

## Taking My Own Advice

For several years, my personal coat collection has consisted of a cashmere overcoat, a mink bomber jacket, a leather jacket, an insulated nylon jacket, a Barbour hunting jacket, and a raincoat. Out of these I would wear the cashmere overcoat, the nylon jacket, and the leather jacket the most. Three years ago, I decided that I needed to replace the cashmere overcoat because of age and it being a little tattered. As I started to look I was surprised how difficult it was to find one I liked. It then it occurred to me, as much as I tell customers about how great and light weight new furs are, especially the sheared mink, that I didn't have one myself. So I started thinking about a men's sheared mink for me. I had considered getting the cashmere in a men's walking coat style instead of an overcoat. So the length would be just below my knee instead of below my calf. Thinking the sheared mink would be much warmer than cashmere, I decided the walking coat length would be perfect for it. So I designed a brown sheared mink men's walking coat with a natural mahogany unsheared, notched collar. I also decided to make it reversible to a water proof micro-fiber shell with the notch collar being fur on both sides. So I can wear it as a sheared mink coat with a natural mink collar or a fur lined rain coat with a natural mink collar. I really thought I would wear it as much as the cashmere and it would be a good

replacement for the cashmere overcoat. It is funny how you can talk about other people's experiences and make recommendations on what they have said, but still not completely digest that yourself. I have had the sheared mink walking coat for three years now. It is by far my favorite coat. I was so wrong in thinking it would just take the place of my cashmere coat. I wear it all the time. I wear all the other coats less. It



acclimates to the temperature so much better than any of the other coats or jackets. When I made it I was only going to wear it dressy or business casual, but I wear it all the time, no matter how casual. I find myself only wearing other coats because I want to wear one of them. The last time I wore my leather, I had already put my

sheared mink on and thought wait. I have not worn my leather jacket in weeks; I am going to wear it tonight. I had been working around my house on Sunday wearing a pair of old jogging pants and an old tee shirt. I

decided to get Five Guys to go for Selina's and my lunch. Not even thinking I grabbed the sheared mink walking coat and headed to Five Guys. I ran into a friend of mine that said, "Well you practice what you preach. You do wear that coat everywhere and with anything." I laughed and thought I really do wear it more than even I imagined and I am the one telling people how versatile they have become.

## An Explosion Of Color & Oh So Good

I have mentioned in other newsletters about the emerging great colors that are available today. But they just keep getting better and better. Next year's furs have amazed me again. If you went back 25 years

ago at Barnes Furs you would only have seen furs in natural colors. The natural colors are beautiful and there are many from which to choose.

Today, thanks to ranch raising mink there are 27 natural colors of mink.

They are all shades of white, grey, brown, and black with a few other variations that combine colors. The

reason you only saw natural colors back then is simple. We didn't dye fur well. The dying process dried out the

pelt and it didn't look great. So, only inexpensive pelts were dyed colors. You wouldn't want to ruin a beautiful

pelt. But now everything has changed. The dying process today just enhances

the pelt and it seems the options are endless. Like this new sapphire-cross mink with silver

fox collar jacket dyed the color mint, that Gabby is wearing pictured here. It starts out as sapphire-cross mink which is a white mink with a light grey stripe in the shape of a cross on the pelt. When it is dyed the process only changes the white into the color mint,

leaving the natural striping of grey. The same thing happens with silver fox. It starts out as a grey fur with black highlights naturally and the process changes the grey to the color mint leaving the natural black

highlights. The fur looks bright and the texture is just as soft as a natural sapphire pelt. From a furrier's point of view, the only way you can tell it has been dyed is by the color. The pelt is as beautiful and in as good of shape as a natural pelt. With these new processes the color spectrum and shading abilities are endless. We are making this same sapphire cross mink in baby pink and baby blue this fall. It is funny; being in the fur industry, people realize we are one of the oldest industries in the world. I think because of the age, the assumption is the industry doesn't change. But seeing it from the inside out, the innovation in design and manufacturing are

remarkable. With the color, the weight, and the softness of new furs the differences of our new coats are as substantial as cars or televisions. A fur from fifteen years ago is like a car from fifteen years ago. You have got to experience the new models. They are amazing.

