

What's hot alert: SA's trendiest kids design new winter ranges exclusive to Ackermans

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Daniella dos Santos ('Dani', 16) and Nikhil Govender ('Nixie', 11), winners of Ackermans' 2017 Style Squad Young Fashion Designer Competition, are launching their very own girls' and boys' winter ranges; which will be available from Ackermans stores across southern Africa in June 2018.

Ackermans' annual Style Squad Young Fashion Designer Competition challenges boys and girls aged between 9 and 15 (at time of entry) to complete various fashion-inspired tasks. Winners take home an enviable variation of prizes, including an iPad with monthly data, branded gear, as well as fashion vouchers. Monetary prizes are also awarded to the winners, as well as a R10,000 educational policy (each) and a contribution to each winners' school. Winners also look forward to celeb-like exposure in the Ackermans magazine, on the website and social media platforms, as well as being featured on the Sound of Ackermans in-store radio station.

The ultimate prize being the opportunity to design their own clothing ranges and see their peers don their creations.

Tanya Ruiters, Marketing Specialist at Ackermans, says the two young fashionistas rose to the various challenges presented to them; showcasing their individual sense of style and creativity. "Nixie impressed the judges with his use of bold prints – he took fashion risks that really paid off and made his designs stand out from the crowd."

Dani, winner of the girls' category, impressed the judges with her attention-to-detail. "Her designs were intricate and remained true to her natural bohemian, romantic style," says Ruiters.

The Style Squad winter range for girls, designed by Dani, comprises 10 must-have items including a hoodie, jersey, track-top, track-pants, two pairs of jeans, a jacket, a handbag, a choker and a cap.

Boys can look forward to six stylish items which include two hoodies, a jacket, two track-pants and a pair of jeans, courtesy of boys category winner, Nixie.

Ruiters explains that to bring it all together Dani and Nixie were treated to an all-expenses paid trip to the Ackermans Support Centre in Cape Town for a three-day design experience, where the aspiring stylistas met with the Ackermans' buying team to put their ranges together. "Our young designers were tasked with completing carefully selected activities to help bring their creations to life." This included trend research, sourcing fabrics, drawing, and selecting silhouettes, colours, cuts and trims.

"To ensure our winners received a real-world retail experience they also briefed Computer-Aided Design (CAD) artists and presented their designs to the management team," adds Ruiters.

The experience was concluded with a fun photoshoot where Dani and Nixie were treated to hair and make-up and kitted out in their very own custom winter ranges.

Ruiters adds that: "All range items are limited edition, and we anticipate both ranges will sell out very fast!"

Top winter trends as predicted by the Style Squad's young designers:

1. Denim: According to Dani, denim is not going anywhere anytime soon. "You will see a lot of denim in my range;

floral-embroidered denim jeans, a denim jacket, and a denim choker and cap,” she says.

2. Knitwear: Dani says: “I love knitwear for winter as it is warm and comfy and can easily be dressed up or down.”
3. Military: Nixie explains that his search for camo pants always seemed to be unsuccessful, which is why he took this opportunity to design his own. “The military theme is carried through to my hoodie and track pants.”
4. Tracksuits are big for winter. “This is a trendy and super comfortable winter look for kids, and is often worn by Maddie Ziegler, a young fashion designer with her own clothing range,” says Dani. Nixie adds that his own range is super comfy and trendy with its own touch of street swag.
5. Warm colours: Dani used warm colours throughout her range, and Nixie incorporated his love for the colour red in his own designs “it is a very trendy and uplifting colour for winter,” he says.















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