

STEPPING IT UP

For Omelle cofounder Cherise Angelle, nothing is out of reach.

LAS VEGAS-BASED footwear designer Cherise Angelle gets stopped a lot. On the street, that is. “People will look down at my shoes and ask, ‘Where did you get those?’” says the Omelle cofounder. As it happens, she explains, “I don’t buy shoes and only wear my own designs, so I end up giving out a lot of business cards.”

Yes, these shoes are definitely getting noticed. Omelle’s couture line of showstopping, height-defying, sculptural stacked heels, seersucker booties, alligator pumps with built-in knee-high merino-wool socks and shiny, pointed patent flats with leather pouches has been snagged by the likes of Sarah Jessica Parker and Sophia Bush, graced the pages of *Vogue*, *Elle* and *Lucky* and appeared on *Gossip Girl*.

The 30-year-old Breaux Bridge, Louisiana, native initially moved to Los Angeles eight years ago and worked at an agency that dressed celebrities for red-carpet events before returning home for a few years. “[At home,] I worked for a law firm and had to wear suits to work every day, and that’s when I really fell in love with jewelry and shoes, to dress things up a bit.” She says that when she would show up at the office sporting Jimmy Choos and Louboutins, “My coworkers used to tell me that I was way ahead of my time.”

When Angelle moved back to LA, she enrolled in the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising’s footwear program and was soon making molds for shoes and jetting on field trips to manufacturing factories in Tuscany. There she teamed up with classmate Nicole LaFave, who had a background in graphic design and knitwear. “We were the two overachievers in our class and for the last month in school, we asked our teachers questions for our business plan, without letting anyone know what we were up to,” she says. Angelle ended up in Vegas when she married her long-distance boyfriend last summer.

Omelle’s new spring/summer collection, entitled Planes, Trains and Automobiles, takes cues from helicopters, jet-engine propellers, railroad tracks and conductor hats. “We’re into unique shapes, textures and textiles, and pushing the limit of what can be worn on the foot,” she says. “Sometimes the artisans at the factory we use look at us like we’ve lost our minds, but to us it’s a fun process, and not just about making another heel or platform.”—JENNIE NUNN



JUST THE FACTS

Southern roots: I love to cook, so I make a lot of foods that are typical to Louisiana—gumbo, shrimp and grits or crawfish. I go to Whole Foods and this little dive store, Caviar Baron Fine Foods & Spirits Boutique. They have really good caviar.

Table hopper: For brunch I love The Country Club at the Wynn. It has this masculine, cigar-room feel, and with the golf course right there you feel like you’re in the country. One of my favorite lunch spots is Rachel’s Kitchen. I order the signature salad. I like the foie gras at Rosemary’s

Restaurant, the martinis with blue cheese-stuffed olives at Olives at Bellagio and the vegan cookies and red velvet cupcakes at Red Velvet Café.

Fashion fiend: My favorite shops are Scoop, Intermix, In Step, Ensemble and Outfit.