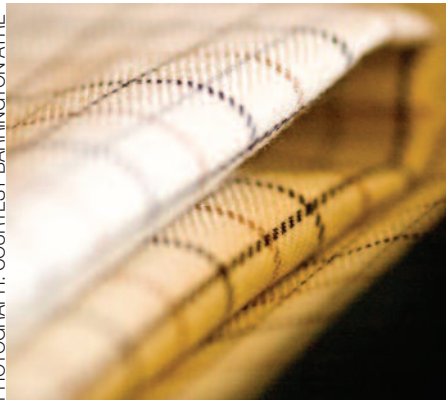


PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY BARRINGTON AYRE



made to measure

Nothing says more about you than the way you dress and an upsurge in demand for the very best workmanship in men's clothing has seen an increase in demand for tailored clothes once again. Eve Maguire met tailor **Tom Wharton** from Barrington Ayre to find out what it takes to make a bespoke shirt...



Today's trend for men's fashion is finding shirts and trousers that fit perfectly. With increasingly discriminating tastes, more men are now demanding the very best quality workmanship for their clothes.

"Men are taking more pride in their appearance and there's a certain prestige for men to have bespoke shirts in their wardrobe," says tailor Tom Wharton from Cirencester-based Barrington Ayre.

The ultimate luxury is having clothes tailor-made and men are aspiring to a bespoke wardrobe in a world where mass-produced clothes have become rife.

"There's a bit of mystery to having your own tailor and men like to have something unique about their clothes," says Tom.

"A shirt is the staple of a man's wardrobe so it's important that they fit well. Most men find that off-the-peg shirts fit in one place but not in others. A tailored shirt is measured to fit in all the right places and the difference in quality is obvious."

The choices of cuffs, collars, patterns, cotton weights and stitching are unlimited with 900 fabrics to choose from and 25 different varieties of collars and cuffs. The

highest quality 100 per cent Egyptian cotton is used to give a sumptuous feel to each shirt.

"Cuffs can be made to incorporate enough space for a watch, and collars can be positioned so they can be worn without a tie while still looking smart and professional. Initials can be embroidered onto the cuff in a subtle thread to give a truly distinctive quality shirt," says Tom.

Men can personalise their custom-made shirts by choosing a contrasting patterned fabric on the inside of the collars and cuffs, choosing one or two buttoned rounded, bevelled or square cuffs, and cut away, classic or buttoned-down collars. Wedding shirts can be personalised to include the groom's initials or the date of the wedding on the cuff or breast of the shirt for a really romantic touch.

And if you're thinking that having a tailor is an unaffordable expense then think again; prices for a bespoke shirt start at £46 due to Tom's low overheads.

"My mission statement is to offer tailormade elegance at affordable prices," says Tom who started his tailoring career in London with Bond Street tailors Hurst & Banks. Seeing a gap in the market for



affordable tailoring, Tom set up as a mobile tailor taking craftsmanship and tailormade quality to a wider audience.

"Gentleman should dress appropriately, and this shouldn't cost a fortune. Fashion is now harking back to the classical days of smart suits, fitted shirts and classic collars which is why demand for the tailored look is on the increase," says Tom.

"Looking smart in business is also a concern for many men and bespoke shirts can be crafted to look professional even without ties as the collars are set slightly wider to open up the face and shoulders.

"First impressions count so looking good in business is imperative."

Tom offers a visiting shirt tailoring service in the Cirencester, Gloucestershire and The Cotswolds area, personally measuring clients and guiding them through their choices of fabric patterns, collars and cuffs and the desired look of their finished shirt, whether they'll be worn with or without a tie, tucked into or worn outside trousers.

Visiting clients at their office or at home during the week or at weekends, Tom

provides a truly personal service that adds to the experience of having a tailor.

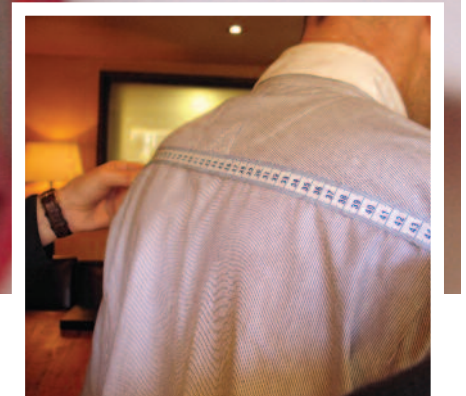
Once all choices are made the shirt takes three to four weeks from start to finish. The tailored shirt then arrives, beautifully packaged, at your door by courier service.

Barrington Ayre Bespoke Shirts also supply clients with the finest English-made socks from Pantherella & Scott Nichol and knitwear from John Smedley, some of the finest jumpers in the world.

"More men are wanting bespoke shirts to have the choice and flexibility of tailormade elegance," says Tom.

"A tailored shirt exudes quality," says client Dean Holmes. "It sits far more comfortably on the body and there's a certain feel-good factor wearing a custom-made shirt. The only difficulty is choosing from so many options!"

Tom Wharton can be contacted at Barrington Ayre on 0845 3009014 or 07511 794702; info@barringtonayre.co.uk; www.barringtonayre.co.uk



Tailor Tom Wharton measures client Dean Holmes for a bespoke shirt.

PHOTOGRAPHS: EVE MAGUIRE. LOCATION: HOTEL DU VIN, CHELTENHAM