

BESPOKED
—LAN CHANG

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Bespoked founder Ian Chang provides the low-down for one's suit fitting session

TEXT: JASON KWONG
PHOTOGRAPHY: JAY LAI / BLINK STUDIO

SUIT COMMONMENTS

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Ian starts by determining his customer's preference, budget and lifestyle requirements. "It is important not to rush the process. We try to get as many details as possible for the right match."



"The most common request here is for two-button, single-breasted suits in lightweight wool. For formal occasions, double-breasted suits are ideal."



The measurement process is crucial as it determines the silhouette and compensates for imperfections such as long arms, barrel chests, stooping postures and uneven shoulders.



The measurements are chalked onto a large piece of brown paper. The patterns are cut and sewn for the suit's blueprint. This will be kept for future reference and alterations.



Most suits are made of wool and wool-silk combinations for comfort and durability. The higher the thread count, the better the quality but the fabric is also pricier. "The fabric should fall cleanly while maintaining a firm and structured look. This can be achieved with high quality wools."



"I recommend notched lapels for single-breasted suits, peak lapels for double-breasted suits, and shawl lapels for tuxedos."

“Sleeve buttons range between three and four. They are typically decorative but working buttons can be requested, and are a sign of the highest quality in bespoke tailoring.”



Several fittings are required to achieve the perfect suit. During this process, adjustments are made to the length, shoulder width and waist line while details like draping, tapering, and trouser breaks are refined. **M**



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IAN CHANG

Owner, Bespoked

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Ian Chang is of the opinion that to be the best, one has to learn from the best. Fascinated by fine tailoring from a young age, he headed to Savile Row in London at 21, hoping to learn from the masters. Turning up at the shops unannounced, he was unceremoniously rejected, but that only made him more determined than ever.

"I did whatever it took to achieve my dream," recalls the 33-year-old. Returning to Malaysia, Ian started doing odd jobs for a local tailor. "I remember ironing shirts all day only to have my boss tell me to do them all over again. I learnt then to take pride in even the smallest tasks." To learn more about tailoring, Ian would even save up to buy branded suits – only to systematically pick them apart to study their construction.

His tenacity caught the eye of Sir Andrew Ramroop, head tailor of the legendary Maurice Sedwell shop on Savile Row, during a tailoring conference in Penang in 2004. Sir Andrew, who was conferred an OBE for his work in bespoke tailoring, subsequently took Ian under his wings. "That experience was gratifying, considering the dismissive response I had in London previously," he says.

Under the tutelage of Sir Andrew, he came to understand what it means to be a professional tailor. "We need to understand the customers and their needs. It isn't just about status and sophistication, but also suitability. The clients are the designers – we merely facilitate the process," says Ian, who visits Sir Andrew annually for refresher courses.

Two years ago, Ian founded Bespoked, an elegant custom tailoring shop in 1 Utama Shopping Centre. In a short span of time, Bespoked has amassed a client list consisting of the who's who of Malaysia's high society, many of whom appreciate Ian's passion, craftsmanship and attention to detail.

"I finally have my own place where I can offer bespoke service in the true sense of the word," he says. "It's not just about the products but also our personalised service where we emphasise on a perfect fit for our customers' personalities." 

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By sheer force of will, Ian Chang has sought tutelage from Savile Row's finest to craft his own niche in bespoke tailoring

