



Fashion Gem Deep in the Heart of Austin

Photography by Sarah Doliver • Story by Julie Tereshchuk

Behind the tall oak doors of one of Congress Avenue's hidden gems sits a treasure trove of designer-made clothes and fashion accessories.

Like so many in the Capitol city, the owner and creative force behind the store is a transplant—although the story of how Csilla Somogyi made it to Austin is as colorful as the fabrics that fill the workroom in the back of the lofty-ceilinged boutique that bears her name.

Born in Hungary, Somogyi spent several years of her childhood living in North Africa, where her adventurous father was working as an agricultural engineer. The family returned to Hungary, where the foursome spent their summers traveling around Europe—despite the Cold War-era travel restrictions. Before long, Somogyi's father got another overseas post and the family found themselves in Mexico. When Somogyi's older sister applied to the University of Texas at Austin, she became a role model for the future fashion designer. Fast forward, and the younger Somogyi landed a spot at New York's prestigious Fashion Institute of Technology.

As she launched her eye-catching handmade collections of dresses and tops, Somogyi grew her customer base by showing at trunk shows, fashion shows and special events, often sponsored by the Bacardi brands, at upscale New York City venues. In 2010, she had a store in trendy Tribeca, New York City's fashionista central.

However, with her sister settled in Austin, along with her parents, New York began to pall and Somogyi opted to head south to Texas.

In March 2012—just in time for the annual hipster invasion known as SXSW—CsillaWear opened on Congress Avenue.

Four years later, she's going strong. As downtown booms, she gets more footfall at the corner of 5th and Congress than she did in Tribeca.

504 CONGRESS AVE
CSILLAWEAR.COM

