

Women

Errol Arendz' fabulous creations

SO — WE'VE been having a close look at fashion designer Errol Arendz' fabulous creations presented in Windhoek last Monday — simultaneously he has been taking a close look at us.

Plus point for Windhoek women is that I overheard him telling someone that when he set off for Windhoek from Cape Town he thought he was going to arrive in a "dusty little dorp", but finds us after all, "tres chic".

The very best comment I heard was from a well-travelled woman whose comment on the collection he presented in Windhoek was: "I

felt that I was somewhere in Europe — certainly not in Windhoek."

Keynote of the collection was the lightness of fabrics. He imports many fabrics from the Seychelles and pays meticulous attention to detail.

Errol loves "fantasy" clothes — loose, floating, exotic garments. He says that in order to achieve this particular look, a woman doesn't necessarily have to buy from an exclusive couturier but just needs sufficient imagination and fashion know-how.

He adds that there are, after all, women who spend a fortune on clothes and who just don't look good.

He finds women in Windhoek

have an open mind regarding new trends and not stagnant at all in their approach to fashion.

He says that a woman has always pinned her faith on a designer to make her look beautiful, and that it is extremely satisfying to be able to do so.

He likes designing dresses for Barbara Barnard, wife of Professor Chris Barnard for instance. "She has a natural quality — her own aura — and a lot of class", he says.

Errol established his business in Cape Town barely 11 months ago and has made a spectacular rise to the top in his field. "I have this

talent and am committed to making full use of it," he says.

His salon in Cape Town has a beautiful view of Table Mountain. "I love that mountain and get tremendous inspiration from it as well as a specific sense of direction," he says.

He is happy about the fact that frequent attempts to revive the mini have been to no avail. "There is nothing uglier than a woman's kneecaps", he says firmly, and adds that after all, even sex symbols today wouldn't be caught dead in the mini, but have also adopted the mid-calf or longer length.

He describes the longer length as stylish and aristocratic and most important of all — it closes the generation gap, particularly as far as women in the over-40 age bracket are concerned.

Often his day starts at 6 am and lasts well after midnight. He explains his tremendous success as being due to "sheer hard work behind the scenes, not putting myself on a pedestal, and having a good team to back me in everything I do."

He tells me that he is essentially a summer person — he finds winter clothes too tailored and

often very dowdy, and says that he is a designer, not a tailor. "I like clothes that are free and gauzy — clothes that can breathe", he says.

In that case what does he do during the long, rainy Cape winter?

"I re-charge my batteries", says this brilliant young 24-year-old who enjoys cooking and gardening when he has a rare moment of leisure.

His ideal? To incorporate lavish designs in an inexpensive way so that a broad spectrum of women can enjoy wearing his designs.

