

Manly makeovers

Three Citizen staffers get some much needed fashion advice, J4-J5

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FROM DULL TO DAPPER DAN

Tip Top Tailors gives three Ottawa Citizen staffers two new fashion-forward looks

JANET WILSON

I have to admit that when Tip Top Tailors contacted me with an offer to give three men from the Ottawa Citizen newsmen a makeover, I was worried that no one would step up to the plate. While I love them dearly, most of the folks at Baxter Road aren't exactly sizzling with style. They either don't have time to worry about how they're dressed or don't have a clue what's in fashion. Sure, we have a few snappy dressers, but when you're in front of a computer eight to nine hours a day and are stuck in suburbia, most of the guys tend to favour casual attire such as T-shirts, jeans and hoodies.

When I sent an email asking for volunteers, I was pleasantly surprised by the response. With more than a dozen replies and some very deserving candidates, it was tough to narrow it down to just three. In the end, photographer Chris Mikula, senior reporter Gary Dimmock and managing editor Andrew Potter got the green light. They were all good sports, seemed to genuinely appreciate the advice from Tip Top's stylists and were pleased with the cut, colour and flattering clothing choices selected for them.

Walter Dimini, Tip Top's divisional merchandise manager for dresswear, helped pull together two different looks for each of our candidates.

"Given their jobs, we wanted to stress versatility. Sports coats are really hot right now and can be worn with a golf or dress shirt. Most men don't carry a man purse, so a sports coat is a great alternative for carrying things, like a cellphone, wallet and keys. Dimini chose a range of wrinkle-free clothing and hues such as blue and lavender that add a pop of colour. The Canadian chain is making a concerted effort to woo customers with a fresher fashion approach and stylish offerings.

"Tip Top is appealing to the fashion-conscious guy who is aware of the trends, but wants us to translate them. We take the current colours and make sure the guy feels comfortable," Dimini says.

"Men buy, they don't shop. They can walk into our store and we have everything they need in one place. We've paired down our assortment so it isn't overwhelming."

GARY DIMMOCK

Senior reporter
Personal style: "I wear whatever is clean. I don't shave very often. I wear jeans with a blazer and white shirt to work sometimes. I have reporter style, which is understated, timeless and romantic."

"I had my colours done and I'm a winter," Gary says. "Beiges and browns don't look good on me."

What I'm looking for: Gary likes to dress like a "man on the street" but is interested in taking his sense of style up a notch. "I'm ready for the next level on that magical dance floor. If Travolta can do it, then I can too."

Tip Top's take: "Gary is obviously a very casual guy, but from the pictures we've seen, he wears clothes pretty well. We wanted to give him a couple of looks that will take him just about anywhere, looking like a touch dressed up, but nothing that a very casual guy couldn't handle."

CHRIS MIKULA

Photographer
Personal style: "Outdoor, very casual and practical. I was once described as looking like I'd just parked my canoe outside."

Chris wears cotton khaki Chinos or cargo pants, long-sleeved Henley shirts and short-sleeved versions of the same. "There's a rather worn brown sports jacket/blazer (Valise Village) in my car for dress up occasions, but mostly I wear a fleece jacket, sometimes with a wind breaker over it."

What I'm looking for: "I am a professional photographer, an amateur saxophone player and a single dad with three giant sons. I should be better dressed, but am not sure where to start. My clothes need to be durable, but I'd like them to say artistic rather than homeless."

Tip Top's take: "Chris is a talented, creative guy. He's made it clear he wants to know he looks good, but he doesn't want to have to think about it. With his work and personality, easy, casual clothes that don't require much effort are important."

Chris received two outfits: the first is a fresh take on the kind of clothes he wears to work every day, while the second is a clean, dresser option. Both looks follow the season's key trends, but with a more subtle touch.

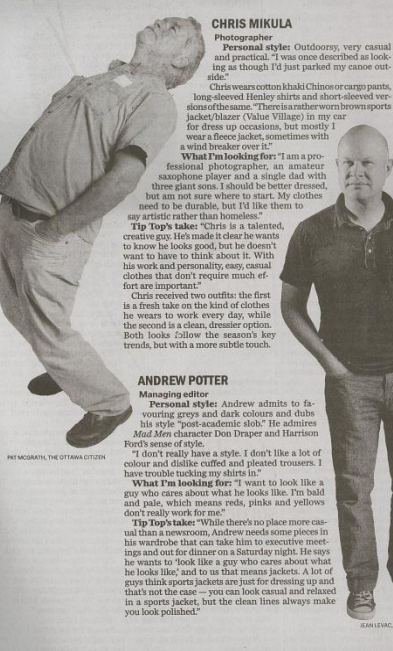
ANDREW POTTER

Managing editor
Personal style: Andrew admits to favouring greys and dark colours and that his style "post-academic slob." He admires *Mad Men* character Don Draper and Harrison Ford's sense of style.

"I don't really have a style. I don't like a lot of colour and dislike cuffs and pleated trousers. I have trouble tucking my shirts in."

