



WILSON FORMAL

Celebrates Casual Teton Lifestyle

CHRISTY FOX

WORDS KRISTEN POPE | IMAGE JONATHAN SELKOWITZ

Growing up, Christy Fox's family always joked that "Wilson formal" was the dress code for any local event—and a chicken suit was perfectly acceptable attire. She named her homewares shop Wilson Formal in homage to the fun-loving local characters that live and play in the valley. Wilson Formal opened in June of 2013 on the Village Road, slightly delayed by the birth of Fox's nephew, Jack Wesley. "I didn't want to open up and abandon ship," Fox explained. The shop serves as a community gathering spot of sorts, a place where all kinds of Wilson people gather. From old school ski patrollers to young boarders, from second homeowners and retirees to young professionals, all types of people linger and chat in the shop.

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Plans for Wilson Formal were in motion for quite a while before she was able to open the doors. "My dream was to open a kitchen store," Fox said. She spent years perfecting her business plan and finding the perfect location. The eclectic and useful merchandise in the shop isn't limited to kitchenware and includes kitchen items such as whisks and garlic spades as well as a wide variety of housewares, organic bedding, local gifts, art and jewelry. Fox believes in only stocking items that are long-lasting. "I have a personal belief that our society is too materialistic," Fox said. "It's important to have things that are really special and can be passed on, not things that are disposable and will be thrown away." Even the store's receipts are paperless, transmitted via email or text from an iPad.

Before items appear in the kitchenware section, Fox researches each one to make sure it does not degrade into food as plastic, aluminum, non-stick and silicone items tend to do. She selects products that are healthful and can be part of a customer's kitchen repertoire for decades. "We have quality pots and pans that you can leave for your grandchildren," Fox said. "They're not things that you will trade in next year—they're investment

pieces." The shop stocks cast iron, stainless steel and other long-lasting restaurant grade products.

The local element is very important to Fox. She knows where the items she stocks come from as well as the people who create them. She even knows where the source materials come from, including the vintage Chanel sequins in Katharine Donan's jewelry as well as the fact that Tommie Williams personally travels to the factories that produce his textiles. Wilson Formal provides a forum for local artists to sell their wares, including Nancy Carson's sterling silver jewelry with natural stone accents and Katharine Donan's jewelry, including rustic pieces, with leather, antlers and re-purposed vintage Chanel sequins. The shop features Hannah Barker Daniel's chunky stone necklaces derived from natural materials, Joni Mack's brass cuff bracelets with a Teton overlay and an opal moon, Mike Tierney's stencil and spray paint art. Abby Paffrath's batiks are on display, as is Tommie Williams' collection of baby gear, including bucking bronco onesies.

When describing her decision to jump into the business, Fox explained her reasoning, saying, "I was standing at the edge, feeling the risk and wanting to do it so I just jumped off. Life's too short." ■