

## PAUL SMITH

Paul Smith's introduction into fashion was completely accidental.

At the age of 16, with no career plans or qualifications, Paul Smith was propelled by his father into a menial job at the local clothing warehouse in his native Nottingham. However his real passion was sport and his ambition was to become a professional racing cyclist, until aged 17 years when cycling-mad Paul was in a terrible accident.

Six months in hospital followed and during this time Paul made some new friends. After leaving hospital he arranged to meet them again and by chance the meeting place was a local pub that was popular with the students from the local art college.

They talked of Mondrian, Warhol, Kokoshka, David Bailey and listened to the Rolling Stones, Miles Davis and much more. It was then Paul knew he wanted to be a part of this colourful world of ideas and excitement.

Within two years, Paul Smith was managing his first boutique in Nottingham and with the encouragement of his girlfriend Pauline Denyer (now wife) and a small amount of savings, opened a tiny shop in 1970. Paul started to take evening classes for tailoring and with the help of Pauline (an RCA fashion graduate), Paul was able to create what he wanted. By 1976 Paul showed his first menswear collection in Paris under the Paul Smith label.

In business for over 30 years Paul Smith had established himself as the pre-eminent British designer. Paul Smith has an ability to anticipate, and even spark off trends not only fashion but in the wider context of popular culture. He manages to transmit a genuine sense of humour and mischief mixed with his love of tradition and the classics

Today there are 13 different collections; Paul Smith Mainline for men and women, PS by Paul Smith, Paul Smith Jeans, Paul Smith London, R.Newbold (Japan only), Paul Smith Black, Paul by Paul Smith, Paul Smith Accessories, Paul Smith Shoe, Paul Smith Fragrance, Paul Smith Watches and Paul Smith furniture and 'things'. Paul Smith rugs, china, spectacles and fragrance are made under license. Designed in Nottingham and London, the Paul Smith collections are primarily produced in England and Italy while the fabrics used are mainly of Italian, French and British origin.

The Paul Smith shops reflect the character of Paul and his designs, an unmistakable Englishness augmented by the unexpected. Each and every Paul Smith shop is totally different, from a shocking pink building with movie set styling on Melrose Avenue, LA, to a Japanese garden at the heart of the Jingumae store in Tokyo. Each shop is a showcase for diverse and eccentric objects complementing the clothing collections with an extensive selection of jewellery, books, art and antiques.

Paul explains his eclectic aesthetic: “We’re a leading and uniquely British brand. We mix up one-off antiques with high quality tailoring: the chair you sit on when you buy a suit is for sale and we can wrap the suit and have the chair waiting for you when you get home.”

Paul Smith is global - the collection is wholesaled to seventy five countries and has 17 shops in England. Paul Smith shops are found in London, Nottingham, Paris, Milan, New York, Antwerp, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, the Philippines, Korea, Kuwait, U.A.E. – and over 200 throughout Japan. Paul remains fully involved in the Japanese business; designing the clothes, choosing the fabrics, approving the shop locations and overseeing every development within the company. Paul Smith also has impressive and diverse showrooms in London, Paris, Milan, New York, and Tokyo.

Paul Smith continues to be an integral part of the company; he is both designer and chairman. Paul Smith is continually involved in every aspect of the business and as a result, Paul Smith Limited retains a personal touch often lost in companies of a similar size.

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