



NICKY HILTON
@nickyhilton

FASHIONABLY Famous

FROM "IT GIRL" CELEBRANTE TO RESPECTED BUSINESSWOMAN,
AUTHOR AND DESIGNER, NICKY HILTON TALKS SUSTAINABLE STYLE,
MOTHERHOOD AND STAYING HUMBLE



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As a member of the iconic Hilton family, socialite and hotel heiress NICKY HILTON has been at the forefront of fashion and pop culture since the early 2000s. A born-and-raised New Yorker, she grew up in the Waldorf Towers at the legendary Waldorf Astoria in midtown Manhattan and became a regular tabloid fixture in the aughts alongside sister Paris. At 16, she also starred in David LaChapelle's infamous "Hip-Hop Debs" Vanity Fair photoshoot. Since those crazy and colorful paparazzi flashbulb-filled days, Hilton has turned a die-hard love of fashion into a successful design career that's spanned almost two decades.

» "From a very young age, I always knew I wanted to do something in fashion. I loved the escapism of it—the dressing up, the accessories, the shoes, the jewelry, the fact that you could put something on and transform yourself—I loved all of it," Hilton reminisces. With mom Kathy regularly taking the sisters to shows in Paris and NYC, where they sat FROW (the row of seats closest to the catwalk) at Bryant Park as teenagers, it's little wonder that the youngest Hilton daughter became a fashion icon in her own right. After studying at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), Hilton's first clothing line debuted in 2004, closely followed by namesake collection Nicholas and collaborations with labels like Totani and Lina Pelle. Her book, "365 Style," hit shelves in the fall of 2014. Today, her new eco-conscious and vegan shoe collection with Upper East Side boutique French Sole offers savvy shoppers a timeless way to look chic with a clear conscience.

The Spanish-made espadrilles and ballet flats in the new Nicky Hilton x French Sole Spring/Summer 2021 collection perfectly embody the "classic with an edge" sartorial style of the mom and businesswoman. Even better? The nine-piece line was created using entirely sustainable materials, including organic cotton, linen and plant-based soles. "We all have to do our part to keep this

world a beautiful place for our children, grandchildren and future generations. It's no secret how harmful the fashion industry is to the environment. So, I wanted to take a step in the right direction and start doing my part with this collection," Hilton says. "I love ballet flats; they're the perfect combination of comfort and elegance, and they're practical. I lead a busy life in New York City where I'm dropping the kids off and running to meetings, and I can't do all that in heels."

In keeping with past collections, Hilton named each shoe style after women she loves and admires, including the best-selling Kathy (for her mom). Fictional characters also get a nod, as the Eloise, "a beautiful harlequin velvet loafer with tassels named after a little princess from The Plaza Hotel," is another Hilton favorite.

As Hilton has become more mindful about her impact on the planet and living more eco-consciously, she says it's been inspiring to learn about a growing number of designers who create ethical and cruelty-free fashion lines that don't sacrifice style. "I love St. Roche; they make the most beautiful organic cotton dresses and tops that I've been wearing a lot lately. I also love shopping at Maison de Mode—a beautifully curated online store that highlights all sustainable brands."

POM POMS UP

• Hilton was the head cheerleader at her high school (St. Paul the Apostle Catholic School) in Los Angeles.

YOU BATTER BELIEVE IT

• When it came to lockdown, Hilton found joy in the same things we did: "I did a lot of baking during quarantine," she says. "I'm a self-taught master baker and love making cakes, cupcakes and sweets."

HOME SUITE HOME

• Growing up, Nicky and her sister Paris were called "the Eloises of the Waldorf," in reference to the series of Eloise books written by socialite and cabaret singer Kay Thompson in the 1950s. The series details the adventures of a little girl who lives at The Plaza Hotel in New York.

REAL FURY

• "No chance."

FAVORITE CUISINET

• "Mexican! I love tacos, guacamole and a skinny spicy margarita."



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Aimed at a slightly different demographic, another collection Hilton recently turned her design skills to is the Spring/Summer 2021 capsule with Doty Dungarees, a British-based childrenswear line. Co-founded by sister-in-law Alice Goldsmith (Hilton married Goldsmith's brother, British financier James Rothschild, in London six years ago), the brand initially focused on brightly colored dungarees designed to fit both boys and girls, but dungaree dresses have since been added. "My girls have been wearing them for years and love them, so I came up with this idea to join forces on a line and added my personal touches like the cotton candy-colored pastels, heart-shaped pockets and cat buttons," says Hilton, who also shares that the denim overalls and little pink flower shorts are firm favorites with daughters Lily-Grace, 4, and Teddy, 3.

As synonymous as the Hilton name is with glamour and style, it's one also deeply rooted in philanthropy. In 1979, Conrad Hilton, the American business magnate and founding father of the Hilton dynasty, left the bulk of his fortune to his eponymous Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. Giving back is equally as important to his great-granddaughter, who devotes her efforts to a number of charities. In April, 10% of sales from the Nicky Hilton x French Sole collection went to animal welfare group Well Beings. "I think it's very important to give back; it's part of our family's DNA. I do a lot of work with and am on the board of Animal Haven, a non-profit shelter that finds homes for abandoned cats and dogs here in New York. I also work closely with the LifeWay Network, an organization that provides housing and healing for survivors of human trafficking."

With a glamorous cast of socialites and philanthropists spanning four generations of the famous family, Hilton says that she owes much of her personal and professional

success to her family. "To me, family is everything. We are so close, and they're such an incredible support system. They are totally my anchor," she says. "Not only is my father an incredible husband, but he's also an amazing businessman. He grew up in a rich family and could have taken the easy route of working in the hotel business, but he was driven and wanted to make a name for himself. With hard work and dedication—alongside his partner Jeff Hyland—he built one of, if not the most, prestigious luxury real estate businesses in the world. My siblings and I always go to him for advice. He's very fair, very smart, very practical and a very good listener."

No stranger to business herself, Hilton learned the ropes by landing an internship at a magazine. "I didn't have the most glamorous tasks, taking lunch orders and taking the trash out, but I learned so much. No matter who you are, never think you're above small tasks. My mother always taught me to be humble, not to get too big for your britches, to show up on time and be respectful of people's time."

On the subject of becoming a mother herself, Hilton says the experience has been magical. "It's a love like no other. I love that I have two [children] and that they have each other. They've been such great companions for one another, especially during this strange past year."

As far as what's next for the entrepreneur, Hilton says there are a few projects in the fashion space that she can't quite talk about yet, but her girls are going to camp this summer, which they're both very excited about. "I haven't been back to England since the wedding and love London, so hopefully we can visit there this summer too, [so] my kids can see their cousins and I'll be able to see my in-laws again. And, of course, come back to California because they love seeing their grandparents in Los Angeles." ■



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