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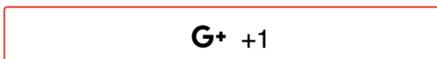
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## Tom Cridland says his jackets will last 30 years. And if not, he'll fix them for free!

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Tom Cridland says his jackets will last 30 years. And if not, he'll fix them for free! <https://www.tomcridland.co.uk/collections/30-year-jacket>

Think of your go-to wardrobe staple – the jeans that graze your ankles adoringly in the summer, the T-shirt that faded way before faded was cool, or the beanie that never fails to protect your ears from turning to pink ice blocks (if you need some inspiration, check Collectively’s love letters to our old clothes (https://collectively.org/en/article/together-forever-love-letters-to-our-clothes/)). But can you imagine still donning said faded T-shirt when you’re, say, 55, while considering what cruise you might book on to during your upcoming retirement? Whaaa...?

But that could be the very scenario you find yourself in if you snap up one of the jackets designed by Tom Cridland (http://www.tomcridland.co.uk), which are about to drop like a bomb later this month. The jackets (http://www.tomcridland.co.uk/collections/30-year-jacket) are the latest (and possibly the last) garment to join the luxury menswear brand’s 30 Year Collection (http://www.tomcridland.co.uk/collections/30yearcollection), which currently consists of a modest sweatshirt and T-shirt in five colours, all of which are guaranteed to last 30 years. If they don’t? Cridland will repair it for free. For three whole decades. Even the return postage is on the house.

Colourful offerings from Cridland’s 30 Year Collection (Photo from tomcridland.co.uk)

Unsurprisingly, the idea has been swamped with media coverage. In our culture of disposable fashion – where simply going past 30 *wears* is a stretch – keeping a garment for the same number of years seems almost revolutionary. But actually, the man behind the brand is keen to point out that plenty of folk are making items that can last for this long.

For example, stroll along along Bond Street in central London and you’ll find a host of fabulous, durable sweatshirts; the difference with Tom Cridland garments, though, is that they’re sold directly to customers online. “We don’t need the staggeringly expensive retail markups, distribution markups and all the [other things], that make clothing so overpriced, so we offer truly luxuriously made clothing at a value price point,” says Cridland. “That’s really our USP.”

***“I will probably have toast in my life for the next thirty years, so why not a classic sweatshirt as well?”***

And true to what he says, the prices come in at an impressively low £35 (just under \$50) for T-shirts and £65 (around \$92) for a jumper. For a T-shirt that lasts 30 years, that works out at just over £1/\$1.50 per year, to wear it unlimited times. The price of a croissant in a cafe, if you will. If you buy a T-shirt for a fiver from a fast-fashion store that only lasts you a year or two, it’s easy to see that the cost per-wear is actually a lot more. Short-termism is the devil, people.

It’s worth noting that Cridland has recently opened his first physical store on King’s Road in Chelsea, London –so, how will he maintain that value price point with his first bricks-and-mortar operation in such a prestigious area?

“We are still primarily an e-commerce brand and the shop is not really a great money-making exercise for us as a business,” Cridland admits. Nevertheless, he’s very happy to have this ‘physical extension’ of the online store.

"We've loved interacting with customers face-to-face," he says. "We've got a great vinyl collection and record player here, and we have people over for coffee and show them our collection."

It's early days – the brand only hatched in early 2014, when Cridland was a mere 23 – but so far there's only been one repair request, when a customer tore their jumper by mistake.

So, apart from the promise of unlimited repairs within that timeframe, what's the secret sauce for a sweatshirt that will last? "We take 360-grams-per-metre cotton and we add a little bit of polyester for increased durability, and to allow it to stretch a bit more."

***"We've got a great vinyl collection and record player here. We have people over for coffee and show them our collection"***

And the promise seems to be working: they're moving production from Portugal to Italy (as famous for its luxury manufacturing as for its love of pasta) to cope with increased demands. "In a way, I'd love to get it made here in Britain so we can cut down on our carbon footprint, but the sad situation is that there are so few British manufacturers left who can work with us, and [those manufacturers that can] are just too expensive for an independent brand like us."

The trousers for sale on Cridland's website are not a part of the 30 Year Collection, but that's because they were the first item that he designed, before anything else came into the picture. And the 30 Year Collection isn't going to encompass everything, he says: "When we move forward into shirts and socks, which are both planned for later this year and next year, we won't be calling them '30-year.'" Nevertheless, Cridland assures that all clothing will maintain the same ethos: quality, value, and being simple and cool.

Tom's top trousers (Photo from tomcrikland.co.uk)

"Every single one of our garments has its own logo on the inside tag and some graphic art to accompany it that's done by a graphic designer in California. And it really just adds something a little bit unique, despite the fact we are producing basics and wardrobe staples."

He loves that term, 'wardrobe staple', and repeats it several times throughout our conversation. And when I think about it, it makes sense; I will probably have toast in my life for the next thirty years, so why not a classic sweatshirt as well?

"Because it's a sweatshirt and it's more like a casual kind of wardrobe staple, it's not something that you would wear at a glamorous event or anything like that," he says, explaining why such an item might inhabit your wardrobe longer than a glitzy dress, for example.

The upcoming jacket that Cridland mentions, by the way, will land in six colours, ranging from conservative navy and blue, to the more flamboyant camel, red, orange and electric blue, ready for spring and summer.

So, what exactly is Cridland donning himself these days? "I really like our grey seal trousers. Those are the ones I wear nearly every day at the moment. They are amazing quality and really cool material, and I really, really like them."

Let's hope he's still able to wear them and really, really dig them for decades to come.

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