

CHRISTMAS ADVERTORIAL



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The Sandalwood story

When friends Fiona Mutton and Bec Sherriff got scheming in the pub back in 2013 neither could have imagined that in a few years time they would be sharing their eye for eclectic style with two beautiful stores in Braidwood and Bungendore.

The two share a passion for South-East Asia and have long-standing connections in the region. Fiona has a wealth of experience in retail, and though it was entirely new to Bec she was up for the challenge. Together they scoured Bali for textiles, homewares and treasures and secured a shopfront on Braidwood's bustling main street. Sandalwood launched in February 2014 and was met with such enthusiasm that Bec and Fiona had to head back overseas just two weeks later to frantically restock. Business has been non-stop ever since, and Braidwood locals and visitors alike fall in love with the colour and texture of the ever-changing array of unique goods that Sandalwood presents.

The shopping trips have now extended into India, and this year the two will explore further afield in Thailand and Cambodia. By drawing from a wide range of suppliers across a number of countries, and combining new wares with old, Sandalwood stylings are joyfully diverse, full of personality and individuality. The range on offer includes textiles and soft furnishings, furniture, fixtures, kitchen and servingware, clothing and accessories, toys, jewellery and trinkets. Many items are one-offs — never to be repeated.

The shopping trips are far from glamorous and not for the faint-hearted, but Bec and Fiona don't take shortcuts — committed to seeing the origin of their stock and ensuring ethical sourcing and production. They forgo the usual picks of large-scale stockists, instead working with small family operations, art cooperatives and venturing off the beaten track, working with locals to find reclaimed items and stunning antiques.



That means every piece in store is hand selected, and each item tells a story. Bec and Fiona take pride in knowing the history and significance of the shop's reclaimed and restored wares, and in having personally met the artists, craftspeople and families who produce the new product, maintaining ongoing partnerships. Sandalwood is able to give back to the regions in which it works by donating to charities that benefit the community.

Through their hard work, Bec and Fiona are creating 'a life less ordinary' for not only their customers but also for themselves, while supporting the livelihoods of artists, families and communities abroad — a rare shopping experience in today's world.



PASIPHAË NURSING THE BABY MINOTAUR (DETAIL) SOUTH ITALIAN RED FIGURE KYLIX C. 340 BC, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE, PARIS

That's an odd baby!

The story of the Minotaur of Crete by Billy Kennedy who has a PhD in Classics and a mother in Braidwood

To find the beginning of the Minotaur's story we must go back to his grandfather, the mythical king Minos of Crete. Minotaur (Μινώταυρος) actually means the bull (ταύρος) of Minos (Μίνως). Minos was of distinguished lineage, being a son of Zeus (king of the gods) and Europa (who gave Europe its name), and he was married to Pasiphaë who was herself a daughter of Helios, the sun god. Together they had a number of children including two famous daughters, Ariadne and Phaedra, and a son, Androgeus, all of whom feature in this story.

Minos was known as a just judge and

the first man to establish laws in Crete, and possibly in the history of humanity. When Minos acceded to power, however, his rule was disputed. In order to prove that his power was divinely ordained he claimed that the gods would grant him anything he wished for and then called upon Poseidon, lord of the oceans, to send him a bull, as a sign, from the depths of the sea. He promised to sacrifice this bull in thanks.

Poseidon did then send a magnificent bull out of the sea thus confirming the divine origins of Minos's royal power. The bull was so splendid, however, that Minos could not bring himself to

kill it. Thinking he could fool Poseidon he sacrificed another bull from his herd instead and put the divine bull in among his cows.

This was an unfortunate decision.

Attempting to fool the gods has consequences, and in order to exact vengeance on the faithless Minos, Poseidon caused his wife, Pasiphaë, to conceive an unnatural lust for the bull from the sea. She was overcome with sexual desire for this bull and jealousy too. She despised the cows in the herd that the bull seemed to favour and especially hated their big, pretty, brown eyes. Not a few cows she separated from the herd and put under yokes to pull ploughs, revelling in their discomfit. Some she even killed in sacrifice and gloated as she held aloft their entrails.

It so happened that at that time one of the greatest inventors of the ancient world, Daedalus, was living in the court of king Minos. Pasiphaë enlisted him as an accomplice to disguise her as a cow so that she could consummate her love for the bull. Obliging, Daedalus constructed a wooden cow on wheels and stitched a real cow hide to the outside. Crouching inside this Pasiphaë went into the field and achieved congress with the bull. The progeny of this union was of course the famous Minotaur, a creature with a man's body but the head and tail of a bull.

Naturally, Minos was rather put out when he discovered his wife's adultery and her monstrous offspring. Not realising at this stage Daedalus' complicity he ordered him to construct a vast maze, the Labyrinth, to contain the Minotaur. (Later Minos did discover Daedalus' involvement in the affair and imprisoned him too — in a high tower. But Daedalus built wings for his son Icarus and himself and flew away.)

A little later Minos' son Androgeus sailed to Athens to compete in their version of the Olympic games, the Panathenaea. Androgeus was an athletic young man with an enviable physique and won many victories — so many, in fact, that King Aegeus of Athens feared he may gain enough support to displace him as king. Aegeus therefore asked Androgeus to prove his bravery by going and defeating the Marathonian bull. This bull was apparently the very bull that Pasiphaë had union with to create the Minotaur. But for one of Heracles's (i.e. Hercules's) labours he was ordered to fetch this bull from Crete, and having done so he freed it onto the plains of Marathon. There the