



Social Style Guru

Aspen Magazine style editor **Sue Hostetler** chats with Dennis Basso.

Dennis Basso has been a mainstay of the Aspen fashion scene for five years now, ever since opening his ultrachic jewel box of a boutique at The Little Nell in 2002. His specialty has been draping the boldfaced social set in glamorous mink and over-the-top chinchilla, but earlier this year he expanded the brand to include elegant ready-to-wear separates. The luxe line includes pieces such as hand-embroidered pants, feminine minidresses, gowns, and dramatic accessories—items that will surely keep his increasingly youthful and hip clientele happy, as well as give them something to wear when once again he hosts the Aspen Art Museum annual winter benefit, Dennis Basso Freestyle, on December 28. Aspen Magazine sat down with Basso to chat about the upcoming event.

Aspen Magazine: When did you first come to Aspen?

Dennis Basso: Maybe 10 years ago, and I immediately loved it. I adore that it is Western and easygoing, but underneath it all Aspen is extremely sophisticated and chic. I find that combination intriguing.

AM: Why did you ultimately decide to open a boutique here?

DB: I started off doing trunk shows at The Little Nell, and from the first show we were a success...so a boutique was just a natural progression. Everyone has been so supportive. I have an enormous amount of clients from all over the world, and Aspen is truly a worldwide destination now. Being here has been very significant for the Dennis Basso brand. And what could be better than having a store

in The Little Nell? It provides such a special and visible position.

AM: What was the inspiration for your current collection?

DB: The inspiration was “town and country”—the appeal of clothes that work as well in the city as they do in the mountains. In fashion it’s always a reach to get that mix. I ended up with a beautiful combination of luxury furs, sporty fashion, and ready-to-wear, using wonderful tweeds and chiffon along with Russian broadtail, sable, and sueded mink in lots of warm tones and creamy beige.

AM: Why is the Aspen Art Museum special to you?

DB: As a designer, art is something that has always interested me—all kinds of art. You don’t necessarily have to own it to enjoy it. And the museum brings a certain level of

culture to Aspen. The people at the museum have been great. My first introduction was by Nancy Magoon, one of my original supporters, and now working with Carolyn Powers is fantastic. There is nothing better than being involved in an event when you have personal friendships with those you are working with.

AM: What is the most exciting part of the evening for you?

DB: Showing my collection to this refined group of people and exposing the Dennis Basso brand to individuals that understand beautiful things. Being involved with the number one charitable event during Christmas week in Aspen goes a step further than just the business aspect of what I do—It’s much more personal and meaningful. ☑