

FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF TEXAS MONTHLY

# FASHION

FALL 2007

BOLD COLORS  
*Sexy Silhouettes*  
LIVING WITH STYLE

ALL *the*  
BEST  
*for* FALL



**KELLY  
HAMILTON  
AND DAVID  
HAMILTON**  
OWNERS OF  
HAMILTON  
CUSTOM  
SHIRTMAKER



**S**IBLINGS KELLY AND DAVID HAMILTON ARE AT THE HELM of one of the most venerable shirt-making companies in the country, family-owned Hamilton Custom Shirtmaker in Houston. At 32 and 29 years old, respectively, they've brought modern sensibilities such as storefront retail space and a user-friendly Web site to the 124-year-old business co-founded by their great-grandfather Bernard J. Hamilton. The fabric for each shirt is still hand-cut with a blade for premium precision, and with more than seven hundred fabrics from which to choose, clients such as Simon Doonan, creative director of Barneys New York, won't wear shirts by any other name. [hamiltonshirts.com](http://hamiltonshirts.com)

**KELLY HAMILTON**

**You're both very young. Is it daunting to take over a 124-year-old family business?** I wouldn't say it's daunting, but it can be very challenging at times. Our family has set a very high standard for the quality of our product and the service we provide our customers, so it's important to me that David and I do the same.

**Most interesting shirt order ever placed by a client:** A man's nightshirt with two special pockets almost at his knees so he could hide his flask and cigars from his wife.

**I love my job because . . .** I have two reasons that I love my job. One, I get the chance to be creative. Whether it's merchandising or designing new shirt styles, I'm not just sitting at my computer all day. Two, our customers. They have been really supportive of any new ideas that David and I have implemented, and they are just flat-out good people to spend your day with.

**Most surprising famous client:** Frank Abagnale, Leonardo DiCaprio's character in the movie *Catch Me If You Can*. He was nice enough to let me do a report on him in eighth grade, long before the movie came out. Of course I got an A+.

**Must-have Hamilton shirt for fall:** I know my brother probably said burnt-orange linen, but I'm going to overrule him and recommend a stylish red-and-black minicheck, so if you are in Lubbock, you can support the Texas Tech Red Raiders in style.

**Pair a Hamilton shirt with . . .** For the ladies, I suggest your favorite pair of jeans and a great pair of very high heels.

**DAVID HAMILTON**

**You're both very young. Is it daunting to take over a 124-year-old family business?** I don't think so. We're not doctors or soldiers. No one's going to die if we make a mistake. We are fortunate to have this opportunity, and we're having fun trying to make the most of it. If we mess up, I'll just blame it on Kelly.

**Favorite Hamilton shirt style and fabric:** I love wide Bengal stripes and a full-roll button-down collar. The pattern is bold and classic at the same time. I also like linens with summer suits.

**Most interesting shirt order ever placed by a client:** A professional athlete broke his arm, and he asked us to make him a closetful of shirts with one sleeve large enough to fit over his cast. He was only wearing the cast for a couple of months. The shirts went in the trash after that.

**I love my job because . . .** It's challenging. We're both manufacturer and retailer. It's an unusual business model, and it demands a creative, unique approach. It's fun to experiment. The free shirts are nice too.

**Most surprising famous client:** Generally, we don't share that information, but I'm going to break that rule because I want to meet the client. Lyle Lovett ordered shirts from us a while back, through a retailer. He's my favorite artist. He also has a tremendous sense of style. I'd love to meet him. So, Lyle, if you're out there, please stop by and let's pick out something on the house.

**Must-have Hamilton shirt for fall:** We have burnt-orange linen. It's the perfect item for an early season Texas game. We're on the lookout for maroon, but I doubt that it will ever be available. All of our fabric is Swiss and Italian, so these colors are not in high demand. Get it now or get it never.

**Pair a Hamilton shirt with . . .** Anything. Everything. Nothing at all—nightshirts and boxers are popular items.