
AND SO

Kate Spade





This issue is devoted to Kate Spade's transition from a journalist to a fashion designer, and then to an artist

Journey from Kate Spade to Frances Valentine

The birth of *Kate Spade*

By Eunseo Song

If you have ever been interested in fashion in your life, you will know Kate Spade. Kate Spade is a women's fashion brand that Kate Spade and her partner, husband Andy Spade, co-founded in 1993.

Did she build up her glamorous career from the start as a designer? No, she was a journalist who worked as an editor for a women's magazine.

From 1986 to 1991, Spade worked as an editor in the accessories department of *Mademoiselle* in Manhattan, and held the title of Senior Fashion Editor/Head of Accessories by the time she left the company. As Spade

developed her sense of fashion in the industry, she noticed the lack of handbags in the market and made a bold move: She started her own business in the fashion industry in January 1993 without any degree in business, marketing or fashion from college.

Starting with a line of hand-

bags and accessories, Kate Spade flourished. When Kate Spade started in early 90s, there were not many competitors in the market. Kate Spade became the first American brand working with nylon and added clothing and a shoe line to its collection, and became a preppy and charming wom-





The change of her name along with the birth of her brand

In 2007, Kate and Andy Spade sold the brand to Neiman Marcus, and in the midst of the selling of Kate Spade, the founders left the company, the Washington Post wrote. Andy worked on other projects. Kate spent time at home with their daughter. And life was good. Until it got boring.

After her success in the fashion field, Spade could have enjoyed her life with fame and wealth. However, it did not stop Kate from pursuing art in design. Her style evolved along with her. She went from a preppy girl to a vintage-loving teenager to a designer of a preppy but lovely Gossip Girl style in the Upper East Side, and then, to a mother.

Along with different phases of her life from a journalist to a high-

end women's fashion brand designer to a mom, Kate Spade did not hesitate to reveal herself in her design, and launched a new fashion brand, Frances Valentine-sophisticated shoes and accessory lines.

"Now, she's Katherine Noel Frances Valentine Brosnahan. In stores, she's Frances Valentine" said the Wall Street Journal.

"My grandfather, father, brother and my daughter's name is Frances. And then Valentine was my mom's dad's middle name because he was born on Valentine's Day," Kate said. "There were a lot of things we made up and we thought that wasn't feeling right," said Andy. "A person's name felt like this thing that was part of us, that connection, something real."

Kate Spade. Frances Valentine. Those two names are enough for her to represent her own brand. Simple but elegant. Lovely, yet mature. “I feel a little nervous coming off that huge run of success,” said Valentine to the Washington Post.

Frances Valentine could have sought an easier way to make her comeback to the fashion industry by using her fame to gain popularity for her newly launched brand. However, she changed her identity and started from the beginning.

If Kate Spade started with a focus on handbags, Frances Valentine began with shoes. “They are all aiming to be pretty but also comfortable. “I wanted to make sure I paid attention to the arch, to the toes, to the heel,” Valentine says.

Francis Valentine shoe collection for 2017 covers a wide array of styles from ballerina shoes with a princess-like bow and glitter to sophisticated ankle boots. Chic boots with thinner edge represents Valentine’s observation and confidence

that has developed in her style over time.

Frances Valentine has evolved her style and is now ready to dive back into fashion field. “You can’t do something that’s already been done,” she said.

“Simply Modern”

One speciality of the Frances Valentine’s de-

sign is structure. *Life Style* magazine described Valentine’s designs “are all about structure.” Valentine said she adores it, but it can’t be silly or superfluous. “They have to be architectural,” she said.

Frances Valentine has started her new business but that does not mean she should only be a businesswoman like she used to be. She has more colors in her life now with the love of her life, her daughter.

“I’d love to sound educated and say I dive into a good book when I’m there, but in truth, I spend time with the kids playing cards, ping-pong, and board games.” Valentine said. “Enjoy your moment. That’s when good design starts.”

Now, the title “artist” fits more than “designer” to Kate Spade.

*"I don't have any
inspiration, I just
design what I like!"*





Story goes on

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