

# Well suited

DAVID KILLICK DISCOVERS  
THE ADVANTAGES OF  
MADE-TO-MEASURE TAILORING

I HAVE a thick neck. Long gorilla arms. Broad shoulders. And my chest is still wider than my waist. It's hard getting a shirt to fit; if I buy for my collar size, it will balloon out at my waist like a marquee and the sleeves are sure to be too short. Oh, and I have a longish body, so it will probably come untucked too.

Basically, many clothes made for Kiwi blokes – especially for the top half of them – seem to be designed for Mr Blobby. So when I spotted Hong Kong tailor Rick Chulani's ad, I thought, 'why not?' And: 'what the heck, I might as well try a sports jacket and trousers as well'.

Not that I have such a problem with trousers – apart from the mysterious way they seem to shrink all by themselves in the wardrobe over winter. But I've discovered that overseas, trousers come in different leg lengths – whereas here you usually have to spend extra to have them taken up.

This could explain why Chulani, from ANS Fashions, is such a busy man. Chulani has been coming to Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch for the last five years and finds his schedule is more hectic every time. When I caught up with him he was fielding phone calls from his hotel room. And, he says, "In Auckland I didn't have lunch for two days."

"Business has increased because right now customisation is very important in consumer purchases," he says. "Even when you buy an iPod you can customise it using different colours. The same goes for tailoring. People want something different; a different style, a different cut from what they get in the store – which is all identical fashion – and that's where we come in.

"But, most importantly, people come to see me because they can't get their size."

New Zealand has a lack of variety when it comes to clothing in the stores compared with a big city like London, says Chulani. He also finds we are very conservative. "Everyone wears greys and black. Not pink."

I didn't go for pink, but chose several shirts in white, cream, and blue, one in dark red, and three black ones with fine stripes in blue, red, and gold. I also got khaki wool slacks and lighter tan ones together with a tan double-vented sports jacket. When the package arrived from Hong Kong about six weeks later, it felt quite light. The clothes drape well. The fit is excellent – providing I don't put on more weight.

In Hong Kong you can't make much headway in Kowloon without literally tripping over tailors. In New Zealand, they are harder to find.

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RIGHT Hong Kong tailor Rick Chulani

