

Esquire

The ESSENTIALS

CAMOUFLAGE: The Anticamouflage

IT'S A TRICK of the eye, an act of visual deception: By wearing a pattern that resembles the colors and contours of one's surroundings, one can hope to escape notice. Since its introduction in the First World War, military camouflage has been the pattern of choice for fighting forces around the world, with shades shifting from greens (tropics) to browns (desert) to even blues (water). Like bomber jackets and khaki chinos and other military staples before it, camo's transition to civilian backs was only a matter of time, and over the decades it's been championed by everyone from Christian Dior to Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons to Savile Row tailor Richard James, who in 1994 famously worked the pattern into suits. Today you'll find it in the collections of labels as varied as Trussardi, Rag & Bone, and Ralph Lauren Denim & Supply, but few use it as elegantly, and counterintuitively, as Dries Van Noten does in this lightweight double-breasted cotton blazer. Far from helping you escape notice, it's the kind of essential statement piece that ensures you'll never blend in at all.

ON ROBERT MCKINLEY, HOTELIER, DESIGNER, DEEJAY: Double-breasted cotton jacket (\$945) by Dries Van Noten; 310-907-4022. Cotton shirt (\$145) by Individualized Shirts; 212-673-8601. Cotton cargo pants (\$78) by Levi's; levis.com. Steel Infantry chronograph (\$550) by Victorinox Swiss Army; nordstrom.com.

