



Soukous

As this Cotham Hill gift shop turns 10 this July, LAURA ROWE gets a guided tour into the very pink and girly world of Soukous

“I still love it, even after ten years,” says owner Elisa Snaden, as she shows me around her Cotham shop.

It's not hard to find. Sitting in the good company of the specialist shops this hill has become renowned for, Soukous is a beacon of pink. But it's not always been this way.

Elisa bought the shop, when it used to be located across the road, 10 years ago. Back then it specialised in Moroccan pottery and throws but when Elisa took over in 2001 she started stocking the items she was

passionate about, namely all things girly.

It stayed in that spot for four years before Elisa moved Soukous to its current home, and then expanded again into the basement last year, nearly tripling the store in size.

There are greetings cards – “people come in for one and come out with a whole handful,” Elisa tells me – gift ideas for every occasion, baby and children's clothes (up to the age of six), homeware, fairy lights, bunting, cake tins, lanterns, mobiles and accessories as well as ladies' clothes in fabulous colourful, floral designs.

There's also silver and beaded jewellery,


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ELISA SNADEN, OWNER

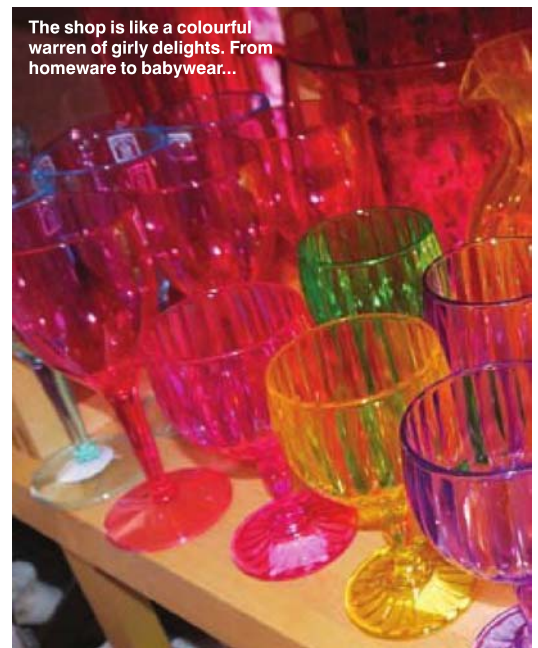
and children's toys. And everything that can be fairly traded is, proving that you don't need to wear itchy hemp sacks to dress ethically.

“Everything we buy, we make sure is value for money. I love the interaction with people here; from the buying to the selling, and all the talking. It's exciting!” says Elisa.

So dedicated is Elisa to the shop that she'll even order items in for her customers, and this is something that has been clearly noted by industry experts. Earlier this year, for the third time, the shop was a finalist in the Independent Gift Retailer of the Year 2011 category (for Wales and the South West) at The Great Gift Retailer Awards.

Everything you can find in store is also available to buy online, and the team now also have a Facebook page, which if you log onto over the next month you can find out about Soukous' 10th anniversary 10-per cent discount day. 

**Soukous, 44a – 46 Cotham Hill,
Cotham; tel: 0117 923 9854
www.soukous.co.uk**



The shop is like a colourful warren of girly delights. From homeware to babywear...