

# Quintana Couture

Quintana Couture is something of a best-kept secret in London's fashion world. Operating out of a sunlit atelier, in a charming cobblestoned Knightsbridge mews, founder Juan Carlos Quintana has been creating stunning couture gowns and enchanting wedding dresses for private clients and celebrities for more than five years.

The characteristics of Quintana are a romantic, very feminine style, manifested through exceptional craftsmanship, fine detailing and a lavish silhouette. These qualities are in part due to Juan Carlos's Latin American roots. Originally from Guatemala, he trained in Haute Couture at the Ibero Mexicana School of Design in neighbouring Mexico. He cites such inspirations as the beautiful hand-woven fabrics of his homeland and the region's passionate spirit as influences, but reserves the greatest credit for his clients. "They are my muses," he says. "After all, couture should always be a collaboration. My clients give the soul to whatever I design for them."

While Juan Carlos is perfectly content to keep the couture house discreet, the public profile of some clients leads to his creations finding their own attention. Amanda Holden was acclaimed as "leading in the fashion stakes" when she wore Quintana to the recent BAFTA Television Awards, while Myleene Klass was praised for her elegance after selecting Quintana to wear when presenting this year's Classical Brit Awards at The Royal Albert Hall.

Asked what happens when one of his gowns hits the headlines, Juan Carlos says the first enquiries are often from brides to be. "My style is emphatically feminine," he says, explaining the attraction. "I like to think that my pieces help a woman to express her glamour and allure – and isn't that what any bride wants on her wedding day?"

Indeed, it is wedding gowns that are frequently Juan Carlos's favourite commissions. "I love to do bridal, it is such an honour!" he exclaims. "It's such an important day, so the fact that they trust me, well, as I say it's truly an honour. Perhaps one of the fondest memories of my career was when a bride cried with happiness during her final fitting – just at the moment I added the veil. It was so touching!"

Strictly by appointment only.

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