

HAUTEBUTCH

Company Overview

HAUTEBUTCH is an innovative, design driven Lifestyle brand, which defines the butch aesthetic by offering fitted menswear inspired fashion, footwear and accessories.

We are creating a new standard in fashion with an attitude to match. A standard that translates from the runway to the boardroom and out to the streets. We tend to de-emphasize busts and buttocks, instead focusing on incorporating little eye catching/smart details from menswear and blending it with a feminine fit to embody our own sense of harmonious style.

Butch clothing is an outward expression of an internal attitude and we endeavor to accentuate and empower the entire spectrum of butches, studs, and tomboy style-seekers, in their myriad of identities, expressions and presentations, by designing and producing a very unique collection of fierce and visible fashions made especially with them in mind and heart.

VISION:

We embrace the following vision for **HAUTEBUTCH**:

to push beyond the boundaries of fashion trends to promote visibility and acceptance of and within our communities while illuminating the diversity found amongst our butch/stud/dyke/boi/MOC/queer/tomboy fashionistas/fashionistos.

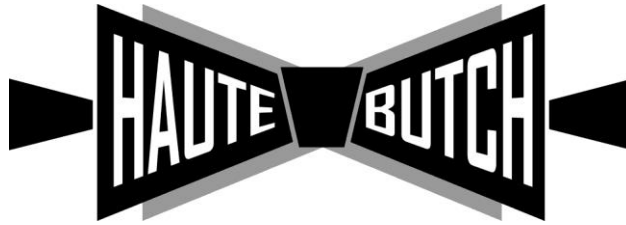
Fashion is but one realm where masculine identified women choose from the myriad ways in which they express themselves externally. Each day, we are presented with a powerful opportunity to define ourselves on our own terms by being true to ourselves, based on our choice of clothing.

HAUTEBUTCH is focused on elevating the mainstream consciousness and opening minds to embrace a clientele that deserves a brand all its own...We celebrate visibility and truth therefore we strive to see **HAUTEBUTCH** be made available to masculine identified women and others in the mainstream and offered on a worldwide platform.

Products:

We design and produce the following merchandise:

- Button up dress shirts
- Jackets
- Light Outerwear
- Footwear
- Bowties/Skinny Ties
- Snapbacks
- Tees, Tanks, Hoodies
- Underwear/Sleepwear
- Vests
- Accessories (Suspenders, Cufflinks, Belts, Watches & More)



Who Are The HAUTEBUTCH Customers?

Our customers are confident, uniquely self-assured, intelligent women who are 100% sure of who they are and how they want to dress. The garments are simply extensions of what and who they really are proud to be. The clothes do not define them but instead aid and accentuates their self assuredness that is so intriguing and attractive. Our edgy, sophisticated and cutting edge line is designed to highlight the beauty within these amazing women.

FAQ's:

How did HauteButch come about?

I got started as a result of both my own experience and the expressed frustration of other women that felt a need for clothing that fit their own personality and style. I wanted clothes that expressed who I was internally: inside I was a confident, capable, fearless butch with a swagger that walked the fine line of tough and tender....yet my wardrobe didn't express it when I went to corporate trainings, weddings, funerals and the like. As a result of that, I never wanted to attend venues where I couldn't dress as myself and avoid settling for ill fitting men's clothes.

Tell me more about HAUTEBUTCH in terms of style. Do you maintain a bit of femininity or is the point to cut that aspect entirely?

HAUTEBUTCH is creating an aesthetic that simultaneously blends masculinity and femininity, a deliberate harmonious style that combats conformity and trends while declaring independence from the fashion "norm". There are tomboys, soft butches, stone butches and many other terms and labels that someone "may" use to describe butch... or not.

We don't want to exclude people with different styles or ways in which they may describe themselves. There are many heterosexual women and men that purchase clothing and footwear from **HAUTEBUTCH** and we celebrate that level of integration.

What key trends do you see emerging or already established in the fashion industry that have their roots in butch fashion?

I think of Coco Chanel's 1920's garconne look and her introduction of women's sportswear as well as Yves Saint Laurent's iconic Le Smoking jacket. Brooks Brothers NYC discreetly sold men's shirts to women way back in 1954. These folks have definitely made an impact on the evolution of androgynous fashion. Model Casey Legler has signed on as a one of Ford's "male models" and she identifies as female.

