

# “NO BLACK SHOES”

**DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL STYLE.** “As a ‘financial guy,’ my style is classic, yet always on the leading edge of current within classic. I love the new flat-front pants, but it took me a while to adjust to shorter jackets. Now I love them and longer jackets look dated to me. Dressing well is all in the details. Too much emphasis is placed on the suit or jacket. Shirts, ties, cufflinks, belts, socks, shoes, etc. are what make all the difference. That’s where you can show individuality. People tease me, because I never wear black shoes.

**WHY NO BLACK SHOES?** I only own black shoes to wear with a tux, but I have black suede instead of patent. I just think there is nothing better than a medium brown leather with a worn patina. Brown to me has a depth and warmth that is my favorite. It’s so much more interesting than black. The hurdle for some customers is wearing brown shoes with dark navy or grey. In Italy, this is a no-brainer.

**DO YOU WEAR SHOES IN COLORS OTHER THAN BROWN?**

I have some desert-colored bucks I love, they can transform an outfit. I wear many natural shades of brown, but, no, I don’t do blue suede.

**WHAT ARE YOUR FASHION INFLUENCES?** My key inspiration is Italian men... designers, businessmen, men in cafés, on the streets... they always look so put together. They’re born with style, it’s part of their culture.

**ANY FAVORITE MEN’S TRENDS FOR FALL?** My favorite “must have” is a soft, unstructured sportcoat that fits like a second shirt. They are versatile and so comfortable. We have them in lightweight wool, cashmere, velvet, corduroy, sueded cotton. I have a deep chocolate brown corduroy one that feels like velvet and always brings compliments. You can dress it up with slacks, or my favorite is to wear it with jeans and a white shirt. Throw in a few great accessories, and to me, that’s the perfect outfit.

**“THOUGH NOT MY THING, BLACK SHOES WILL ALWAYS BE IN STYLE. HOWEVER, THERE’S BEEN A SHIFT... NOW MANY MEN BUY MORE BROWN THAN BLACK, WHILE IT USED TO BE THE REVERSE.”**

**RUSS MITCHELL**  
CO-CEO, MITCHELLS FAMILY OF STORES