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Creating Your Dream Uniform

by Michael C. Sherrin
 EDGE Style Contributor
 Wednesday Dec 21, 2005



The next time you get dressed, try on this Uniform. Amid the posh shops of the South End, Uniform is looking to provide a safe haven for men looking for affordable fashion and free

espresso.

"There's really not a lot of places that men can hang out and have a place to shop and feel comfortable," says founder Gary Ritacco. "I think guys are really excited to have a place of their own to shop."

Opened since April, Uniform offers an assortment of clothing and skin care products that Ritacco has personally approved. "I chose brands that I like to wear," Ritacco says. "The only thing I could go by opening a store is my own taste. There's nothing in here I don't like."

Uniform features Ritacco's range in taste from Ben Sherman to Penguin to True Religion, giving fashion a casual and relaxed look. "Keeping everything affordable, that was really the key," says Ritacco. "I wanted to be able to put something together for people so they could come in a grab a couple of things and match them up with those really cool pieces they're buying at the expensive stores."

Ritacco considers Freitag his baby after seeking to be one of the few American outlets for the Switzerland-based company. Freitag bags are all made from recycled materials. Ritacco opened Uniform after spending more than 20 years in retail. After helping develop a neighborhood business, Ritacco decided it was time to work for himself.

"I always knew in the back of my head I wanted my own space but was always just sort of apprehensive and afraid," Ritacco says. "Uniform fits my personality. It just means I'm doing things in a uniform fashion, always sticking to the goal and being consistent in how I run the business. And it also means, in kind of a whimsical way, when you get up in the morning, you put on your uniform."

Ritacco is proud of his unique product lines and relaxed atmosphere, looking to give men their own space to shop in an industry full of girls-only.

"I designed the space with an architect to be comfortable so you come in here and you can hang out, you can sit down," he says. "And I've got the awesome espresso machine in the back."

"I've been in retail for probably over 20 years. I helped a neighborhood business run their operation and that's kind of when, I always knew in the back of my head I wanted my own space but was always just sort of apprehensive and afraid. You know helping them I knew I could do it. I also wanted to do something in the neighborhood I live in. I've always had a passion for mens clothing."

A freelance writer and editor, Michael can be contacted at MikeCS83@yahoo.com or through his website at <http://mikecs.95mb.com/>.

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