

PARTY PLANNER

Quality clothes at bargain prices

By **RANDI BERGMAN**

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Walking through the mall can be an overwhelming feeling. Store racks overflow with today's throwaway fashions, and all the soul of the industry seems to have disappeared.

This leads me to believe that the motto of today is quantity over quality. But if it's quality you are searching for, both Tom's Place and Emmanuel Bitini offer just that.

Tom's Place (416-596-0297) sells a wide variety of high-end men and women's clothing at affordable prices. "We cater to the wealthy, the middle class and the not so wealthy," says Tom Mihalik, the store's owner. "Everyone can shop at Tom's Place."

Mihalik's father opened the business, in Kensington Market, in 1958 as a used clothing and furniture store. The store dressed its customers in the finest suits and tuxedos they could find.

"We always believed in suits, and making men look great," Mihalik says. When the store burnt down in the late 1960s, because of some hippies getting a little carried away with candle-making, it moved to its current location in the market and has been selling high-fashion clothing ever since.

Tom's Place sells designer clothing at reduced prices. Made up of mainly formal and

semi-casual wear, the store's selection is something to be admired. The store carries thousands of suits, so as to fit each and every customer. With such an assortment, how could they not!

Mihalik makes sure that the store is on top of current clothing trends. He even travels to Europe and the United States yearly to keep up on the trends. "We are today's newspaper – we don't get left behind," he says.

Mihalik observes that a classic tailored look is one of today's most important trends and two-button suits and slim silhouettes are all the rage at the store.

The vibrancy of Kensington can be felt throughout the whole store. "There's a lot of history here – this is where I grew up," says Mihalik.

"It was always my dream to sell beautiful clothes here. How could I not be thrilled to go to work every day?"

The store is also widely known for its deals. "You can haggle with us and we'll



Tom Mihalik of Tom's Place.

usually give it to you," he says.

Another option for fantastic designer clothing at discounted prices is Emmanuel Bitini (416-782-3211), which has two locations. Since the late 70s, Emmanuel Bitini has been offering the best in women's clothing.

Catering to all women who appreciate beautiful fashions, Emmanuel Bitini carries everything from day and evening suits to evening gowns and casual wear, all at discounts up to 70 percent. The store carries such brands as Jones, Louben and CYC. The selection

offered is so large that there is most certainly something for everyone. "There is so much to choose from here," says André Abitbol, the

store's owner.

He cites sheer blouses and dressy skirts as some of the great trends offered in the store. In keeping with current colour trends, a gorgeous array of browns, pinks and greens dominate the store. The store receives new trendy items so often that you will hardly see the same thing twice.

"We are very excited when we get new shipments," says Abitbol. In such a lively high-fashion environment, it'd be impossible to be bored. "I really love the excitement of fashion changes – it just fills the store."

If you crave a fabulous shopping experience that will fill your closet with fashions galore, heading to Tom's Place or Emmanuel Bitini might just be right for you. With all the hottest trends at equally hot prices, these clothiers have got it all. No longer must you run through the mall with that glazed-over look in your eyes – these stores are here just for you.

Other women's fashion places advertising in this supplement are: Deja Vu, 905-472-9566; Fashion Pulse, 416-865-3166.