

# GREENWICH

MARCH 2015 | \$5.95



*private*  
**ESCAPE**

{ TOUR A MAGICAL BACKCOUNTRY ESTATE }

GREENWICHMAG.COM



**GOING INSIDE THE CIA:**  
**JACK DEVINE** TAKES US INTO  
A WORLD FEW HAVE SEEN

**WRITE ON!**  
**ADAM BRAUN** ON HOW A PENCIL  
CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

# TRIFECTA of FASHION

*Meet three of fashion's chicest trendsetters, all with their own brand of understated elegance—and find out their favorite must-haves for spring that will elevate your wardrobe from head to toe*

BY RIANN SMITH



BRUNELLO CUCINELLI



TABITHA SIMMONS



FRANCESCA AMFITHEATROF

THE SOULFUL CRAFTSMAN

## BRUNELLO CUCINELLI

THE TERM RENAISSANCE man gets tossed about loosely, but nowhere should it more comfortably rest than on the cashmere-clad shoulders of designer Brunello Cucinelli. A lover of philosophy, art and nature, Cucinelli built his company headquarters in Solomeo, a fourteenth-century medieval hamlet near Perugia, Italy. True to his vision of beautification and preservation, the designer opened schools, built a cinema and restored buildings and gardens within the town's ancient walls—the act of a soulful artisan whose clothing reflects craftsmanship of the highest order. His Spring 2015 collection rocked the runway at last fall's Breast Cancer Alliance luncheon and fashion show at the Hyatt Regency Greenwich, sponsored by Mitchells/Richards, the premier carrier of the Cucinelli brand. Forget champagne wishes and caviar dreams—it was the designer's champagne mink and caviar leather that women went home fantasizing about.

**How did you get started?**

**A** Like many people from my region, I grew up as the son of a farmer. My father worked the land, and we lived a very simple but serene life. As my brothers and I got older, my father moved us to the more urbanized city, where he got a job in a factory. At twenty-five, inspired by the tradition of knitwear in Umbria and by the early success of Benetton, I created a small collection of women's colored cashmere tunics and entered the first chapter of what would be a life dedicated to manufacturing luxury goods.

**Unlike many designers based in Milan, you are in Solomeo. Why?**

**A** Solomeo is the village where my wife was born and grew up. Now my entire family lives there, from my aging father to my daughters and their families. It is home, work, life. I am inspired by the green cypress trees, sunflower fields and the impact of the territory around the factory. Every building has large windows so the

workers can see the magnificent view of the Umbrian hills and be inspired every day, like I am, by its colors and scents.

**What is your philosophy about how people should dress today?**

**A** I like the idea of people "dressing well." I think it is important to feel elegant and comfortable in our aesthetic and to never try too hard, because at times it could be evident and not attractive.

**FROM HEAD TO TOE**

**THIS PAGE, LEFT:** silk organza top with monili fringe bib and cotton tank, \$1,455; multi-strand beaded bracelet, \$745; cotton pull-on pants, \$1,055; calfskin/ostrich leather heeled sandals, \$1,595 **RIGHT:** cotton/silk marina jacket, \$2,225; linen/wool/silk glen plaid jacket, \$2,795; wool tie, \$220; chambray spread-collar shirt, \$800; cotton flat-front pants, \$595; calfskin cap-toe shoes, \$1,330

**OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP:** silk blouse, \$1,160; Monili bralette, \$2,395; leather belt, \$675; silk crepe jogger pants, \$1,390; calfskin/ostrich leather heeled sandals, \$1,350; silver monili pochette bag, \$2,140 **BOTTOM:** Cotton shawl-collar cardigan, \$1,095; microfiber down vest, \$1,435; cotton crewneck t-shirt, \$305; wool flat-front pants, \$675; kudu suede desert boots, \$890  
Richards, 359 Greenwich Avenue, Greenwich, 203-622-0551; Mitchells, 670 Post Road East, Westport, 203-227-9165; mitchellstores.com

**What drives your design?**

**A** Everyday life. I design thinking about men and women, no matter their age, who want to buy a high-quality product and dress well for their everyday needs: going to the office, picking up the kids from school, traveling for business or leisure. What I love most about designing is the pride of seeing items entirely made by hand. The care that these women put into each garment is always a source of inspiration for me.

