



At that time, it felt difficult to find household items that were made locally, as the export business was huge and with India being rich in handcrafted items, they could also be easily sold in the country. I knew of many people while travelling, bought carpets from Indian brands available abroad for almost double the value and then reimporting it. That's when the idea struck me of building a brand with all the knowledge and the history we had with rugs.

What has been the growth story of the brand and what sets you apart?

Learning on the go is something we have always believed in. Every year has had its new set of challenges. Emphasis on design and quality have always been our main focus and we have stayed true to that. Winning various design awards like EDIDA, International German Design awards over the years and working on collaborations with some of the best people in the industry like Varun Bahl, Rooshad Shroff, Jj Valaya and Ashiesh Shah who are willing and wanting to work with you makes you realise that the brand has come a long way from where it started.

Cocoon Fine Rugs opened their first store in Jaipur this year, this is the brand's fourth rug gallery in the country, after Mumbai, Bangalore and Kolkata. We recently collaborated with a Malta based design house DAAA HAUS for a rug series which were based on artist James Vella Clark's work.

What sets Cocoon apart, is our commitment towards constantly innovating design using the finest raw materials. Everything is handmade and sustainable. At Cocoon we don't do too many rugs of the same design. Very rarely will you find the same rug that adores 2 different homes. Each piece is unique and every carpet has a story to tell and an inspiration behind. The success of the brand is also credited to our futuristic thinking in terms of predicting trends and customer-focused approach which makes the brand a frontrunner in the luxury rug space.

Where do you source inspiration and how does it then finally become a collection?

I see inspiration in almost everything, especially when I travel. I love travelling and this is something that helps me visualize and free my mind to think about distinctive designs, aesthetics and mix and match of colors that can be incorporated in making a rug. Our signature collections are heavily inspired from my extended stays in vibrant world cities - Chicago, San Francisco, Barcelona and London. All things around inspire - nature, architecture and people. Learnings from these travels have been one of the biggest influences behind signature collections such as Colors of Life and Vintage

Revival!

Our rug collections are also inspired by different ideas like abstract paintings, architecture, photography and even textiles like Ikat and Batik. Like recently we did an entire collection inspired by the Bauhaus movement which just completed 100 years.

Each of our rugs were inspired by the abstract design, shapes, architecture and colours which are true to the Bauhaus design philosophy. Additionally, we carry limited edition collections with top designers like Ashiesh Shah, Jj Valaya, Rooshad Shroff and Varun Bahl.

How much influence does the floor have on the atmosphere of a room?

A great rug lifts up the look and feel of the room and adds vibrancy / colour to it. The rugs that we create can also be used as a piece of art by putting it up on the wall instead of using it as a floor rug. A rug also helps in reducing the noise in your space.

A hard surface floor does not absorb sound the same way that a carpet does. When the temperatures drop the carpet has a greater insulating value compared to a marble or wooden floor.

How did this collaboration with Daa Haus come about and what is the artistic significance?

DaaHaus treasures art in every form and is constantly in search of new talent promoting freedom of expression and creating opportunities where artists and entrepreneurs

meet to give life to new art. These ideologies and beliefs are very similar to Cocoon's and that's where the instant connection was made.

The idea of this collaboration was germinated when Keith Pilow was travelling to India for the first time in 2019, exploring the possibility of setting up a satellite design & architecture studio in Mumbai, he immediately fell in love with the country, its craftsmanship and the traditions. He wanted to develop something that was unique bridging the two cultures. Keith remembered about the art collection of a fellow countryman and friend, artist James Vella Clark. His work has always inspired Keith hence it was no cliché to convert his works into rugs.

These rugs are pieces of art. Each of our rugs has a story to tell. This collection is a story of true passion for the art & craft of rugs. It is also a true story of convergence of two cultures, vision and design and colour!

The soft, sumptuous and delicate metaphoric intent of this collection can be physically felt under your feet. The collection is a blend of pure natural wool and silk, the slight imperfections in the weaves have been expertly measured to best recreate the original paintings of James Vella Clark. ☐



RUGS AS PIECES OF ART

Ayush Choudhary, founder of Cocoon Rugs, believes each rug has a story to tell. Luxe Code speaks with him to discuss how he built the brand and his design inspirations.

Photo courtesy: Cocoon Rugs
Words by : Rini Mukkath



Established in Mumbai in 2009 by Ayush Choudhary, Cocoon Rugs is known for its sophisticated, modern interpretation of classic weaves, making rugs a contemporary style statement.

Recently, Ayush Choudhary, both designer and founder announced a collaboration with Malta based designer Keith Pillow of The Daaa Haus Group to unveil a limited edition of rugs, titled "Convergence". The designs are a convergence of the works of artist James Vella Clark's oil on canvas series which are inspired by the landscapes of Malta.

"The Ayush Choudhary x Keith Pillow limited edition of rugs is a convergence of cultures with nature as its inspiration, enriching the abode or any physical space across the world, in this blend of pure natural wool and silk, the slight imperfections in the weaves have been expertly measured to best to recreate the original paintings of James Vella Clark," says Ayush Choudhary.

"Experiencing the production of the exquisite rugs first-hand at Cocoon's workshops in Jaipur, I was consumed by the idea to develop something unique bridging the two cultures. Upon recollection I remembered about the art collection of a fellow countryman and friend & artist James Vella Clark. The result is a reinterpretation of James' works, intricately reproduced in an unconventional form of luxury rugs" says Keith Pillow.

Cocoon rugs as a brand have grown both in design and size, we

spoke to the founder to trace the journey. Excerpts from the interview with Ayush Choudhary:

How did you start Cocoon Rugs?

It all began in 2009, when I had a vision to take a basic functional item like the carpet, and transform it into a piece of art. I took my father's export-focused carpet business and gave it a new direction, making the 'Cocoon' name India's leading a-la-mode luxury carpet brand. Focused, I have deep emotional roots with carpets, and am the second generation in a rug manufacturing and design company. As a young boy, me and my father used to visit carpet weavers around Rajasthan and Gujarat. These experiences trained my eye tremendously and helped me to shape unique design sensibilities with a great understanding of textures, colour combinations and design.

Growing up in Rajasthan inspired me and made me develop a taste for all things beautiful and artistic. There was always a sense of belongingness with my father's carpet business, as we saw the dedication and love with how he grew the company. At the start of my journey, I went to the US, to pursue a degree in Electrical Engineering, but soon realized that this wasn't my calling, so I shifted to Finance and Marketing. It was only in 2008, when I was on a break in my hometown, I realized there was an opportunity in the carpet space in India.