What I'm looking for: "I want to look like a guy who cares about what he looks like. I'm bald and pale, which means reds, pinks and yellows don't really work for me."

Tip Top's take: "While there's no place more casual than a newsroom, Andrew needs some pieces in his wardrobe that can take him to evening meetings and out for dinner on a Saturday night. He says he wants to look like a guy who cares about what he looks like, and to us that means jackets. A lot of guys think sports jackets are just for dressing up and that's not the case — you can look casual and relaxed in a sports jacket, but the clean lines always make you look polished."



GARY'S CASUAL LOOK

This look is for a guy who likes to wear his shirt out rather than tucked in — and that's Gary. A Britches non-iron, easy-care shirt in lavender and white check was paired with a grey Grafton 1853 pants.

Price tag
■ Grafton 1853 5-pocket pant (grey): \$59.50
■ Britches non-iron dress shirt (lavender plaid): \$69.99



GARY'S CHURCH OUTFIT

This ensemble is perfect for a meal out or for a work function. The Grafton 1853 City Traveler sports jacket, classic pair of khakis and Tallia Orange shirt with its subtle check offers a fresh, current look.

Price tag
■ Grafton 1853 City Traveler sports jacket: \$149.50
■ Tallia Orange dress shirt: \$70
■ Bellissimo easy-care pant: \$69



After and during makeovers by Jana Christova, the Ottawa Citizen's Shopping Centre's Tip Top Tailors.

CHRIS'S CASUAL CHIC

Tip Top stylists wanted to inject a bit of black into Chris's wardrobe to go with his musical side and started with a Black Britches windbreaker. It's a great mid-weight so he can wear it through many seasons. The Britches blue/grey check shirt is on the bold side, but the coloration keeps it subtle. It's non-iron, easy care which Chris will appreciate," Tip Top's Walter Dimini says.

Price tag
■ Britches non-iron dress shirt: \$69.99
■ Britches windbreaker: \$129.99
■ Britches flat-front cotton pant: \$59.99



CHRIS'S CLASSIC LOOK

For meetings or a night out on the town, Chris was dressed in a light grey check Daniel Hechter sports jacket, which goes nicely with his silver hair and goatee. A Grafton 1853 polo in lavender paired well with the suit and his colouring. Tip Top's Grafton 1853 5-pocket pant, which comes in a range of colours, fits like a jean, but offers a dresser look with the jacket.

Price tag
■ Daniel Hechter sports jacket (grey check): \$249.99
■ Grafton 1853 5-pocket pant (black): \$59.50
■ Grafton 1853 Polo (lavender): \$59.50



Ottawa makeup artist Ariana Assadi powders Chris's face before his final photo shoot.

ANDREW'S SPORTY STYLE

Andrew was dressed in a smart yet casual Stonehouse sports jacket, Grafton 1853 denim pant and a blue-and-grey check Stonehouse sports shirt to compliment his blue eyes and complexion.

Price tag
■ Stonehouse cotton blend sports jacket: \$175
■ Stonehouse sports shirt: \$95
■ Grafton 1853 denim pant: \$69.50



ANDREW'S CLASSY LOOK

Tip Top opted for a subtle look in pale blues and greys to match Andrew's blue eyes and pale skin. A blue/grey Daniel Hechter suit with a subtle check was teamed with a French blue Bellissimo cotton dress shirt. The shirt is wrinkle-free, which is sure to please Andrew. A Tallia Orange paisley tie helps, well, tie the look together.

Price tag
■ Daniel Hechter check suit: \$350
■ Bellissimo (French blue): \$49.99
■ Tallia Orange tie (Paisley, French blue): \$60



In Tip Top shape

Canadian menswear giant puts a new face on retail chain

JANET WILSON

The Tip Top Tailors, one of Canada's oldest menswear retailers, has been renovating the interiors of its stores across the country while polishing and updating its image. "We're putting a new face on Tip Top. Our customer has been asking for this," says president and CEO Dave McGregor. "We want men to find everything they need under one roof."

The store's in Ottawa recently for the reopening of Tip Top's Bayshore store, one of the budget and the second largest in the country after Toronto's Yorkdale. Tip Top has been dressing Ottawa men at Bayshore since 1975. McGregor, a former vice-president with the Hudson's Bay Company and Idene's N Things, says that during the 1990s Tip Top lost its way in the fashion world. "The company forgot who their market was. They tried to compete with Harry Rosen."

Tip Top sells about 10 brands, from Daniel Hechter to Calvin Klein as well as Grafton 1853, a classic collection of essential clothing for men that McGregor refers to as "affordable luxury." "We've invested our money into the details with our brand. We sell Canadian suits for \$425, which are made in Montreal. Our basic polo is \$29.99. It's been that price for the past six years. I grew up with Big Steel Man and Tip Top Tailors. Men are so used to it being their dad's store. We want to be their store."

WATCH a cool video of the transformation of our three male makeover contestants at ottawacitizen.com/life