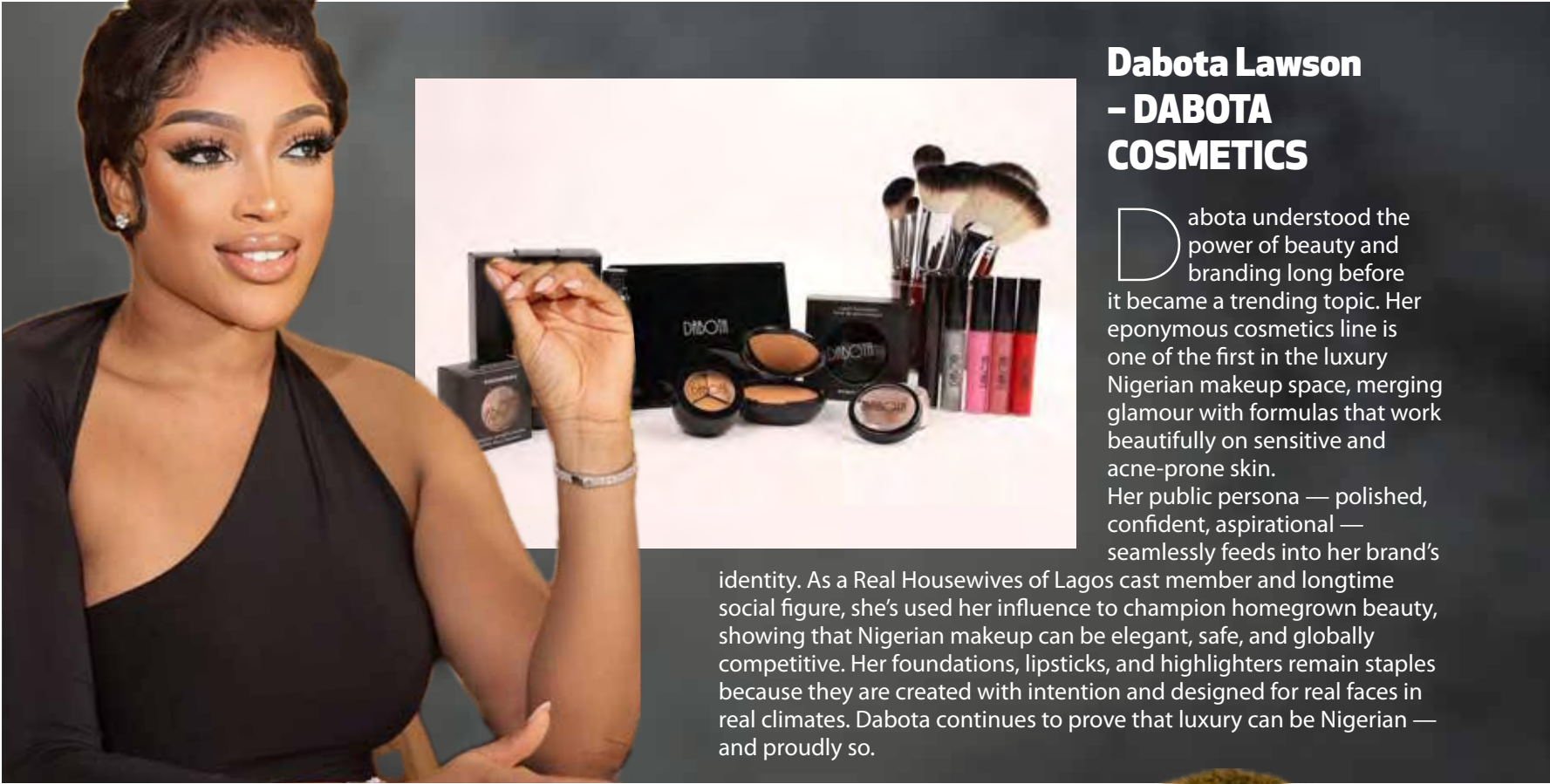
## Oke Maduewesi – ZARON COSMETICS

If Tara built the foundation, Oke made beauty accessible to the mass market without sacrificing quality. Zaron Cosmetics is the brand that everyday Nigerian women swear by because it performs in humidity, on oily skin, through long workdays, and during Lagos heat. Oke figured out something simple but powerful: affordability shouldn't mean compromise. With foundations, powders, brushes, lip products and skincare made for African skin, she filled a gap others ignored. Zaron's wide retail presence and investment in training programs have created a community of loyal consumers and budding artists who trust the brand without hesitation. Her work has quietly influenced how new labels think: performance first, inclusivity always, and hold the customer at the centre of everything.