**What's the "It" look for Spring 2015?**

**A** Refined luxury with athletic sensibility. Our main themes for women are textured knitwear, vests in a variety of beautiful materials and minks. For menswear, we have a sartorial look with lightweight elements, the focus being shorter overcoats, sport jackets and softy constructed suits. A key trend is the knit polo worn with a sport jacket or suit, which gives it a modern look.

**Tell us something surprising about yourself.**

**A** I am passionate about philosophy books and keep stacks of them, which I often refer to while thinking about new projects. I always find time to play soccer with my childhood friends. And I love playing jokes on people. It is part of our culture and probably something I inherited from spending so many nights at the local bar as a young man.

**If you could dress anyone, who would it be?**

**A** I would have enjoyed seeing Gianni Agnelli. He was truly a man of style. I think he would have looked very elegant in our gray tuxedo.

**What clothing could you not live without?**

**A** A navy cashmere blazer for more formal moments, and a neutral cashmere crew-neck sweater for an evening with friends. >

THE FASHIONABLE SHOE-IN

# TABITHA SIMMONS

KATE MOSS. JULIANNE MOORE. REESE WITHERSPOON. Gwyneth Paltrow. Fergie. It's not a question of who wears Tabitha Simmons' shoes—it's who doesn't wear them. Point of fact: The British beauty's dalmatian-print flats practically had their own music video, thanks to Taylor Swift's dance-y hit "Shake It Off." From red carpets to urban streets on both sides of the Atlantic, Simmons' fierce footwear mixes with skinny jeans and billowy ballgowns in equal measure, a testament to the designer's own effortlessly chic aesthetic. Wife to celebrated fashion photographer Craig McDean, Simmons' life is a creative swirl of high fashion, motherhood and well-edited simplicity. Her designs speak to the woman who wants to look mod but doesn't take herself too seriously—much like the Council of Fashion Designers of America award-winner herself.

**How did you wind up designing shoes?**

**A** I actually started as a model, which lead to styling, which turned into being a full-time stylist for various designers and publications. I was always really passionate about shoes, and I really wanted to do my own line. It took a very, very long time to set up. I was extremely happy when it came to light and I launched it five years ago.

**Your shoes are ladylike... with a naughty edge. Why is that dichotomy so appealing to women?**

**A** Women don't want to be too much of one thing. My shoes offer a good balance of fashion, timelessness and luxury. They are versatile enough to go with many different looks, and I always have comfort in the forefront of my mind.

**When you aren't wearing your own designs, what might we catch you in?**

**A** I love Dolce & Gabbana and Alaïa shoes for fancy nights. What is there not to love about Alaïa's shoes? They are very sexy and timeless. For more casual

days, I'll wear TOMS or Stan Smith sneakers.

**What do you think is the "It" look for women this spring?**

**A** I love the Spanish collection from Dolce & Gabbana. I also love Givenchy's lace black-and-white stripy dresses. They are great.

**What advice would you give a woman who is investing in a high-end pair of shoes like yours this spring?**

**A** Pick something that is classic and seasonless, as it will be a good investment. A flat point is always good or an espadrille, since they are always timeless and great for summer.

**Your hometown is London, but you live in NYC's Chelsea. What about those two locales inspires you?**

**A** London has that coolness factor about it. Their dressing looks so effortless, which is always interesting to me. Everyone in Chelsea looks very put together, but not as if they tried. It has a more casual but artistic vibe than other parts of the city.



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVEN VANN

**Your shoes have graced innumerable famous feet. Who has given you the biggest high to see in your heels?**

**A** We have been exceptionally lucky when it comes to celebrities. Everyone I have dreamed of has worn my shoes, but the best feeling is when you walk down the street and you randomly spot someone wearing them.

**Tell us something surprising about yourself.**

**A** I take ballet lessons as a form of exercise. And I'm very good at building with Legos.

**What is your favorite piece of art, your favorite book and your favorite musician?**

**A** My favorite art is anything by Dustin Yellin, and my favorite book is *A Feast For Crows*. I love all different types of music... anything from Frank Sinatra to Rihanna.

