

## IN TIME

Some of the very first to be produced by Longines column-wheel, single push-piece chronograph, part of the brand's collection, certainly stands out. The fluted crown has a mechanism which cleverly controls all of the watch's functions and gives it a traditional aesthetic. People have inherited the watch from several generations despite it being only 100 years old. Available in steel and leather. Price on request.



### THE ACCESSORY

#### Music Man

Eric Clapton arrives in the region for his gig at Dubai Media City on March 6th. And even if you can't strum a chord yourself, you can appreciate the ex-Cream crooner's slow hand, just as you can appreciate Etro's limited run of leather guitar cases inspired by *charrería* (Mexican rodeo). Menswear designer Kean Etro was inspired by the national sport on one of his many trips to Mexico, evident in his entire S/S14 collection, but it's these guitar cases that top our shopping list. Crafted using traditional saddle-making techniques, including using hot-iron branding to stamp Etro's signature paisley motif onto the waxed leather, each case is a fashionable work of art. Price on request.

## FOOT PRINT

Ralph Lauren has jazzed up the humble espadrille (left) with a range of prints this season. While the paisley or camo will certainly add a pop of colour to a slim pair of summer chinos, don't be tempted to try and match the print to your shirt - these bad boys offer enough pattern for one outfit. Dhs725



### MAIL ORDER

Mayfair tailor Thom Sweeney has been producing beautiful bespoke suits since 2007. But this season, Thom Whiddet and Luke Sweeney, the duo behind the brand, have produced a ready-to-wear collection available, thankfully for us, in the Middle East, on mrporter.com



## DRESSING FOR THE RACES

BY MAHIR ALI

The Dubai World Cup takes place this month and at a half-day event held outdoors it's important for style to marry comfort.



**Wear** something that you're more comfortable in. A two-buttoned option helps create abroad-shouldered, narrow-waisted

In future, you could invest in a well-tailored suit to ensure a great fit for your body and unparalleled attention to detail. But in the meantime, have the right attitude to carry whatever you have with confidence and have fun. Here are some tips on how to be turned out in your very best.

**Choose** pastel tones for shirts and suits as this is a chance to get colourful - so no black. Spruce up your outfit with a statement tie, a pocket handkerchief, some stand out socks, a cravat or even colourful shoe laces. Have fun with it, but be careful that it's not overkill.

**Pick out** equine themed cuff links or even a scarf to complement the mood of the event. Tie-pins and lapel pins are also a good touch. But once again, less is definitely more.

**Traditional** elegance is easier to adopt so don't succumb to the pressure of the style stakes. You could keep it chic by donning a traditional suit, a well fitted shirt and match your accessories to the colour of your date's dress.

look. For a more casual look, mix blazers and trousers in complementary colours. A dark blazer with light coloured pants is a winner.

**Lace-up shoes** are a must - absolutely avoid boots or loafers. The colour doesn't need to exactly match your outfit, but it should match your belt. For the brave, two-tone shoes are a great way to express oneself.

**Hats** aren't only for the fairer sex at the races. From a fedora to a classic trilby or even a bowler or a top hat, feel free to don one that catches your fancy. It must match with the shade of the suit and lend an air of formality. It's also important to familiarise oneself with the basics of when to doff a hat and when to take it off. Also, beware of hat hair!

**The races** are a formal affair, so your hair should be neat and trim. Avoid the use of too much styling product. A more natural look that doesn't distract from your outfit is ideal.

*Mahir Ali is artistic director & head of operations, at Ascots & Chapels.*

British luxury men's couturier Ascots & Chapels, Ascots & Chapels are 130-year old British tailors who offer the most unique sartorial experience for men, delivered by masters in the art of creative tailoring. Their visiting tailor service, Global Concierge and specialist Colour Consultant set them apart.

Find their stores in Dubai Marina Mall (level 1, +9714-427-0124), DIFC (Marble Walk, +9714-325-2216), Souk al Bahar, Downtown Dubai (+9714-450-8576) and at the Pearl Qatar (+9744-002-7989), unique fitting rooms at the Control Tower at Motor City, Dubai (+9714-362-9975) and Al Raha Mall in Abu Dhabi (+9712-556-5340), with a new shop now open at the Galleria, Abu Dhabi. (+9712 6761001) [www.ascotsandchapels.com](http://www.ascotsandchapels.com).



