



Elaine talks to: Lindsey Imeson from Shanti House Apparel

Elaine: Hello again, Lindsey and it was really good meeting you at the AIKB Easter Fair because I was blown away by your beautiful pashminas and sweaters that were on display there. And I'm sure that you had a very good day.

Lindsey: We did. Thank you. Yes, it was very good.

Elaine: Very, very hard to resist.

Lindsey: Met some very nice people. It's great. Thank you.

Elaine: Absolutely, So tell me, how did you become involved with this particular er project and tell me what it's called.

Lindsey: Okay. And so Claire and I have been best friends now for many years, over 20 years. And er we met each other back in the UK. And my husband and I have now moved to France permanently. Um I probably been here now for about 16 months. It was January, back end of January 23, when I fully moved out here. And so Claire and I had been talking, obviously about Claire's projects and Claire's er new career. And she mentioned er about Natalia, the lovely lady that she met um when she was training. And it was something that we both felt you know very, very strongly about. Er, we're both quite politically active, we we don't like injustice. We don't like bullying. We're very into women's rights. Er and so, yes, that's something that we felt that we wanted to to bring back to France and we, well at the time I was in the UK. Um so we started Shanti House, gosh, it must have been, yeah, 2020, 2021 properly. And um Shanti just means peace. You know, it means everyone's welcome. So yeah, it's it's something that we feel quite strongly about.

Elaine: So it was through your connection with Claire and her travels to India? And have you been out there?

Lindsey: No, not yet.

Elaine: Not yet.



Lindsey: Obviously because of COVID.

Elaine: Oh right.

Lindsey: But recently, I have um been in contact with another family. And they live in Jaipur. And um they work with local artisans in that area. And I've been invited to go in October this year. So it's something I'm thinking about definitely.

Elaine: No, stop thinking about it.

Lindsey: Well, absolutely.

Elaine: Just do it. Just to go for it.

Lindsey: Yeah, it's definitely, as I say, Now that COVID. You know, it's all out of the way.

Elaine: Of course.

Lindsey: It means that we can start to.

Elaine: I think that that gave possibly, in a way it was a stop, wasn't it? And it made people stop and pause and think.

Lindsey: Very much so.

Elaine: And reflect and maybe take a new path, once it was open again.

Lindsey: Absolutely, yeah.

Elaine: To to try to do something that might have been in your head, but not um actioned. So how do you actually get all those lovely shawls and little sweaters and things over here.

Lindsey: Well we're quite lucky, um because obviously Natalia and Claire and I um will kind of have Face Times, and um, you know, we we're kind of, you know, on



social media with each other. Um and Natalia will, you know, tell us, you know, some sometimes the latest products that they you know, that she's kind of come across, and she's working on. Um and so basically, Claire and I think about, you know, the kinds of things that we think, you know, people would get joy from here. Because interestingly, some of the products that were very popular popular in the UK, um they haven't been as popular in France, um and you know vice versa. It's just interesting. It's about knowing I think the people that you're working with, and and who you know, are interested in, in in the products that you want to offer. But that's all part of, that's what makes it interesting. So, you know, we think about the types of pashminas that we like, er we obviously have cashmere, we have organic cotton, from Dharamsala. And then we have the cashmere um shawls and pashminas that come from Nepal. And we have some beautiful woollen jumpers, which I think you might have seen.

Elaine: I was incredibly tempted.

Lindsey: Um they also.

Elaine: 'cept I've just had a big car bill.

Lindsey: Yeah, they're beautiful. Um. And I think, you know, it it's kind of multi layered for me in terms of the project. I think there's many factors to why I really enjoy what I'm doing. We feel like we're kind of giving back a bit, we feel like we're helping, you know, particularly ladies - we do work with, with men, obviously - but we do work primarily with ladies. And I think we sort of touched er earlier about kind of the commercialisation of the region. And unfortunately, what that can mean is that ladies, you know, can't stay in their, in their family homes, they have to move to bigger cities to try and find work. So by helping in our very small way, doing what we do, it allows these ladies to, you know, to continue to live in their areas, in their communities, live with their families, and you know, work and do what they feel passionate about, and it helps them to be financially independent.

Elaine: Absolutely.

Lindsey: So it's a really, it's a really good.



Elaine: It's all made on a sort of small scale, is it, all handmade, largely?

Lindsey: Yes, as I say, um individually, you know, obviously, they're work in cooperatives, but you know, people are making you know, some some of the ladies make the dyes. Some of the ladies do the the weaving or you know, the the knitting, the looming, so, it's just very much, you know, on an individual basis, and and Natalia has been, you know, she's lovely lady, she's very ethically minded, as Claire and I are and so you know, between the three of us we work out.

Elaine: Fantastic.

Lindsey: What we want to.

Elaine: How fortunate to have met.

Lindsey: Yes.

Elaine: Someone like that.

Lindsey: Absolutely.

Elaine: Isn't it such an opportunity.

Lindsey: It was it was lovely.

Elaine: Isn't it? It's as though it was meant to be.

