**Jute & Sable  
  
Interweaving relevant seasonal style with undeniable necessity, Jute & Sable caters for Italian Greyhounds who are too often overlooked in the dog clothing world. Transcending mere fast fashion, founders Andrea and David address the breed’s specific insulation and fitting requirements while utilising textiles and colour palettes which are both effortlessly smart and enduringly classic. For Jute & Sable, form elegantly follows function in producing high quality, considered designs efficiently protecting even the most delicate and discerning Italian Greyhounds from the elements.**

Andrea and David of Jute & Sable have perfected the art of expertly blending seasonality, quality textiles and chic lines in crafting clothing and accessories exclusively for Italian Greyhounds. The entrepreneurial partners - in both marriage and business – felt inspired to commence their venture soon after buying their own Italian Greyhound, Bailey. Like Greyhounds and Whippets, Italian Greyhounds have little fur which renders them especially vulnerable to the elements. It is for this reason outerwear such as coats, jumpers and even pyjamas are not only fashion adornments, but in fact necessary protection from wind, rain and particularly frosty climates. When Andrea and David sought out clothes for Bailey which would not only provide comfort and protection but also suit their style as a family, they were left dissatisfied. Most of the available dog clothing on the market proved ill-designed, unfashionable and lacking quality materials. David was in the process of considering various business ideas when Bailey’s fashion conundrum suddenly became a gap needing to be filled. Andrea’s background in photography merging with David’s business savvy launched the creative efforts needed to develop Jute & Sable as a specialised dog-wear brand.

Bailey acted as the muse for Jute & Sable and in many ways, an important representative for Italian Greyhounds worldwide. This is because the bodies of Italian Greyhounds need to be catered for in a variety of ways which dog fashion brands commonly overlook. Firstly, standard dog attire fails to suit the Italian Greyhound’s lithe frames, so lines which curve to their body are essential especially while engaging in their notorious frenetic energy bursts around the house or park. Secondly, the need for the disproportionately wide collars is vital, not only so they do not slip over the narrow head but more importantly due to the fragility of their neck and throat. A single assertive tug on a lead attached to a thin collar on an Italian Greyhound could prove detrimental, therefore a wide collar ensures pressure is evenly dispersed over the entire neck. David suggests a harness is yet another option which places pressure on the chest rather than the neck - optimal for puppies, pull-happy dogs or activities such as running. However, many harnesses on the market tend to be too long and deep chested for the likes of Italian Greyhounds, making a proper fitting key.

Long before developing Jute & Sable, Andrea was especially knowledgeable about sighthounds and their requirements. This was due to a previous professional engagement with a photographer who customarily kept his Greyhound in the studio as they worked. Andrea reminisces, “He was such a lovely dog. When our clients were in the studio, he would lay on their laps – he was simply a dream. It’s why I fell in love with the breed.” Andrea and David invested a great deal of time into researching Italian Greyhound breeders prior to finding Bailey. This was necessary for them in order to locate an ethical breeder while also gaining a deeper understanding of the breed by directly interacting with them in their home environment. Andrea discusses the obstacles they faced during this process: “There were instances while visiting breeders where it wasn’t apparent where the puppy or dam was and certain aspects of the experience felt like red flags.” When consulting with the UK Italian Greyhound community, they were guided to a woman owning 13 Italian Greyhounds whilst running a luxury dog hotel in the countryside. Bailey, the particularly well behaved and clever puppy, was chosen by Andrea and David. From then, the couple tirelessly trained Bailey both on and off lead, even incorporating her into their regular running routine. This was six years ago, and since then Bailey has changed their personal and professional lives in ways they could never have anticipated.

The Jute & Sable business model is based around incorporating relevant styles into practical, quality dog clothing. A point of controversy Andrea and David faced is the question of whether Italian Greyhounds and other short-haired sighthounds require clothing – with some individuals objecting to the concept. Little body fat and thin fur necessitates supplementary protection, which the couple have sought to cater to. They also strive to ensure the clothing appropriately fits the typical Italian Greyhound body as they could otherwise easily become tangled in a flurry of activity. Alongside Italian Greyhounds, some items in Jute & Sable’s collections may also accommodate petite and standard sized whippets. However, the brand is currently geared to cater specifically for Italian Greyhounds.

Jute & Sable first launched with five products in the four leg and front legs style. It now offers four dozen pieces within two primary collections: the Essentials Collection akin to a basics collection which offers fleece fabrics as a solution for Italian Greyhounds at play as well as the Luxury Collection providing high quality cotton and wool fabrics in tailored fits. The colours are refined and classic – even the reindeer Christmas romper is tastefully chic. A lightweight summer collection also features, as well as leads, blankets and Italian Greyhound-specific collars. The concert mat is also a Jute & Sable staple, developed due to Italian Greyhounds’ dislike for sitting directly on the floor. Andrea comments on Bailey’s particular aversion, “She will sit on a blanket or chair, but you won’t ever see Bailey sit on the floor! If we are in a coffee shop or pub, unless she is on my lap or in a chair, she stands the entire time looking quite awkward. This was the inspiration behind the concert mat which can easily be stored in a handbag.”

Andrea and David aim to focus their range on products which are not readily available in the market - a business decision resulting in Jute & Sable’s overarching international success spanning the United States to Australia. A challenge, of course, has been Brexit inhibiting the smooth flow of business between the UK and Europe however this is only a temporary damper. Jute & Sable products are crafted in London, which is a point of pride for the British business and a novelty especially for the American market. The couple remark how they would eventually love to open a boutique, however due to Covid they plan to be based solely online for the foreseeable. Their online-based model has awarded them substantial business success and they are working on expanding their collection – soon to include an extended range of collars and even a practical, modern hoodie.

Adding to the tapestry of Andrea and David’s life is a brand-new baby boy named Spencer. When asked how they find the energy to manage a dog and baby while running their own business, the couple reveal it’s a matter of finding their feet. David explains, “Andrea is still at home with Spencer so I primarily run the business and source fabrics, then bring them back for her input.” As for Bailey, Andrea remarks since she tends to predominantly have an independent nature, she seems happier to have less focus on her. “She is the type of dog who wants to do her own thing and cuddle on her own terms.” The couple acknowledge how imperative it is to commit to the responsibility of taking on a dog no matter the situation. Instances where families give a dog up for adoption when a new baby comes along does not sit well with the couple. “Bailey is part of the family…Effectively, our lives revolved around her from the minute we brought her into our lives.” Andrea and David’s unwavering dedication to Bailey has transferred into their passion for Jute & Sable, a business that through dexterously filling a gap has added to the lives of countless Italian Greyhounds and their owners around the world.

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