



STYLE FOR MEN



TOM
STUBBS
TALKING
TROUSERS

THE NEW DIGNITY

Welcome to your own page, gents. I'm going to set out my stall straight off: we've got ourselves into a scuffy-dirty predicament where jeans and trainers are letting us down seriously. I'm sick of the sight of men's pants poking out above their low-slung waistbands. We need a more dignified way of dressing, and that begins with a nice pair of slacks. Luckily, the designers agree, and there is a new order of pants out there that is more suave than sexy: flat-fronted from Ralph Lauren Purple Label (£195; 020 7535 4600); shrewy straight legs from Hermès (£235; 020 7499 8854); and a neat herringbone from Hackett (£80; 020 7730 3331). Combine them with a dapper belt and a [tucked-in] shirt, and you have a look that, refreshingly, is a lot more David Niven (right) than David Beckham.



THE TIE CLIP

The spiky tie hardware is increasingly registering on smart radars. It's going to be properly viable next spring, so sporting one now will mark you out as being ahead of the game. The question is: can you wear one without looking like Dal Boy? It's a case of proceed with caution, Rodney. The key factor is the outfit you clip it to. A sleep suit with a sash, monochrome belted-off tie or beach public-school stripes offer a what you're aiming for. Used correctly, it will put a cocky little kick in your neckwear and give you a sense of Raf Pock romance or Kristy-like menace, depending on your mood. You can still pick up vintage pieces in antique shops for a tenner. For a classic shopping experience, GuHill does brushed steel or onyx versions, from £180 30845 438 0778. Just one thing I don't advise wearing one if you actually are a snail-or-relation.

FEET FIRST

Q Someone recently made disparaging comments about my red cashmere socks. Do they really mark me out as an "upper-class twit"?

A It depends on the rest of your look. If you're teaming them with the other trappings of Tropicana (bad language, polo/rugger shirt, Timberlands), then possibly, yes. If, however, the socks are a flamboyant garnish on a well-considered ensemble, then how dare he? Fine socks are one of the cornerstones of good living. To justify your exorbitance even further, team them with a sophisticated cardigan (by Nicole Farhi), a fine Italian shoe (by Sergio Rossi) or even a ragsakhi bantuk pie crust (from Faiss, Tottenham or Custom Made).



THOU SHALT COVET A VINTAGE ROLEX

For wrist exclusivity, vintage fashion and finesse, and go historic. Original 1970s Rolex grandeur with the kind of glamour and cachet that have disappeared from today's style agenda. By going vintage, you get unusual spec, such as enamel buttons or a bespoke strap – and no counterfeiter is going to pick up on that. 1977 Rolex Oyster Perpetual Date with black glass dial, onyx strap and gilt buttons. £1,950 from The Vintage Watch Company. 020 7499 2032. www.vintagewatchcompany.com

THE POLITICS OF T-SHIRTS

Here's a slogan for you. "Most slogan T-shirts are rubbish." So we recommend something with ironic backing. The new batch of Ts from Worn By comes infused with the sassy agro chic of top attitude merchants such as Ian Dury, Joe Cochet, Claude Hyde and Debbie Harry. Don't think this means you can get away without a personality of your own, though – that's still an essential. £42. 020 7291 8345

