



Wilbur & Gussie's bags are designed by Brett Tyne and Lucy Lyons, who work together in London

WILBUR & GUSSIE

Q: How does your partnership work? Brett and I have been friends since we met at school; our partnership works because we are good friends, not best friends, and we share the running of the company equally, from admin to design. We also have differing design strengths. I might choose a co-ordinating lining for a bag, and Brett might choose a striking, sometimes clashing, lining, which works in a wholly unexpected and brilliant way.

Q: Who are Wilbur and Gussie? Wilbur is my cat and Gussie is Brett's West Highland terrier. We wanted a name that meant a lot to us (as our pets certainly do) but one that was also light-hearted and fun – fashion is often taken far too seriously.

Q: What are the elements of the perfect bag? A clutch bag needs to be the elegant final touch to an outfit and interesting enough to divert conversation once placed on the dining table.

Q: What is your signature design? The Charlie – a silk envelope style clutch adorned with a beautiful Swarovski crystal brooch fastening. We designed the brooches, which are made in Paris. Our bags epitomise luxury and style, just as Fortnum's does, so we were thrilled when Amanda Ware [Fortnum's fashion buyer] asked us to be part of her new range. It's a natural fit.

Q: What kind of fabrics do you use? When we started researching the fabrics, we fell in love with these fabulous silks and they became the starting point for our bags. We love using silk because it holds the vibrancy of colour – it spells real luxury, as do the Swarovski crystals we use. Often if we find a silk that we really love, we buy the entire roll so no one else can have that print. For Autumn/Winter 2007 we have introduced tweeds and velvets to complement the silks.

Q: How many bags should a woman possess? As many as the hormones desire!