

AS SEEN IN
EARNSHAW'S



Whimsical Wales

FOR NICOLA O'CONNELL and Fiona Grant, sisters and creators of *Girl and a Mouse*, childhood nostalgia is the ultimate inspiration. "We spent a lot of time with our grandfather at his cottage in Wales," Nicola recalls. "The cottage was heaven and literally in the middle of nowhere." Playing amongst the woodland's creatures, the girls took a liking to mice. "I always thought mice had a cute yet mischievous side to them, so we thought what could be a more perfect combination of characters than a girl and a mouse?"

Nicola, the principal designer of the line, has been working in the apparel industry for more than 14 years. Her affinity for a vintage aesthetic is no doubt encouraged by her experience designing for *Free People*, a women's line with a hippy feel. She describes *Girl and a Mouse* as bohemian, relaxed, vintage and whimsical, adding that "there's always a surprise element—a touch of embroidery, a frill, an insert or a lace detail used in an unexpected way."

Crochet trims, mixed patterns and off-color stitching are all staples of the Fall '11 line, which is sized to fit girls 12 months to 5 years old. Soft pink, mulberry and seafoam green are the frontrunners for color, and Nicola adds that the collection is intended to encourage children to use their imaginations and to mix and match. "Who says you can't wear leggings, a dress, a top and a hoodie—all at the same time—and not look cute and cool?" —*M.W.*

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