

## The perfect fit

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Pat McCausland, a 1971 Tulane grad, is the go-to outfitter for three generations of uptown's high society. (Photo by Cheryl Gerber)

[Perlis](#), an upscale menswear emporium on Magazine Street, is a family business, and after 76 years of dressing locals for formal occasions, it's a New Orleans institution. As the store's head salesman for 45 years, Pat McCausland's well-trained eye for fit and flair also is well-known among the uptown community that counts on him to make them look their best.

"We do a lot of social life," said McCausland, 69, a New Orleans native and a 1971 [Tulane University](#) graduate. "Weddings, funerals, debutante and Mardi Gras balls;

Perlis dresses the royalty of the most prominent krewes.”

“Mardi Gras royalty” may call to mind shiny suits in garish colors with intricate detailing, but that description would apply to parade attire. The balls are much more refined.

“We only do basics. Tuxes, tails, morning suits and linen ? all black and white. No fringe, no ruffles. Everything”s conservative and everything”s tailored,” McCausland said.

But “conservative” doesn”t mean it”s stuffy or old-fashioned, and Pat McCausland”s expertise is integral in showing customers how a generic suit can become an individual statement.

“I have an eye for color and an eye for fit. And I have a sense of what people like,” he said. I never ask someone”s size. A natural taper is an easy place to start and I take it from there.”

McCausland”s talent and professional reputation for fitting suits has only grown through his years with Perlis.

“I”m on my third generation of customers,” he said. “Even when the kids of families move away, a lot of them will call me up and I”ll ship them suits.”

Making this type of connection is what McCausland loves most about his career.

“The thing I find most rewarding is the close relationship I”ve developed with my oldest clients,” he said. “It”s not just about selling clothes, it”s about connecting with people and providing a service.”

*Benton Oliver is a senior at Tulane University majoring in music, communication and German.*

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