## Remi Martins-Johnson – TEXTURE SCIENCE LAB

Remi is the disruptor — the one pushing boundaries with science and innovation. What began as her frustration with finding ethical, textured hair options evolved into Texture Science Labs, Nigeria's first dedicated hair laboratory. Her breakthrough? ReXI™ Lab Made Hair — a lab-engineered textured hair innovation that mimics the look and feel of natural hair while remaining lightweight, durable, and ethical. It's the backbone of every hair brand created through her lab, including REGirl, which has become a global favourite.



## Dabota Lawson – DABOTA COSMETICS

Dabota understood the power of beauty and branding long before it became a trending topic. Her eponymous cosmetics line is one of the first in the luxury Nigerian makeup space, merging glamour with formulas that work beautifully on sensitive and acne-prone skin. Her public persona — polished, confident, aspirational — seamlessly feeds into her brand's

identity. As a Real Housewives of Lagos cast member and longtime social figure, she's used her influence to champion homegrown beauty, showing that Nigerian makeup can be elegant, safe, and globally competitive. Her foundations, lipsticks, and highlighters remain staples because they are created with intention and designed for real faces in real climates. Dabota continues to prove that luxury can be Nigerian — and proudly so.

## Ife Agoro – DANG! LIFESTYLE

Few founders understand community the way Ife does. Dang! Lifestyle began in 2020 with scented candles — a small start that turned into a wildly successful multi-product beauty and lifestyle brand. Today, Dang! spans skincare, fragrance, and personal care, with thriving e-commerce operations in the UK, USA, Canada, Ghana, and Kenya.

What sets Ife apart is her ability to convert genuine connection into commercial success. She sold 400,000 units in three years without a traditional marketing campaign — simply by understanding her audience and building trust. Dang! is playful, inclusive, and proudly Nigerian. It's a brand that invites women to embrace beauty without pressure, celebrate deeper skin tones, and enjoy routines that feel fun and attainable. In many ways, Dang! represents the spirit of this new generation — bold, digital, and community-led.



## Joycee Awosika – ORÍKÌ

Joycee's ORÍKÌ brand sits beautifully at the intersection of wellness, skincare, and African luxury. She built a full ecosystem: a spa that feels serene and indulgent, and a product line rooted in African botanicals and handcrafted care. ORÍKÌ's oils, cleansers, and treatments elevate ingredients like shea, baobab, and other local extracts — showing the richness of African wellness traditions in a modern, minimalist way. Joycee champions rituals, slow beauty, and self-care as a lifestyle, not a trend. Her work is expanding the definition of beauty in Nigeria: it's not just makeup and skincare, but the full experience of taking care of yourself.



