

# BEAUF

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There was a time when Italian tailoring meant beautifully crafted clothes that made a man look smart, accomplished and professional. It was a look that powered the rise of the nation from the ruins of World War II, along with Fiat motors, Vespa scooters, Olivetti typewriters and a host of other design-led products. All accompanied by the imagery coming out of Rome's cinema studios, Cinecittà. What we celebrate as the *sprezzatura* style of Italy owes so much to that period, when after the miserable conflict and privations of war the Italian economy boomed and the nation's men could indulge their penchant for the philosophy of "*bella figura*", which holds that you show your best face to the world, no matter what.

A number of what became household names in the world of sartorial dressing enjoyed great success. Zegna, Canali, Pal Zileri, Brioni... these were labels that made waves beyond the Mediterranean, and one of the names that rose to prominence was Corneliani. Based in the ancient town of Mantova, in the Lombardy region, this, like so many others, was a family firm, founded on the principles of skilled tailoring. Corneliani was launched by Alfredo Corneliani in the 1930s, making handcrafted outerwear and raincoats.

His two sons Carlalberto and Claudio took over the company and expanded its reach. The label would become associated with Italian suits and coats that found favour with well-dressed professionals at home and abroad.

It thrived for many years, particularly from the 1970s to the 2010s, specialising in a classic wardrobe for the executive working man, something reflected in its advertisements, which featured handsome, usually suited and booted fellows in scenarios that suggested a certain successful professional lifestyle – luggage, cars, dogs, beautiful women. One ad from 2013 even had the strapline "Man as a Masterpiece".

But while this formula worked for many years, it was finally challenged when menswear started to yield to the trend towards relaxation – trainers instead of shoes, polos instead of shirts and ties, and the creeping influence of sportswear. But it wasn't just that we no longer wanted to look perpetually on our way to the boardroom; our relationship with work was shifting, too. The rise of tech and creative businesses with their laid-back style, flexible working and the notion of the office becoming more amorphous, has seen a move away from traditional menswear, however beautifully made, as the backbone of the male wardrobe.

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## Ones to Watch

A snapshot of Brummell's annual Ones to Watch listing of the 30 under 40 making waves in the City

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## Creative vision

Philippa Thorp does more than design interiors, she helps her clients develop their own personal style

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## Responsibly furnished

How Sheridan Coakley is moving with the times with his design company SCP

## Easy does it

The new Italian style as epitomised by Corneliani of Mantova is sartorial and elegant, as before, but now informal for the modern age

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## Amazing space

Philippa Thorp has built an interiors company that aims to protect and advise on its clients' creative vision

Philippa Thorp is known to her many City clients as head of the award-winning architecture and interior design company Thorp Design, turning her hand to anything from private jets to art galleries. Operating globally, clients range from political leaders to lawyers and financiers.

Thorp sets out to create spaces that reflect clients as they would most like to be seen. To this end, she helps them discover and develop their own style, curating collections with them.

Thorp had originally wanted to be an artist, so enrolled on an art foundation course. 'My teacher loathed me for being from a public-school background, but he drilled me in perspective and drawing, and ignited a fire in my belly,' she says. That fire was dampened when she went on to study fashion and textiles at Leicester, where she found herself feeling 'rudderless and miserable'.

Abandoning her studies, Thorp took a temp job at Citibank. 'It was a sliding-doors moment,' she laughs. 'My boss was inspirational, so sure of what he wanted, not rudderless at all.' Thorp was asked to stay on – which she did for four and a half years.'

In 1984 a friend, Sarah, asked Thorp if she'd help her set up a design business. 'I suddenly realised that I'd always been envious of my roommate at Leicester for studying interior design, so immediately I said, "I'm your man!"'

Not long married, Thorp used the gold her mother-in-law had given her as a wedding gift to buy her stake in the new company, leaving the City to embark on a design career. By the time she struck out on her own two years later, she had a roster of 'amazing clients'.

In the early 1990s, Thorp had set up the architectural side of her company. 'I'm totally self-taught,' she says, 'but have always instantly and instinctively been able to see a space in 3D. You have to get under the bones of what people want and then ensure that project stays on track by controlling all the elements.'

Today, Thorp Design is at the top of its game. 'One client told me that in 20 years the only thing she needed to replace in her home was a rug,' she says. 'That's testament to the fact we're really giving people what they want. Now, with art curation too, we're taking clients on an artistic journey to achieve their vision. Clients trust me to deliver because I oversee absolutely everything. I'm not just paying attention to the detail but obsessed with attention to the detail. It's that which gives financiers in particular the confidence to place their trust in me. Just like their other investments, they want the best outcome possible and that is exactly what I strive to guarantee.'

[thorp.co.uk](http://thorp.co.uk)

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Illustration: Marina Esmeraldo. Photography: Tord-Rikard Söderström/Wingårdhs



## CHANGING TACK

Sweden has long been a leader in minimalist design, but a new generation is taking things in a fresh direction

Globally renowned for spearheading a minimalist, form-follows-function aesthetic, a new generation of Swedish brands and designers are subverting expectations. Known for producing desirably simple clothing and furniture that is well made, spare and calm, Swedes have a word for this kind of stoically aspirational lifestyle – *lagom*. It means "sufficient". Not too much. Just enough.

But dig deeper, look closer and another, less restrained, more muscular and audacious *Svenskar* style breaks loose of *lagom*. With its cutting-edge tech and spectacular event architecture, 21st-century Sweden is developing a new look; less "just enough", more *mer än lagom* – "more than enough".

Take luxury boat manufacturer J Craft. Based on Sweden's ancient island of Gotland since 1999, J Craft is in a league of its own. On the surface, its 42ft J Craft Torpedo model resembles a wooden Mediterranean cruiser – but look closer and you'll find a machine that expertly balances *La Dolce Vita* aesthetics with serious power.



The Torpedo is made from handcrafted mahogany veneer, which is sanded by hand before being lacquered 18 times for a long-lasting quality finish, on a fibreglass hull. It takes around 8,500 hours to build from scratch – which is why only one or two make it out of the factory each year.

J Craft owners are involved in the making process, from start to finish. Everything is customisable according to the owner's taste (integrated fridge-freezers? Cutlery designed by His Majesty Prince Carl Philip Bernadotte of Sweden? You got it) and entirely made in Sweden. In fact, every component can be traced to one of

Clockwise, from top the J Craft Torpedo Aquila III; a Teenage Engineering's TP-7 field recorder; Gothenburg's Kuggen building



J Craft's Swedish master builders. It is an expression of the individual and an ode to Swedish design. (But with the possibilities to add music systems, Ralph Lauren upholstery and unique clothing, simple is not a word in the boatmaker's vocabulary.)

Powered by twin Volvo Penta IPS 650 engines with a rudderless IPS pod system, the Torpedo can reach top speeds of close to 50 knots with 30 per cent less fuel consumption than traditional propulsion systems. Elegance is at the heart of such technology. High-speed turns in the not-so-inconspicuous style of a certain 007 agent are enabled by state-of-the-art craftsmanship, all at the touch of a fingertip. Indeed, former James Bond, Sir Roger Moore, is a fan. Making an entrance at the Monaco Yacht Show in a J Craft Torpedo back in 2009, the actor commented, 'I can certainly see James Bond arriving in a boat like this at an exclusive party somewhere on the Riviera, and I think any of my seven Bond girls would have loved it too.'

The idea of "sufficient" has also never been enough for the people at cult tech outfit Teenage Engineering. From its Stockholm studio, it makes products that introduce a retro/future-fabulous take on Swedish style. Apparently influenced by 1970s pop culture, Kubrick's *2001* and My First Sony toy tech rather than, say, B&O or Apple, Teenage Engineering's lucid, tactile designs for samplers and sequencers are the tools of choice for musicians including Beck, Depeche Mode, Thom Yorke and – of course – Swedish House Mafia.

Meanwhile, Swedish practice Gert Wingårdh's Kuggen construction in Gothenburg has been described as a piece of modern architecture with a Renaissance twist. Certainly, its distinctive, cylindrical construction with a mosaic of glazed terracotta, light-reactive, colour-changing panels, can't be easily ignored. Swedish for "cog", the Kuggen was inspired by the machinations of moving parts and industrial design.

It's safe to say that Swedish design is definitely not in *lagom* territory anymore. [j-craftboats.com](http://j-craftboats.com)