# Ascots & Chapels

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Al Raha Mall (Abu Dhabi)

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BY  
**MARK C O'FLAHERTY**  
 PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
**PHILIP C HAYNES**



*Limited Editions*

# THE DETAIL

WHY YOUR NAME HAS BECOME THE LAST WORD IN DISCREET LUXURY

**T**here's something distinguished, albeit anachronistic, about being a man of letters: JD Salinger, DH Lawrence, F Scott Fitzgerald... Initials seem so inherently cerebral, smart and timeless. Which is partly why having a monogram embroidered or embossed on elements of your wardrobe is so appealing.

For years, the monogram has been the preserve of the sartorially flamboyant, fusty Jermyn Street tailors and intriguing secondhand finds. Now the continental super-brands, as well as some smaller, innovative designers have embraced it: niche, high-end swimwear company MYO have been doing a solid trade in personalised items of late: "We've been asked to do everything from family crests to personal messages," says co-founder Will Fattal. The simple monogram remains one of the most popular requests — it creates a frisson of emotion around an item, as if it's been marked out as a future heirloom — even if it's just a pair of swimming trunks. "It deepens a connection with our brand," says Fattal.

Louis Vuitton recently launched a made-to-order service, with 3,000 possible combinations of shoes (from Dhs9,630) and complementary belt (from Dhs4,020). Everything is made at their Fiesso d'Artico workshop in Italy. The finishing touch to these pieces is the hot stamping of two or three initials inside the shoe, or within the belt lining. The invisibility of the monogram — like a particularly posh label at boarding school — is telling. Although

Louis Vuitton has been offering its fairly bold Monogram service for some time (putting stripes and initials on a bag's exterior), and Hermès recently launched a "Gourmette" leather bracelet (Dhs1,890) with the customer's initials on the outside, the modern monogram is more commonly as discreet as it is indulgent. "It should be discreet. It's a detail that is for you and your dry cleaner's eyes only," says Mahir Ali who offers monogramming on the inside of his suits and on shirts at Dubai's Ascots & Chapels.

This month fashion hipster Hedi Slimane introduces a monogram line of leather goods to Saint Laurent, the first time the brand has done so. Mark Tungate, the author of *Luxury World: The Past, Present and Future of Luxury Brands*, believes the monogramming as anything but old fashioned too. He sees its renaissance as a by-product of the digital revolution. "I think that social networking has made us more comfortable with the idea of promoting ourselves, of embracing our own identity and thinking of ourselves as a brand." Tungate also believes that the monogram has reappeared as a way to enforce uniqueness. "We're surrounded by a sea of sameness, so I'm not surprised we're keen to grab a bit of individuality and distinction."

The monogram feels as sentimental as it does special. The personal touch is the antithesis of fast fashion. The Rug Company produces the widest range of designer interior pieces of their kind (including designs by Vivienne Westwood, Alexander McQueen and Paul Smith), and it's recently noticed an increase in requests for its monogrammed rug service. "It's the ultimate bespoke choice," says CEO and co-founder Christopher Sharp. "It leaves no doubt that the piece was a special commission."

Similarly, who wouldn't be happy to receive a monogrammed gift of an Anya Hindmarch made-to-measure wallet? Or a gold-stamped notebook from Smythson? As Andy Janowski, Smythson's CEO, says: "In today's culture of luxury, personalisation is a crucial discerning factor. It's an expression of individuality. If it's done discreetly, with style, then it becomes timeless." **£**



**CAPITAL INVESTMENT:** Above, Smythson's in-store monogrammer in action. Below, personalised Ralph Lauren slippers; Louis Vuitton luggage



