

**A**ndre Todd Thornton is a fashion designer and founder of clothing lines Street Mode and Twenty2. Born and raised in Newark, New Jersey, Andre's entrepreneurial mindset catapulted him into the position of CEO within a major clothing line. Andre considers himself simple and direct, and it shows in his designs. Andre's goal is to give the fashion world something it's missing!

**Tell us about your newest collection**

My newest collection is also my first signature collection, titled Andre Todd. It shows show my range as a designer, whereas the previous collections were thought to be more urban. The collection hasn't been seen in its entirety as of yet, but I will be showing more of it in the next few months throughout the East Coast fashion weeks and shows.

**What does fashion mean to you?**

To me, fashion is diversity. For the person who is all about Street/Urban wear, their look is just as important (and as scrutinized) by their peers as Rihanna walking the red carpet. Fashion is about a progression – just because you start somewhere doesn't mean that's where you'll finish. It's also about self-discovery and life. Fashion is the Streets – don't let anyone tell you anything different!

**How would you define your personal style?**

In a few words, my personal style is very broad, all encompassing, but still classic. In a world full of trends, I remain classic!

**You're from Raleigh, North Carolina. What's fashion like in 'The City of Oaks'?**

In Raleigh, fashion is so behind the times. The saddest part about that is that they're comfortable being right where they are!

**When did you realize you wanted to become a fashion designer?**

My mother modeled in my younger years, and at that time I wanted to pursue photography. During my teen years I fantasized about fashion, and in my twenties I started making that fantasy my reality!

**What was the first article of clothing you ever designed?**

The first garments I ever designed were men's and women's fleece sweats. The ladies garments were made as a mid-drift, and were multi colored. Oddly enough, I actually still have a few of them!

**Tell us about your design process.**

I like to sketch designs and

# Raleigh Fashion Designer Andre Todd Thornton

By Jessica O'Hehir

Learn more about Andre Todd Thornton, and his collections, at [www.streetmode22.com/](http://www.streetmode22.com/).





construct them. Normally designing and constructing can take a few days, or sometimes less. One of my strengths in design is that I'm able to be very decisive, and still stay open to the process.

**What's one of your accomplishments as a designer?**

I was nominated, and won, an award out of Atlanta (organized by Nakita Barnes) for best new designer in 2015.

**Do you draw inspiration from any designers in particular?**

John Galliano, Stephanie Rolland, Sean Jean, Jean Paul Gaultier, Tom Ford, Donna Karan – they have all inspired me in one way or another. They've elevated the industry and keep me up at night trying to get to the next level.

**Where do you buy your fabrics?**

Locally, I purchase fabric at Joanne Fabrics and Mood. I often shop online for other materials.

**What do you believe makes a quality article of clothing?**

The basics. First of all, material is everything. Construction comes next, and lastly (yet equally as important) is the fit!

**How do you prepare for a fashion shoot or show?**

I prepare by going over every single detail, until I can't get anything wrong. Chance favors the prepared mind!

**What type of model best represents your brand?**

It all depends on what I'm shooting or sending down the runway. If I'm sending a gown down the runway, the model has to be able to handle the garment and be age appropriate. The right model can take any design and make it a masterpiece!

**Do you have any words of wisdom for aspiring fashion designers?**

My advice would be to learn from those who came before you, and understand that the business of fashion is more important than fashion itself!

**What are some of your fashion goals?**

To be the best me that I can be, and when I've done that to take it to the next level. Also, I'd love to win a CFDA Award someday!

**What matters to you most as a fashion designer?**

I'm artist on so many levels. Like any artist, I'm always aspiring to be better and to strive for perfection. I'm continuing to grow and learn, and it's important to just get it right!