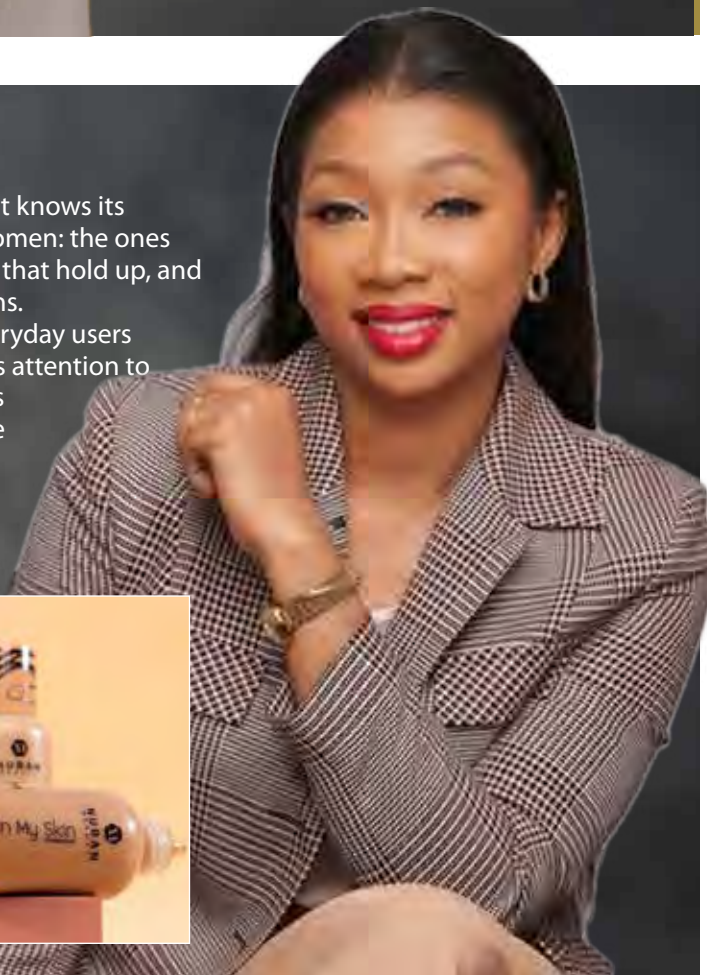
## Dr. Hilda Ashio – Skin101

At a time when misinformation and unsafe skincare trends dominate the internet, Dr Hilda has become a voice of authority and calm. Skin101 — her medical and cosmetic dermatology practice — blends clinical expertise with accessible skincare education. From acne to hyperpigmentation to advanced cosmetic procedures, Skin101 focuses on personalised treatment backed by science. Her approach has helped thousands move from quick fixes to long-term skin health, encouraging Nigerians to invest in evidence-based routines. Today, Skin101 is one of the most trusted names in the Nigerian skincare landscape, shaping conversations about safety, ethics, and proper skin literacy.



## Stella Dekile – NUBAN BEAUTY

Nuban Beauty is the definition of a brand that knows its market. Stella created it for real Nigerian women: the ones who need pigment that shows up, textures that hold up, and shades that match without mixing three foundations. Nuban quickly became a favourite among both everyday users and professional makeup artists because Stella pays attention to undertones, to climate, to performance. The brand's brushes, foundations, and palettes have pushed the industry to think beyond Eurocentric norms. Stella's commitment to quality and education continues to inspire a new generation of beauty founders.



## Toke Makinwa – TM Perfumes

Toke's transition from media personality to fragrance entrepreneur feels seamless because she understands something many overlook: scent is identity. Her perfume line — featuring Oud Rush, Intense, Faya, Vogue, and Dive — captures different moods and personas modern Nigerian women relate to. She didn't just release perfumes; she created a lifestyle moment. Each scent is aspirational, stylish, and rooted in her personal brand — proving that celebrity entrepreneurship can be both authentic and high-quality. Her success sets a strong benchmark for locally made fragrances ready to stand on global shelves.



## Ore Runsewe-Lawani – ARAMI ESSENTIALS

Ore built Arami Essentials out of a desire to create simple, natural beauty solutions using Africa's finest raw materials. Born and raised in the UK, she moved to Nigeria and quickly saw the gap in access to high-quality, trustworthy skincare. Arami's clean aesthetic, honest formulations, and celebration of ingredients like shea butter and coconut oil have made it a favourite among minimalist beauty lovers. Her CSR initiative, Mind Body Soul, further grounds the brand in community and purpose. Ore's long-term vision is clear: position African beauty at the centre of global conversations.



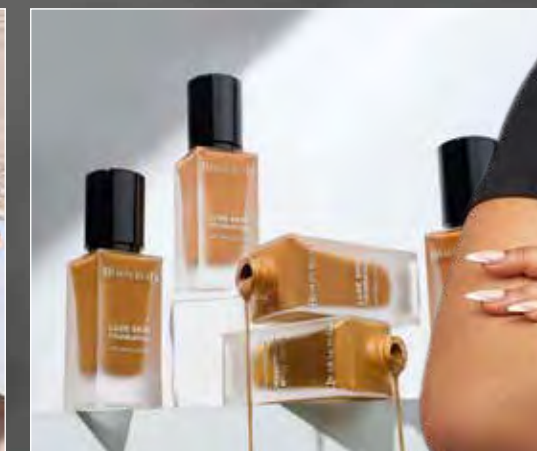
## Chidiogo Mbelede – COCO SKIN

Chidiogo's Coco Skin blends tradition with modern skincare needs. Her products — rich in shea, botanicals, and hydrating oils — are crafted specifically for Nigerian skin and climate. Coco Skin stands out for its transparency, ingredient education, and community engagement. Chidiogo built a brand that helps women understand their skin, not just buy products for it. Her work highlights a shift toward healthier routines, conscious beauty, and African-led ingredients shaping the future.



## Adeola Adeyemi – BEAUTY BY AD

Adeola turned her passion and digital presence into one of the country's most recognisable homegrown makeup brands. Beauty by AD is vibrant, relatable, and built for the everyday woman who wants reliable pigments and flattering formulas. Her matte lipsticks, glow products, and eyeshadow palettes became instant favourites because she listened to her audience. Adeola's strength has always been community — she speaks to her followers with honesty, enthusiasm, and a shared love of beauty. Beauty by AD continues to shape the market by proving that authenticity and quality are a powerful combination.





