

# VOGUE INTERNATIONAL

MAR/APR 2008  
027003

COVER PRICE \$12.00  
WHOLESALE \$10.00  
RETAIL \$12.00  
US \$12.00 / CAN \$12.00  
REST OF WORLD \$14.00

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fall/winter 2008/09

# dog gone cool

WITH ITS FRESH AND SOPHISTICATED DESIGNS AND BUSINESS SAVVY, GREYHOUND JUST MIGHT BE SOUTH EAST ASIA'S BEST FASHION EXPORT. WORDS: TIM YAP

A country too often dismissed for its counterfeits, Thailand now boasts a new Bangkok-based fashion establishment that encompasses labels with an intellectual, handcrafted aesthetic such as Sretsis, Kloset Design, Soda, Senada and Tube Gallery. But the one company that's cementing its reputation as a nation with fashion talent is Greyhound. The 27-year-old company is on the move and not just in Thailand where the sporty, tailored men's and women's lifestyle brand operates four standalone stores and 12 shop-in-shops in department stores. Over the past year, it has increased its business in North America, Europe, Japan and South East Asia by 30%. This year, it expects to grow exports by another 20%. Its four clothing labels—Greyhound (men's and women's contemporary sportswear), Playhound (an energetic, youth-driven sportswear and denim line), Hound & Friends (a licensee business with Disney) and Grey (an experimental upscale fashion line)—are expected to do 300 million Baht (roughly US\$10 million) in 2008. It also runs a domestic restaurant business that comprises Greyhound Cafés, Another Hound and To Die For is Fine Dining Restaurant and Bar. Combined, the two businesses are said to be worth half a billion Baht (US\$17 million) and the Greyhound Group is said to be courting partners in foreign markets, weighing its potential in the accessories business and beefing up its attendance at trade shows. This year, it plans to show at Tranoi, D & A, The Train and Project. In one sense, the brand is not new to the US or Europe; four years ago François Alexander, the owner of Nexus, the New York-based sales agency that acts as Greyhound's worldwide distributor, discovered it at Atmosphère in Paris and fell in love. "Today, it's very difficult to discover

innovative details without being clownish," he says of its strengths. He adds that today's freshness-craving contemporary market is now discovering it as well. Takashimaya and Bloomingdale's are said to be interested in the line, which sources most of its fabrics from Japan and wholesales tops and bottoms from \$70 and dresses for \$140 to \$220 (menswear wholesales for less). Other retailers are finding the brand's reasonable prices and unique balance of tailoring and trendy detailing, such as an epaulet placed on the forearm or waist and an oversized chest pocket, great selling points. "As we like it. That's what is in our mind when we create or design. It is the best and only way so that we can judge the work we do," says creative director Bhanu Inkawat of Greyhound's willingness to take liberties that, by its accounts, has allowed him to translate a very Thai sensibility into a lifestyle empire. Inkawat adds that Greyhound has been successful in part by eschewing overnight trends and offering wearable items. The café business, in turn, has allowed him to expand the brand's potential and target market. US retailers have high hopes for Greyhound. "What's refreshing is it's slightly more sportswearish and avant-garde but not as dressy as a lot of Asian brands," says Eveline Morel, the owner of Em & Co., a fashion-forward LA women's store, which recently began stocking the line. Akira, a menswear retail chain in Chicago, is so impressed by Greyhound that it put it at the forefront of its new designers display at its North Avenue store. And Traffic, a specialty menswear retailer in LA, has similarly merchandised it alongside brands such as 3.1 Phillip Lim, Mike & Chris and Frankie Morello. Traffic's own Ilan Trojanowski, says Greyhound's shirts appeal to guys looking for something stylish to wear with jeans. "They're very cool, very different," he says. [greyhound.co.th](http://greyhound.co.th)

