



• CRAFT/PROFESSION

Ella and Leila BOUZIGES are both youthful experts in the craft of dying. They create their own exclusive fabrics and use their sewing skills to design a wide range of original fashions. A triumphant alchemy between plants and chemistry, fashion and art!



The two sisters are skilled in the use of vegetable dyes and mordant printing. Mordants are metallic salt fixatives used to set dyes on fabrics. A mordant combines with the dyestuff and the textile fibre, leaving an insoluble colour unaffected by light or washing. The mordant is printed on the fabric before it is soaked in the dye bath. Then the patterns appear...



The whole process requires several stages: the plants used in the dyes must be gathered, the patterns traced and printed, the plant material boiled and the fabric dyed. The garments are then stitched and ironed.

• BACKGROUND

“We started out in horticulture and discovered the properties of tinctorial plants. We used turmeric and onion peel for our first attempts at dying fabric and people liked our first designs. As a result, we



decided to launch our own brand in 2012” explains Ella. “Warnä” means “colour” in Indonesian.

The plant materials used by the sisters to dye their fabrics all come from species found in New Caledonia: leaves from gaiac and pomegranate trees, wood chippings from red oak and houp trees, all types of endemic wood used to make carvings.

• INSPIRATION AND ART/DESIGNS

“Warnä” dyed fabrics are mainly cotton but the sisters also dye wool, silk and linen. Their fabrics can be machine-washed on cold and ironed.

The sisters design dresses, tops, tee-shirts, skirts, scarves and sarongs, bags and jewellery. “Warnä” apparel is natural in feel, with ethnic or geometric prints. Colours are subtle: mainly shades of brown, yellow, green or ochre.

Ella and Leila use only environmentally friendly techniques to dye and design their fashions: no tinctorial plants are imported, plants are gathered sustainably by hand, no chemicals are used and all wood chippings are donated by local woodcarvers.