December in Nigeria is not a month. It is a full-time job, an extreme sport, and a personality all on its own. One minute you're casually sipping water and minding your business, the next you're plotting outfit changes for four events in one night and wondering why your bank app suddenly thinks you're reckless. Whether you're a seasoned December warrior or a first-timer still spelling "Detty" with one 't, there are a few essentials you need before you step into the ring. Consider this your starter pack — the fun, the fashion, the chaos, and the tiny dose of common sense required to make it out alive

**1. A Wardrobe That Can Multitask Better Than You**

Detty December is not the time to start experimenting with outfits that require assistance from three friends and a prayer. You need clothes that can take you from a brunch in Ikoyi to a concert on the Island and still look photo-ready. Think statement pieces that deliver drama without inconvenience: slinky dresses, linen sets, wide-leg trousers, crisp shirts, mini bags, bold shoes, and a healthy dose of shimmer. Sequins? Absolutely. Lagos in December is powered by vibrations, lights, and reflective surfaces. Shine is practically a dress code. And please, pack a pair of flats or slides in your car. All those "I can do five hours in heels" speeches end by 11:47pm when you are dragging your feet through a car park that suddenly feels like a pilgrimage site.

**2. A Phone That Won't Die When the Vibes Peak**

If your battery is a coward, this is not its season. Between snapping reels, navigating Google Maps because every party is somehow "hard to find," and coordinating with your people in the noise, your phone will be working harder

than NEPA during elections. A power bank is non-negotiable. A second cord? Even better. Screenshots of gate passes? Essential. Screenshots of the screenshot? Don't laugh — you'll thank yourself when security at 2 am decides to develop new rules. Also, free up space. Nothing hurts like catching the perfect moment — a Burna cameo, a surprise kiss, your friend falling for the third time — only for your phone to respond: "Storage Full." Don't be that person.

**3. A Circle of Friends Who**

Understand the Assignment  
December friendship is not regular friendship. This is the month where you truly know who your people are. You need at least one planner (the human Google), one connector (the one with "links"), one sensible person (to drag you home before midnight turns into morning), and one unrepentant enabler (the reason you're outside again after promising the Lord you were done).  
Group chats are your headquarters. You'll coordinate outfits, plan transport, argue over who is late (someone is always late), and talk big about arriving early but still show up at 10:45pm for a 7pm event. It's tradition.

**4. A Budget — And the Discipline to Actually Respect It**

Ah yes, the part everyone pretends to forget. Detty December is fun until you check your balance and suddenly become very religious. Gone are the days when #20,000 could carry you through five outings and leftover suya. Today, one night out can humble even the proudest among us.  
The hack? Create a December budget, multiply it by two, then add a "miscellaneous" category for spontaneous concerts, last-minute aso-ebi, and "Let's quickly go out" invitations that end at sunrise. Transfer money into a separate account for bills and emergency adulting — and do not touch it. Because January waits for no one.

**5. A Hydration and Skincare Plan (Trust Us)**

Your skin will tell on you. Between makeup, late nights, dehydration, and the dusty harmattan breeze trying to sabotage your glow, this is not the time to neglect your routine. Stock up on moisturisers, lip balm, body oils, sunscreen, hydrating serums, and facial wipes to peel off layers of partying.



And drink water. Then more water. Then one more bottle. It sounds boring, but so does explaining to your dermatologist why your face is suddenly acting like you've been wrestling in the desert.

**6. A Transport Strategy — Because Lagos Will Try You**

If you're in Lagos, understand this: traffic has its own agenda in December. A simple drive from Victoria Island to Lekki can turn into a two-hour reflection session. Your transport plan should be equal parts strategic and spiritual. Leave early when you can. Don't trust Google Maps after 6 pm. And always have fuel, because nothing humbles a person like running out of petrol on the way to an event where you'd already planned your entrance. If you're using ride-hailing apps, prepare your chest. Prices will rise like harmattan dust. Surge pricing in December has no conscience.

**7. A Little Bit of Sense (Just a Little)**

December is carnival season, but please — apply wisdom. Keep your drinks in sight, stick with your people, share your location,

and know when to go home. A good time is great; a safe time is even better. And if your village people send you messages like "Come outside, we are live!" at 3 am, kindly ignore. December is long; not every night needs your attendance.

**8. A Post-December Recovery Plan**

The real test of adulthood comes in January. School fees. Rent. Subscriptions. Deadly exchange rates. Life will come knocking like a debt collector. Create a soft landing plan: detox from outings, reset your sleep pattern, drink water, open your emails, apologise to your liver, and prepare for whatever wahala the new year wants to start with.

Detty December is a beautiful, chaotic, glitter-coated marathon. It's the one time of year when the country feels lighter, people are friendlier, and every night holds a story you'll laugh about months later. With the right starter pack, you'll not only survive it — you'll own it.  
Just remember: December is for the vibes, January is for the consequences. Handle both with grace.



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