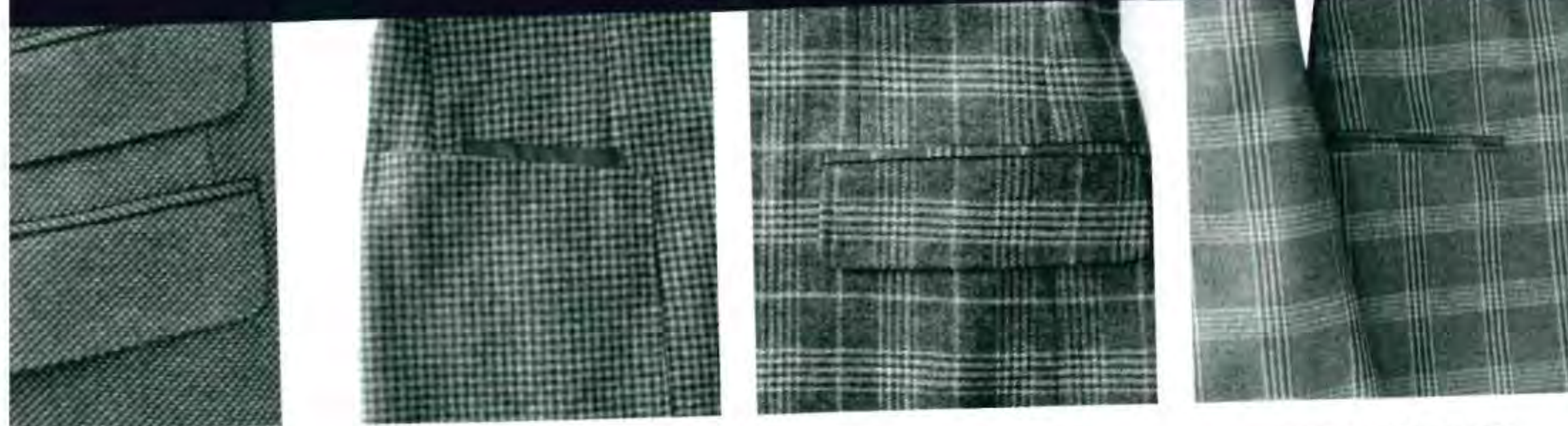
# THE VISUAL GUIDE TO POCKETS

## PANTS



**OG-MOUTH** Trousers (Dhs1,420) by Phineas Cole  
**STANDARD SLANT** Wool trousers (Dhs2,479) by Giorgio Armani  
**JEAN** Cotton jeans (Dhs617) by AG Adriano Goldschmied  
**COIN** Cotton khakis (Dhs310) by Dockers

## JACKET



**TICKET** Wool-and-silk jacket (Dhs1,600) by Ascot Chang  
**PATCH** Wool-silk-and-cashmere jacket (Dhs2,123) by Boss  
**BESOM (FLAPPED)** Wool-mohair-and-cashmere jacket (Dhs9,531) by Ravazzolo  
**BESOM (JETTED)** Wool jacket (Dhs8,796) by Giorgio Armani

## SHIRT



**STANDARD** Cotton shirt (Dhs545) by Mrporter.com  
**FLAP** Cotton shirt (Dhs899) by Hamilton Shirts  
**WESTERN** Cotton shirt (Dhs289) by Levi's

## OTHER



**HOT**

## CANVASSED VS. FUSED

### THE TWO WAYS OF A JACKET

#### CANVASSED:

Any tailor worth his thimble will stitch an extra layer of horsehair fabric (called the canvas) between the exterior and liner of a suit coat. This mimics the cut of the jacket and provides shape — your shape. A jacket can also be half canvassed, meaning the canvas layer extends only to the bottom of your ribcage. To determine what you're wearing, pinch a section of the jacket between your fingers. If you can feel something floating in between the two layers, you're a lucky man.

**FUSED:** The cheaper alternative is to glue, or fuse, the inner layer to the suit fabric. This will not have the same shape-holding ability (although new technique is narrowing this gap quickly) and can result in a jacket that appears stiff and boxy. One word of warning: Dry cleaning can damage a fused jacket, detaching the canvas in certain areas and causing puckering. So have it done only when necessary.

