

# I S L A M I C HORIZONS

## New York, Paris, Milan, and ... ISNA?

Will the fashions at ISNA Conventions lead to trendy Muslim-friendly wear?

BY SARAH KHAN

**A**mbling through the Convention Center this year, you might have mistaken the Hyatt's hallways for runways. Women with perfectly-coiffed manes and stylish blazers passed by ladies with ornate hijabs and manicured nails. Pointy-toed shoes clicked past colorful flip-flops in the bazaar.

Traditional hijabs and jilbabs are seemingly harder to spot year after year, as unique interpretations of the season's latest fashions find their ways onto ISNA-goers. Case in point: Knee-length dresses were all the rage this year, but paired with pants or jeans for modesty's sake. Many girls wore embroidered tank tops or sleeveless blouses obscured beneath this season's hottest item, the shrug. Long layered gypsy skirts in vibrant colors were matched to hijabs and purses, and reds and lavenders proved

to be the hottest hues of the Labor Day weekend. Since mainstream designers have been embracing South Asian *kurta* tops and beaded *khussa* shoes with full force, many *desi*—South Asian—girls just reached deep into their closets and pulled out their own *kurta*s and slippers from existing outfits to top off their extra-faded jeans.

The hotel lobby glittered aplenty this year, since sequins formed the staple of virtually every ensemble. Belts, purses, peasant skirts, and shawls all shimmered in rich shades of emerald, turquoise, magenta, gold, and silver. From the sparkles adorning their clothes to the funky, jeweled accessories embellishing their outfits, 'bling-bling' was definitely at the forefront of the ISNA fashion scene this year.

The most popular hijab style was the wrap—not the trian-

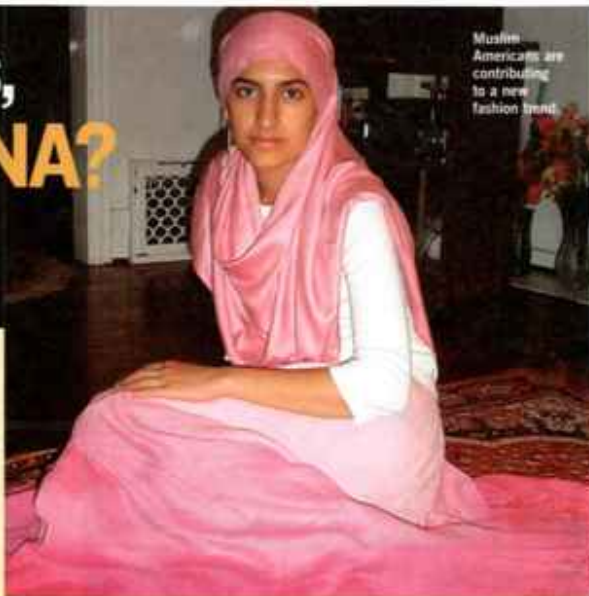
gle—pinned with, what else, a trendy bejeweled pin. Scarf watchers noted that the lace-edged hijabs are a dying breed.

While the ladies clearly took extra care to look their best, the brothers were not far behind in the sartorial department. Faded jeans coupled with fitted polo shirts were a regular fixture in the lobby scene, and popped collars were a common sight. South Asian-inspired long tunics were not limited to girls alone; embroidered cotton *kurta*s were in vogue in the men's sections as well. The most surprising trend spotted on the male set at ISNA was their choice of color; pink shirts were all the rage, in

styles ranging from button-down dress shirts to short sleeved *T*s to—of course—polos with popped collars.

As ISNA continues to evolve year after year into a conference that strives to address all the needs of Muslim families, it's also becoming an opportunity for men and women to scope out the latest styles and stay in touch with what's hot. With it becoming increasingly difficult to find clothes that adhere to Muslim codes of modesty and fashion trends simultaneously, ISNA—through both its attendees and the broad array of bazaar stalls—provides an unprecedented outlet to catch up on *couture*. Who knew? ■

Muslim Americans are contributing to a new fashion trend.



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH KHAN

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