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## Arkwear Offers Socially Conscious Polo Shirts

By Jean E. Palmieri



Andreas von der Goltz's love of animals and the environment was the spark behind his latest business venture, a polo-shirt business called Arkwear.

The entrepreneur and Guatemala native who created the brand, whose mission is "polos with a purpose," will donate 5 percent of his company's sales to the Wildlife Conservation Society, one of the oldest wildlife organizations in the country and the operator of the Bronx Zoo in New York.

"WCS operates in 60 international countries, teaching people and children about nature and animals," von der Goltz said. "They've been such a great partner for my brand. It's not easy to prove yourself as a start-up."

He said the idea behind the business was to offer options to men seeking a men's wear staple that stood for something. "I was tired of going to my local store and seeing Lacoste and Polo. Then I saw that Marc Jacobs had shirts with rats on them that were super popular, so I thought I'd try to reinvent the wheel by making them better."

Von der Goltz, who is married to Elizabeth Hui von der Goltz, a senior vice president of Bergdorf Goodman, has a history in social consciousness. In 1994, his father built a rainforest aerial tram in the Braulio Carrillo National Park of Costa Rica, to teach the community there to use the environment to make a living, not destroy it.

Arkwear shirts are made in Peru, of Pima cotton, with 3 percent spandex for stretch. The first season, the shirts feature four endangered or vulnerable species of animals as their logo: the orangutan, the shark, the elephant and the rhinoceros. The shirts are sold exclusively on the brand's web site and retail for \$95.

Looking ahead, von der Goltz will offer four different animals for the 2017 season: the bee, the Grauer's gorilla, the sperm whale and the Sumatran tiger.

"We'll change our animals once a year," he said. "We hope people will want to collect them."

Down the road, he'd like to offer a children's collection with a baby and adult animal as the logo.