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## MOHAMMAD MAHIR ALI

CO-OWNER OF DUBAI TAILORS, ASCOTS & CHAPELS



I've been working in this industry for more than 15 years; in fact my family are third-generation tailors so I've seen everything and anything.

A Dubai client, I won't mention who it was, once requested us to create an inner lining for his jacket using Hermes scarves. I thought that was very creative of him and it was a really stylish personal touch.

A client also wanted his inner jacket pocket tailored to the size of his iPad mini so he could slide it easily when travelling. It's a great idea and something I'm seeing more and more of recently as technology becomes an important lifeline for travellers.

Clients regularly request us to have their signatures inscribed in their native language; for instance Arabic or Mandarin.

A client once requested having a Tricolor lining for his jacket. He wanted red, white and blue, the colours of the French flag. The colours were vertical on the flag so it was easier to execute, and looked great once it was finished.

Another client didn't want any back pockets on his suit trouser just to emphasise the fact that the trousers were bespoke. That and the fact that he didn't like using back pockets, of course.

Clients now commonly request contrasting buttonholes on their sleeves or lapel keyhole. Some also want their first buttonhole of the jacket opening

to be in a contrasting colour. It's becoming a trend.

Some clients require a zipper closure on the inside jacket pockets. This is primarily for when they travel as it ensures their wallet and travel documents are safe while they're travelling.

One client that really stood out for me wanted to have an off-white shawl collar suit for his wedding suit, with black satin lapels and a black satin trim on the side of his trousers. The end result was really dapper and different.

If you really like to keep things coordinated, choose a fancy lining for your jacket, like paisley, and use the same lining for your trousers too.

## LESSONS FROM AN INSIDER

## HOW TO SEW A BUTTON



1. Stitch an X where you want the button to be.



2. Thread the needle up one buttonhole and down the diagonally opposite hole. Do the same with the other holes. Repeat four times.



3. Wrap the thread around to make a shank below the button.



4. Push the needle through the shank a few times and cut the thread.

## AN EASIER WAY TO SEW A BUTTON



1. Put your shirt in the car and drive it to the tailor.  
 2. Pull out Dhs10.  
 3. Pay him.

## GREAT MOMENTS IN TAILORING

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WESLEY MERRITT

**1200s:** The word "tailor" first enters the English lexicon.

**1730s:** Savile Row is constructed in London. The street becomes a hotbed of tailor shops by the beginning of the 19th century.

**1789:** With the French Revolution, the elaborate, foppish dress favoured by the aristocracy gives way to more practical fashion styles.

**1800s:** Beau Brummell popularises trousers, a longer version of riding breeches.

**1860s:** The Prince of Wales

commissions Savile Row tailor Henry Poole to make the first version of a tuxedo.

**1883:** The Journeymen Tailors' Union of America is founded.

**1938:** The Disney film *Brave Little Tailor*, in which Mickey Mouse uses a needle and thread to defeat a giant in a fight, is nominated for an Academy Award.

**1977:** Martin Greenfield, a Buchenwald survivor, founds his own tailoring company in Brooklyn, NYC. His clients will

later include three presidents, a vice-president, and, reportedly, President Obama.

**1995:** Chandler learns the difference between a good touch and a bad touch from Joey's tailor on *Friends*.

**2001:** Geoffrey Rush plays the titular character in the movie version of John le Carré's spy novel *The Tailor of Panama*.

**Circa 2006:** Swedish shirt-maker Eton incorporates convertible cuffs into all its shirts.

## THE VISUAL ARGUMENT: NOT ALL TAILORS ARE CREATED EQUAL



At this stage, the pants are fully complete, except for the hemming, which will be done at the ultimate fitting.



9. The basted jacket is torn apart and rebuilt using the new specifications. Your paper patterns are also updated for future orders.

10. On the basis of the new measurements, a horsehair canvas (for the inner layer; see above) is cut, then soaked in water and line-dried to shrink it down to the appropriate size.

11. Once dry, the canvas is stitched into the suit fabric.



12. The roll of the lapel and collar are intricately shaped — using as many as 1,000 stitches.

