

# MADE IN BROWARD

South Florida is saturated with talent – meet the people that make us beautiful



In a rare moment of modesty, elitist fashion designer Tom Ford, once said: "Telling my clients how they should dress, and how they should look everyday is awfully empowering for me as a designer." Indeed it is, and you would be hard pressed to find anyone in the industry that didn't think like that, because if they don't, they simply have no business being in an industry where making your clients look better is everything.

For three South Floridians, Charlie Lapson, Wendy Clark and Barry Kronen, that lesson has been learned. From empires of gold and diamonds, beauty products and pony hair handbags, *Las Olas Magazine* salutes three local entrepreneurs who have come up through the ranks to satiate an international hunger for style.

## RED CARPET BAGGER

### Charlie Lapson

When fashion, jewelry and handbag designer Charlie Lapson says he has errands to run; it is anything but the mundane. On this morning, his checklist includes stopping by *Desperate Housewives* star Felicity Huffman's home; she borrowed a diamond and sapphire necklace from his Charlie Lapson by Le Vian line. She has fallen in love with his line of handbags for Spring/Summer 2005. But Felicity isn't the only one. His handbags have been a smash hit for fashionable viewers of Shop NBC, the nation's fastest growing shopping network with an audience of more than 80 million homes. Currently, Lapson is conducting a quality check to ensure that the bags, which arrived from Italy, are up to the "Lapson Seal of Approval" — perfection. "It's not easy," says a half-joking Lapson. "But if you want to be in the world of fashion you have to give 110% of yourself. It is your name on the line." And from Hollywood, Fla. to Hollywood, Calif., the Lapson name carries clout. "I love everything Charlie does," says Amy Davidson, of the WB show *8 Simple Rules*. "His work has personality and originality. You know you won't be on the red carpet wearing the same necklace as someone else."

Hailed as "one of the hippest designers in Los Angeles" by *TIME* magazine, and "The Designer for the New Millennium" by *Entertainment Tonight*, Charlie Lapson, a South Florida native by way of New York, began his career leading design teams for Bugle Boy and later designing his own line of ready-to-wear which opened more doors leading him to design expensive baubles and chic bags that A-listers such as Halle Berry, Cameron Diaz and Kirsten Dunst run around with in Hollywood.

Wooded by high profile events such as the Oscars®, the Emmys®, the Grammys® and the *American Idol* series, Lapson has become one of the most sought-after consultants in the entertainment and fashion industries. "If you want to be recognized as a style icon," says Lapson, "you can't just do one thing — you have to be dripping in style from head to toe."

And for Lapson that's exactly what his fan base wants to hear. In 2004, the Charlie Lapson by Le Vian line of jewelry and his style tips began touring the U.S. in trunk and at makeover shows hosted by Jared Galleria, an upscale jeweler. Now, the man who has long-accessorized the red carpet and runway elite is making his way across America.



Debra Messing with Charlie Lapson