Lindsey: Yeah. Many years ago, in in a different career I had, I used to work - I don't know whether they do something similar in France - but in the UK, there was an initiative um called Women in Rural Enterprise. And it was something that I was part of, and I really enjoyed um being in that group. It's basically lady supporting individuals, you know, we were supporting each other in our businesses. Um and I something that I would really like to do here in Brittany, um and I'm not sure at the moment if there is anything like that here.



Elaine: Well, the thing is to source it and see, and I because I think that the French and certainly the Bretons are very into very into that sort of like non commercialism.

Lindsey: Absolutely.

Elaine: And promoting individual enterprises. They do give a lot of help to people to set up an individual enterprise of of some kind.

Lindsey: OK.

Elaine: Particularly, if it's ethical as well, there there's there's very much that down to earth attitude.

Lindsey: Yes.

Elaine: A lack of commercialism.

Lindsey: Yeah.

Elaine: In a way. And I think you would probably find that very straightforward. So what outlets er do you actually have for selling on your

Lindsey: Well, we're exploring different opportunities at the moment, different ways to do things. And it it's a learning curve for me because I'm still pretty new to the region. So as I say, in the UK was quite lucky. Because obviously, I knew which areas I wanted to work in. So at the moment I'm working at Quintin market on a Tuesday, and then I'm working at er Huelgoat er market on a Thursday. And then this Saturday onwards, I'm starting at Quimper on Saturday mornings, from eight to one.

Elaine: So get, certainly buzzing around.

Lindsey: Yeah, it's great. Cos I get to to see lots of beautiful places as well.

Elaine: And Bon Repos have a market too on a Sunday morning.

Lindsey: Yes, I I understand that. Yes, they do. Don't they. So maybe.

Elaine: From, I think it's end of March to October.

Lindsey: Oh Okay. That's over the summer period.

Elaine: That's another one. Yes, over the summer. And that gets very busy.

Lindsey: Gosh, OK.

Elaine: Because you've got a lot of people visiting the Abbey and going on the canal.

Lindsey: Right. Okay.

Elaine: So that's one to check out.

Lindsey: So that might be something to look for.

Elaine: And there's a lot of lovely, like leather goods and things like that, handmade goods.

Lindsey: Oh beautiful. That sounds lovely. Um yeah. And and also, we've been investing in the website. So um I need some support with that, because I'm not technologically minded. Um, but it's something that we've been working on and, um you know, moving forward, that's something that I'd like to develop as well. Um, yeah. So it's.

Elaine: Amazing.

Lindsey: So it's, so it's all new. It's all a learning curve.

Elaine: Well, I think you've certainly got your feet on the ladder.

Lindsey: Thank you. Yeah. And we just, we love what we do. And it's you know, there's what we really enjoy. Claire and I is that obviously, like with Claire's treatments, we really want people to enjoy.



Elaine: Well you're working almost in together isn't it. The two are collaborative.

Lindsey: Absolutely. And the two are.

Elaine: In some respects they're all connected to.

Lidsey: The two are linked. Um. And we really love it when you know, customers buy our products, and they really love them. And if they buy them for presents for their mums or their grandmas or you know, whoever, that they feel really passionate about it

Elaine: Well when you're wearing something that's lovely and soft as they are

Lindsey: Yes

Elaine: And handmade, maybe and individual.

Lindsey: Yeah.

Elaine: Bespoke almost. It makes you feel good.

Lindsey: Absolutely.

Elaine: Doesn't it. So.

Lindsey: And you know you're doing a good thing.

Elaine: Yes.

Lindsey: In buying it. So it's just everyone is getting, you know, joy from it. So yeah, it's just something that we really love to do.

Elaine: Perfect.

Lindsey: And we'd like to do more of it.

Elaine: Lucky Mellionec to have you two living there. I'm sure there's a beautiful aura about the place.

Lindsey: We try. All that calm.

Lindsey: It isn't always, but we do try obviously.

Elaine: No no no 15 year olds on noisy motorbikes racing, revving up. Oh, no, no, no. No.

Lindsey: It's very peaceful where we live. We're very lucky.

Elaine: It's very calm. Well, well done you.

Lindsey: Thank you.

Elaine: Well done Lindsey. Thank you so much. I was just so blown away.

Lindsey: Oh thank you.

Elaine: By your beautiful products, you know, ooh where does that come from?

Lindsey: That's part of the joy, you know, part of the joy is, you know, um choosing those products. And sometimes, you know, we don't know, in terms of the cotton shawls, for example, we don't actually know what colours and designs the ladies have you know decided on. So it's like Christmas every time we

Elaine: Oh brilliant, oh golly.

Lindsey: We get, receive some new shawls.

Elaine: Ooh Well, I we will put the details of your Shanti House Apparel

Lindsey: Oh thank you.

Elaine: Um in the links on our programme and on the website.



Lindsey: That's very kind.

Elaine: And er I'm sure you will be seeing more of me.

Lindsey: Thank you Elaine.

Elaine: Thank you very much.