**What one pair of shoes could you not live without?**

**A** The Leticia. It's the perfect sandal with feminine details, but has an edge with its block heel. »

**KICKING IT IN STYLE**

Sebille Espadrille Flat in black and white stripes, \$395, [Barneys, New York](#); Cabochon Cork T-strap Sandal in natural, \$825, [bergdorfgoodman.com](#); Leticia Sandal in champagne glitter, \$595, [net-a-porter.com](#); Daisy Chain Flat in indigo denim, \$695, [saksfifthavenue.com](#); Bonai Leather Lace-Up booties in toffee, \$1,095, [saksfifthavenue.com](#)





PERFECTION TO A T  
FRANCESCA  
AMFITHEATROF

IT HAS BEEN THE DAYDREAM OF MANY A WOMAN—beginning with the iconic image of a bejeweled, danish-noshing Holly Golightly—to spend the greater part of one’s morning gazing into diamond-studded glass cases at Tiffany’s. For Francesca Amfitheatrof,

it’s all part of the job. As the first female design director at Tiffany & Co., Amfitheatrof created a collection called Tiffany T that is at once luxurious and spare, modern yet timeless (and has anecdotally been a hot ticket for birthday, Valentine, and just-because-I’m-fabulous gifts around Greenwich). Having designed jewelry collections for Chanel and Fendi, silver for Asprey and Garrard, furniture and lighting for interior designer Muriel Brandolini, in addition to curating art for museums and private collections throughout the world, Amfitheatrof is as multifaceted as her sparkling statement pieces.

**What led you to jewelry design?**

**A** I made my first piece when I was fifteen. At school, my teacher brought a jeweler in to speak to our class and I was fascinated. Now I’m a trained jeweler and silversmith and have a master’s degree from the Royal College of Art in London. I’m obsessed with form and function, and it seems to me that because metal is so malleable and changeable, you can do anything with it. Even now, when I’m on holiday, I’ll spend as much time visiting jewelry stores as I do visiting museums and galleries.

**How has your background influenced your work?**

**A** I grew up all over the world and have immersed myself in music, art, film and theater along the way. I lived in Italy for a time when I was growing up, and beauty and art surround you all the time there.

**What inspires your design process?**

**A** I particularly love Asian art and ceramics. There’s a real sensitivity to form and a very pared down and clean aesthetic. I love the view of the ocean in Cape Cod. The coast of the northeastern United States has a sort of ruggedness and austerity that I find intriguing. And the dunes are so beautiful when they roll down to the gray-green of the Atlantic.

**What is the story behind your Tiffany T collection?**

**A** “T” pays homage to the Tiffany name, but it also has a verticality and angularity that I associate with the energy and intensity of New York. Tiffany T

is sculptural and bold and very closely linked to the architecture of this city. It’s for the cool girl-about-town who’s well-informed and has a handle on what’s happening, what’s now. What I love about Tiffany T is that it’s democratic. It’s an attitude, not an age.

**What is your favorite book, piece of art, and favorite film?**

**A** My favorite book is *From Bauhaus to Our House* by Tom Wolfe. I love Günther Uecker nail paintings, and any film by Jim Jarmusch.

**What are your current fashion must-haves?**

**A** Aquazzura heels, Preen dresses, Proenza Schouler jeans, a Faye Toogood coat and a Tiffany foldover color block clutch.

**Which pieces of jewelry can any woman pull off that feel very “now”?**

**A** Tiffany is not as traditional as you think. There are a number of diamond pieces in Tiffany T that are inspired by sketches from the 1920s that I found in the Tiffany archives, for people who want to wear precious stones in a really modern way.

**What piece of jewelry could you not live without?**

**A** I love the square bracelet in 18 karat gold. It’s not the largest piece in the collection, but it has great presence on its own while also somehow working in well with any other piece in the collection, for a more textured, layered look. **G**

**THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL**

Tiffany T Wire Earrings in 18k white gold with diamonds, \$4,800; Tiffany T Chain Scarf Necklace in sterling silver and 18k gold, \$5,000; Tiffany T Diamond Line Bracelet in rose gold, \$20,000; Tiffany T Square Bracelet in 18k gold, \$5,000. Tiffany & Co., 140 Greenwich Avenue, Greenwich, 203-661-7847; 40 Post Road East, Westport, 203-221-7676; tiffany.com



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTINACROCK