

The Andrew Davis Verdict

Guilty of raising the bar.

By Karen Alberg Grossman

Awoman in the midst of divorce is complaining to her lawyer that her husband is out of control, spending excessive amounts of money on clothing. Boy, was she complaining to the wrong guy!

For Andrew Mallor is not just a high-powered attorney, he's also a menswear retailer with a lifelong passion for the business (starting at age 14 when he pushed ladies' swimwear racks at Bambergers, Newark).

Chosen by his peers as one of the top 50 lawyers in Indiana, Mallor and business partner Chris Lambert opened their independent menswear store three years ago in Fort Wayne, Indiana. (Mallor had a couple of prior retail ventures over the past ten years.) Called Andrew Davis (Davis is Mallor's mother's maiden name, his oldest daughter's middle name, Lambert's wife's maiden name, his son's middle name, etc...), the store is a 4000 square foot emporium of fine menswear, geared to professionals 35-and-up. The mix is about 40 percent clothing, 40 percent sportswear, and 20 percent furnishings and shoes. "We're selling fewer suits, but they're more special," Mallor says of his clothing business that features Canali, Lubiam, Trussini, Jack Victor and private label. Suit retails are in the \$595-\$1395 range and custom (from Copley and Lubiam) is a growing part of the mix. Furnishings include Lee Allison neckwear ("Our customers collect them; we were one of Lee's first accounts."), Robert Talbott, Canali, XMI, Eton and



Andy Mallor and Chris Lambert

more expensive sportswear; we're doing really well with sportcoats and we sell \$350 Zanella pants everyday. What's more, for a so-called conservative city (they told me I'd never sell fashion in Fort Wayne), our customer is stepping up to styles that are hip, even funky. We're selling Robert Graham shirts and plainfront pants to 65 year-olds."

Considering that his store is three hours from his law office in Bloomington, Mallor has become a master at multi-tasking. "I sign legal documents in the store. My secretary does both retail and law. My law office and living room are both filled with swatches. My clothing customers come into the store for legal advice and I outfit many of the guys I see in court." (Can we assume that his Ladies' Nites in the store include complementary legal advice with the complementary manicures?)

What's a high-powered divorce lawyer doing in menswear retailing?

Klaus Boehler. Sportswear runs traditional to contemporary, and includes Gran Sasso, Paul & Shark, Robert Talbott, Scott Barber, Robert Graham, Bills Khakis (counted and replenished twice a week), Bernard Zins, Ike Behar, Haupt, and Equilibrio (that sold out to the piece this past season). Footwear features Bruno Magli, Cole Haan and Allen Edmonds.

Fall plans for the business include a comprehensive Robert Talbott shop and a stronger emphasis on fashion sportswear. "I spend my days in various offices and it's apparent that while guys are dressing up a bit more this year than last, there's no widespread movement back to suits," Mallor confides. "If anything, guys are wearing

On the state of marriage in America, Mallor (who's been married to his wife Jane for 33 years) is realistic, "The inclination when things get tough is to run. But marriage today takes a lot of patience. As does divorce, but always with the ultimate goal of helping families stay connected. And helping people is the real reason I wanted to be a lawyer."

Incidentally, Mallor's good luck outfit is a Canali striped suit, French cuff shirt and Canali tie. "Whenever I wear it, people know it's a court day..." While he claims there's no correlation between what he wears in court and the size of the settlement, he keeps on wearing those gorgeous Canali suits... ■