

Gulfstream

# NONSTOP



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VIRTUAL PERFECTION

BESPOKE

## Legacy in Leather

Inspired by legendary adventurers of the past, Chapal perfects the ultimate heirloom jacket.

BY LAURIE WERTZ  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMMANUEL FRADIN



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To walk through the wooden doors on the rue de Rivoli, up the grand staircase to the Chapal showroom, is to step back in time to an age of *savoir-faire*. Inside this elegant Haussmann apartment, in the heart of the historic Paris fashion district, a stunning array of hand-crafted leather jackets awaits, each one more irresistible than the next. Founded in 1832, Chapal makes leather jackets steeped in aviation and automotive history with a contemporary edge. Celebrating a spirit of high-speed accomplishment, these are garments intended to be worn for a lifetime then passed to the next generation. The company's devoted following includes celebrities, aviators and racing car enthusiasts—modern-day adventurers who seek a connection with the storied past. Chapal is that rare entity: a family-run fashion house that is steadfastly preserving artisan methods mastered through the centuries. Jean-François Bardinon is the eighth generation of his family to lead the company along its independent path. "We have never used suppliers to make our jackets," he says. "We have full control of each step." Chapal takes great pride in meticulously crafting a jacket to individual customer specifications, delivering a fit and feel that only expert handwork can create. >



Eighth-generation president Jean-François Bardinon in the Chapal Paris showroom, which was once his family home.

A selection of Chapal racing jackets (opposite) reflects the family's passion for vintage automobiles.

BESPOKE



A hidden pocket label is signed by the tailor who saved the jacket from start to finish. Bespoke orders begin with a custom fitting at the Chapal showroom (top).

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## A Bespoke Experience

Chapal's bespoke services take the luxury of finely crafted leather jackets to an exceptional level of detail. All the iconic Chapal aviator and driving jacket styles can be made-to-measure for men and women. Clients can also special-order materials—leather finishes, linings in silk or British flannel, detachable shearling collars. For a one-of-a-kind statement, Chapal will embellish a jacket with custom embroidery, patches or even tattoos to commemorate memories and events. The process begins with a visit to the showroom in Paris, where Bardinon meets with the client. If an in-person visit is not possible, the Chapal team makes it a point to talk by phone. "It's important to hear their voice, to know who will be wearing the jacket," says business manager Laurence Luçon. "We ask questions, not just about the look of the jacket but how do you want it to feel?" Clients are invited in for a private fitting, where more than 20 body measurements are taken to achieve the legendary Chapal fit. Once a pattern is cut, the tailor takes over, creating one jacket at a time, from assembling and sewing to finishing the lining and details. A natural wax finish produces the leather's rich, varnished patina. It's a formula that has been in the family for five generations. Bardinon designs and supervises all bespoke orders himself. As keeper of the Chapal family heritage, he does not rest until the garment has been properly fitted, finished and delivered. "The only moment where I am happy is when the client says, 'It's perfect.'" >

## THE 1914 JACKET

Originally made for the French Air Force, the 1914 is one of many Chapal jacket styles that can be custom tailored. Clients can create a signature heirloom jacket from a menu of bespoke options.



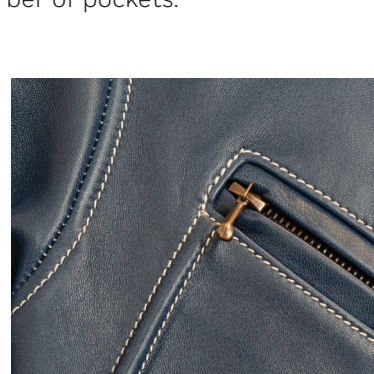
THE 1914 JACKET

**01. Leather.** Choose a fine leather from a range of colors and finishes. A detachable sheep fur collar is available on select jackets.



**02. Lining.** Browse a selection of cotton gabardines, French silks and British flannels.

**03. Personalization.** Add a signature touch with a custom patch, tattoo or monogram.



**04. Detailing.** Specify stitching color and the shape and number of pockets.

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BESPOKE



"The only moment where I am happy is when the client says, 'it's perfect.'"

—JEAN-FRANÇOIS BARDINON  
Chapal President

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## INSPIRED BY PARIS

Jean-François Bardinon carries on a French leather-making legacy that dates back to 1832. When he was 20, his father, Pierre, sent him to the Chapal workshop to learn the family business. A dreamer with an eye for cinematography, he quickly began sketching jackets. After years as Chapal's designer, he took over the reins of the company in 2005. Growing up in the 8<sup>th</sup> arrondissement of Paris amidst the world's great fashion houses was a guiding influence. One of Bardinon's favorite childhood memories is of dining at Maxim's with his family in the 1960s. The grand Parisian restaurant and its impeccable service made a keen impression—and sparked his passionate attention to customer service today. Bardinon is always creating new Chapal clothing collections and forging collaborations with other artists from film actors to hip-hop musicians. Yet he remains dedicated to upholding his family heritage. "It's essential that we stay true to our history," he says. His favorite Chapal jacket? The "1914," a style originally made for the French military and worn by his aviator grandfather.

