



GOOD JEANS

Ace Rivington tailors to community

WORDS BY MEGAN WALDREP
PHOTOS BY MICHAEL KWIECINSKI

In 2014, Beau Lawrence and I stood outside a storage unit at The Carpinteria Storage Place off Via Real. He rolled up the steel garage door to reveal stacks of boxes containing the beginnings of Ace Rivington, a denim and lifestyle brand now located on State Street.

Beau handed me a soft, heather grey sweatshirt made from a fine French terry cloth fabric. The same material inspired him to walk away from the corporate world of global denim design and production for Guess Inc., Union Bay, and other major brands.

He found the cloth during a fabric scouting trip. "I came home with this little swatch of fabric, and I said, 'Sweetheart, I quit my job, and this is our future.'" His wife, Yasmin, who was six months pregnant at the time, considered that the ink had barely dried on the deed to

their new house in Burbank before looking Beau in the eyes and saying, "All right. Let's do it."

The family moved to Carpinteria in September of 2013. A moment on the Carpinteria Bluffs Nature Preserve rooted them here, and the tight-knit community has kept them here.

Recently, Beau and I reconnected by phone to pick up where we'd left off after the article I penned six years ago. The French terry cloth sweatshirts are still prevalent at Ace Rivington, but Beau's appetite for denim has resurged. "It's funny because having designed and developed denim for some of the world's biggest brands, my intention as a business was to prove myself in a category that I wasn't known for, and that's why we launched with the sweatshirt."



Beau Lawrence, founder and owner of Ace Rivington



Beau with his family, from left, daughter Balencia, wife Yasmin, and daughter Leila.



For his brand Ace Rivington, Beau decided to produce the best darn jeans you've ever owned. And once you wear them, you realize he may be right. It could be the premium denim sourced from a fourth-generation family-run business in Milano, Italy, known for being the "greenest denim mill in the blue world." Or it could be the relentless tailoring and styling to create an optimal fit. It could be that his jeans are made in the U.S., supporting American talent and industry. But really, it's all of the above and more.

"Once we decided to commit to denim as the core part of our business, it really started working," Beau says. "Through the full tailoring and lifetime warranty that we offer on our jeans, my mission is to make you feel great and look better in our jeans than in anyone else's."

Our conversation shifts to Ace Rivington's involvement in the local community, most recently during the pandemic. "When we moved to Carpinteria, we were lucky, right away, to get our oldest daughter, Balencia, into Lou Grant Parent-Child Workshop. That opportunity alone helped us to fast track our community participation and awareness."

When COVID hit, the company donated revenue to the Santa Barbara County Foodbank through online sales. "From the start of those donations on March 23, we raised over 70,000 meals for the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County," Beau says.

Soon after, Ace Rivington produced filtered face masks

in its L.A. factory. The support from friends, family, and the Carpinteria community "helped us survive as a business," allowing Ace Rivington to pay employees, in full, before government support was available. With the community's financial support, Ace Rivington helped first responders by donating masks to all employees in local grocery stores, including Albertsons in Casitas Plaza, Pacific Health Foods on Linden Avenue, Montecito Village Grocery, and Tri-County Produce Co in Santa Barbara.

"I love this town, and I want this to be our home forever," Beau says, pausing to gather his words. "So, wherever we can find a way to serve and support, that's what this path is all about. Carpinteria is the hub of that for us."

The pandemic also afforded Beau an unexpected interlude, a chance to decide that Ace Rivington's long-term future in retail would live on State Street. The new retail space at 1106 State Street acts as a "living room outside of the home," combining the feel of a 1950s gentlemen's parlor with a top-notch concierge experience.

Locally owned boutiques have faced a tough battle against corporate giants online and in malls, but Beau recognizes that these are the businesses that create communities. "That's certainly a lot of what's missing in small-town America today," he says. "And as you see, Nordstrom and others have left our town because they haven't figured out how to survive



RIVINGTON
AIRLINES
SANTA BARBARA

here. It's an opportunity for us to be like the local flag-wavers for our community."

Another way to experience Ace Rivington is through a tricycle. Seriously. Beau harnessed his inner 15-year-old kid to dream up "the coolest design vehicle I could add into the business." After hashing out various plans, a trike typically used for selling gelato in the Netherlands, made the cut. "Of course, the Dutch do it great, but in Carpinteria, we do it even better."

The Ace Rivington Denim Vending and Tailoring Trike is inspired by a 1930s Ford plywood panel van and includes a hand-crank vintage Singer sewing machine, which Beau will use for tailoring. He's even built a fitting room off the side inspired by a shower curtain for a vintage claw-foot bathtub. This unique invention will sit pretty outside the new flagship store and participate in many local parades to come. "There is an outside chance that Santa Claus might be spotted being shuttled around town in it during the holidays," Beau adds. ♦



Beau on the Ace Rivington Denim Vending and Tailoring Trike in the new retail store at 1106 State Street