Masculine females are hitting the runway becoming ever so visible, standing up to be counted, and claiming their place on the planet. It's a great time, we're saying "we matter, we deserve our own fashions and to see ourselves represented everywhere and we won't settle for anything less". Finally, we're being heard...our time is NOW. Our tagline at **HAUTEBUTCH** is "Embrace the brand that embraces you" and we mean that whole heartedly!

What does HauteButch have on the fashion horizon that we can look forward to?

Just yesterday, we began stocking our new Alpha Sport Shirts for S/S 13- those are amazing with the cutaway collars and can really add polish to an outfit. We're also in pre-production of our new **HAUTEBUTCH** BodyWear of boxer trunks and briefs, which is super exciting. Our customers have been waiting for this day! In the near future, you can look forward to our line of signature slacks, polos, and blazers as well as more accessories to round out the collection.

What does it mean to be butch?

I'm not sure it's possible to define "butch" because it's a self identifying term. Anyone can be butch if they say they are and yet there are others that rebuke labels at all. I see it more as an attitude or way of life that speaks to the individual's sense of self.

It can be a multi faceted identification with regard to appearance (masculine looking and/or style of dress, hair style), internal characteristics (assertive, rebellious, confident) and finally an outward expression of how one walks in the world.

ABOUT Karen *aka* K.Michelle Designer, Founder, CEO

I've known since I was 19 years old that I was a lesbian for sure and a butch lesbian at that. Clothes that are men's-wear inspired is what I really like to wear and in which I feel most comfortable and confident.

The very last time I put on a dress was to attend the funeral of someone I really cared about; otherwise, I stay far away from really feminine clothing because it leeches away at my self esteem, it's just not me.

In the past, I've spent a great deal of money at Macy's, H&M and Express on boxy, ill fitting clothing in an attempt to express how I feel inside, only to be left with a closet full of nothing to wear .

My lack of clothing choices definitely affected my career choices and my decisions when it came to any occasion or function where I might have to show up in a way that I found to be false and humiliating.

Throughout my life, I chose mostly to wear clothes from the men's department that lacked the fit and style that I really desired but was more relatable than the option of wearing feminine women's clothing; it was a hard compromise at times.

With the launch of **HAUTEBUTCH**, I embrace a refreshingly honest "if I wouldn't wear it, I wouldn't make it" approach to my designs.

I've always been an entrepreneur in other sectors of business that have equipped me with some uniquely transferable skills to offer to **HAUTEBUTCH**.

My previous entrepreneurial experience involved locating and negotiating to acquire distressed homes and rehabbing them as an investment, I flipped houses. Prior to that, in 2005 I owned 9 rental properties in Texas, Florida, Georgia and Alabama and managed 3 real estate companies.

My grandparents were real estate entrepreneurs that owned several residential and commercial properties. They owned and operated the first black taxi line in Houston and a small night club which afforded them the ability to hire and help others in need. As a young girl, I had the luxury of having them around me all day because they worked from home and on Friday's all sorts of people came to pay their rent, while Granny and I served up homemade fish dinners for extra money.

It was really fun and yet there were times that it was scary to watch them juggle all of the balls in the air but somehow they always managed to land on their feet! It was on the job training at its best- entrepreneurialism is definitely in my blood.



"I can remember being in 4th grade and doodling fashion styles on women while my teacher lectured...I was caught more than once! In my last couple of years of high school, I took fashion merchandising and attended a school for modeling. It was not my cup of tea but my interest in fashion came at an early age."

March 2012, I started doodling again- just like I did in 4th grade but this was like a dream board of items that I would have in my own closet, which would fit me, if I had my way. The next thing I knew, I had expanded that to a big cardboard look book to include other butch women's styles too. Into the wee hours of the night, I began reading everything I could read about fashion, manufacturing and the need for butch clothes.

I could not believe that nothing at all existed!

So, I got started with **HAUTEBUTCH** as a result of both my own experience and the expressed frustration of other women that felt a need for clothing that fit their own personality and style.

"I wanted clothes that expressed who I was internally: inside I was a confident, capable, fearless butch with a swagger that walked the fine line of tough and tender....yet my wardrobe didn't express it"

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In The Press: <http://www.hautebutch.com/press>

Testimonials: <http://www.hautebutch.com/testimonials>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ButchByDesign>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HauteButch>

Instagram: <http://instagram.com/hautebutch#>

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