

be individual

Tom Wharton answers your tailoring questions ...

Dear Tom, I'd like a lightweight suit that I can wear throughout the summer for any occasion – what would you recommend?

If it is a business suit I would suggest that you look for a nice lightweight English-made fabric such as ones from Dugdale Brothers or Holland & Sherry, both based in Huddersfield, and at about the 9 oz weight. (Luckily, we can provide all of these and more!) The 100 per cent wool will make sure that your suit, although being lightweight, is also incredibly strong and will last for many, many years. I would also suggest that if it is a suit that you are going to be wearing to a variety of different occasions, then I recommend that you look at a plain coloured fabric without any pinstripes or checks. For a great summer look, take a look at some of the light blues if you are feeling brave, or if you want to stay classical, go for the dark blue, nine ounce fabrics, which are fantastic and if you add in a rather tasty little yellow lining you will have a beautiful summer looking suit with a splash of summer colour inside.

If however you have a little bit more freedom in your suit choice and are after something a little bit braver, then why not go for a nice powder blue fabric?! Yes, it is a courageous choice, but if you can pull it off you will have people admiring you from afar and the extra little splash of colour will give you an even stronger summer feel. Stick with a nice wool or wool-linen mix and stay lightweight and you will have a suit that you can pull out for weddings, meetings, holidays and drinks parties year in and year out.

For any summer suit though, I suggest that you keep your lapels small and not as pointed as you would have gone for a more formal suit. Steer away from getting the suit fully lined if you can as it does add extra weight and can be a bit warm. Although we can pop in some perspiration pads under the arm pits if you need them?!

Stick with straighter trousers to allow you to abandon the socks or stick with some lovely silk ones. Go brave with the lining to complement everyone's summer mood, and keep your lapels smaller as you may not be wearing your tie as much. As always, be

individual; if you are having a suit made for yourself then you should have it made as you have always wanted it. It is your suit, and your style. Stay individual and stylish and enjoy the sun.

Dear Tom, what is the difference between English cut suits and Italian cut suits?

The first thing to really remember when looking at this question is that the majority of Italian suit designers always harked back to the English looking suit. They loved the look and wanted to bring the same effortless style into their designs whilst holding on to their own individual look. However, the basic differences come in three real key areas. Firstly the shoulders. The English suit steers away from the padded shoulder, preferring to go for the shoulder hugging cut that accentuates the gentleman's form and brings the eye into the face and not away from it.

The Italians prefer to go for padded shoulders, not to the extent of the Dynasty like shoulder pads of Eighties America, but definitely padded. This puts more emphasis on the shape of the jacket and cut. The waist of the English cut suit is less tapered than the Italians. The Italians prefer to emphasise the upside down triangle shape with their padded shoulders moving into tightly tapered waists, whereas the English are much more reserved and prefer the straighter cut. You will however notice that many English suits are now starting to favour the tapered waist and this is something that really started happening in the Sixties and is making a bit of a revival.

The third main difference is that the Italian cut suit should not have any vents at the back of the jacket. The English cut suit in contrast will have two vents. This is most likely a throwback to the English Gentleman usually being on horseback and is a practical way of wearing your jacket and has stuck since. So if you want to have an English cut suit, go with non-padded shoulders, a moderately tapered side and a double vented jacket. Whereas if you wish to appear more Italian, go with padded shoulders, tightly tapered sides and no vents. If however you are a bit younger and of slighter build, a mix between the two styles will give you a fantastic looking suit and keep you looking stylish and fashionable. **BS**



WITH TOM WHARTON

Tom Wharton started his tailoring career in London with Bond Street tailors Hurst and Banks. Spotting a gap in the market Tom set up his own tailoring company, Barrington Ayre, last year. Tom Wharton can be contacted at Barrington Ayre on 0845 3009014 or 07511 794702; info@barringtonayre.co.uk; www.barringtonayre.co.uk