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Cut From the Same Cloth

At Chickie's Daughter in Spring House, Amy Kabinoff and Stacy Trachtenberg bring fresh vision to a decades-old legacy of offering elevated women's fashions with unmatched personalized service.

by **Jeneane Brown** | photos by **Alison Dunlap**

The term *kindred spirits* certainly applies to the duo of Amy Kabinoff and Stacy Trachtenberg. Long before they met, they had mutual friends. Also, in a remarkable coincidence, both are the mothers of twin boys, each with a son named Max. Above all, they share an instinctive flair for style.

Now successful business partners, Kabinoff and Trachtenberg lead Chickie's Daughter, a premier women's clothing boutique whose legacy in the Philadelphia area goes back more than 80 years. Chickie's Daughter specializes in contemporary fashions from head to toe, with personalized customer service to match, and it has spawned generations of loyal patrons who return to the boutique year after year.

Kabinoff and Trachtenberg have over six decades of experience in the clothing business. Inspired by the timeless panache of the New York fashion scene, the partners use their combined experience and innate sense of style to choose looks that will meet the needs of their clients. Serving everyone from young adults to octogenarians, Chickie's Daughter strives to help customers leave the store not only with expertly coordinated ensembles but also a renewed sense of confidence that comes from looking and feeling one's best.

The boutique, originally named Chickie's, began in Northeast Philadelphia.

"My grandmother started it in 1939 in a smaller store on Castor and Unruh, and it was a little more formal than we are now," Kabinoff explains. "When my grandmother got sick, my mother went into the business, and she changed the name to Chickie's Daughter."

Kabinoff began working for the family business when she was just 18 years

old. In 1997, the decision was made to relocate the store to Jenkintown, where Kabinoff and her mother spent 17 years. In 2014, Chickie's Daughter moved to its current location at 901 North Bethlehem Pike in Spring House. Kabinoff eventually took over for her mother, who, at 85 years young, still serves as the business's bookkeeper.

"She is amazing," Kabinoff marvels. "She is as sharp as a tack."

Kabinoff has seen styles change over the years—more contemporary and casual, but still with an elevated look, and an emphasis on high-end brands, including some market exclusives—though her approach to serving the needs of an ever-changing clientele is timeless. Speaking of changes, for a fresh "new evolution" continuing the store's legacy and the "passing of torches," Kabinoff and Trachtenberg are rebranding as @1939 by Chickie's Daughter 2. The 1939 reference, of course, signifies the year that the original Chickie's opened its doors.

A Perfect Match

The partnership between Kabinoff and Trachtenberg, which commenced earlier



this year, was born out of a mutual connection. In high school, Trachtenberg worked for Kabinoff's sister-in-law, who owned Linda's Loft in Jenkintown, a clothing boutique not far from Chickie's Daughter. She then spent time in corporate America—a decade working for General Motors, then earning her real estate license. The COVID-19 pandemic changed everything. She found herself home with her family, assisting her sons with their virtual education.

Although Trachtenberg had expertise in various disciplines, she was unsure what she wanted to pursue going forward. She recalls that her husband, who runs an insurance company, encouraged her to do something that she loves.

"What do I love?" she remembers asking herself. "I remember always telling my parents when I was younger, I wanted to buy Linda's Loft, and it was never up for sale. I've always been a shopper. I love clothes, I love shoes, and I love to be with people and talk to like-minded people—all of that."

She was preparing to accompany her husband on a business trip and wanted some new apparel, so she drove to Chickie's Daughter, where Kabinoff styled her. The two hit it off immediately.

Observing Trachtenberg's knack for contemporary looks, Kabinoff asked if she might want to work at the boutique during the busy seasons. Trachtenberg left her number with Kabinoff, with neither of them realizing their encounter would change the trajectory of both of their lives.

When the pair reconnected and the idea of becoming partners was broached, Kabinoff admits she was skeptical at first. Then they went to New York on a buying trip.

"She nailed it—totally nailed it," Kabinoff recalls. "I especially liked her attitude."

Trachtenberg says the two complement each other well. Both have their own strengths, and they share a sense

of style—a trait Kabinoff describes as "very rare."

"In order to do well in this business, you have to be a good buyer and be able to sell to your customers, and [Trachtenberg] does both equally well," Kabinoff adds. "You have to accommodate your people, accommodate your market, and know your product, and she seemed to capture all that almost instantly. I was very impressed."

Serving, Not Selling

Trachtenberg brings a technological edge to Chickie's Daughter. So far she has created a new website and developed a raft of ideas for social media content. She is eager to learn more about the clothing industry from Kabinoff's vast experience.

"It's a really great environment, and it makes me happy," Trachtenberg says. "I hope everyone who comes here feels the same way. I want to put a smile on people's faces."

The goal of Chickie's Daughter isn't just to sell, it's to serve. Their motto is to provide a "fresh, fun, fabulous" experience to each customer.

"I want to make everyone feel as good as they can and look their very best," Kabinoff says. "That, to me, is so gratifying and so important, not just to make a sale, but to make the person actually just so happy and feel good."

With Kabinoff and Trachtenberg at the helm, Chickie's Daughter is poised for continued growth and reinvention. Rooted in legacy, yet maintaining a modern flair, the boutique is set to expand its reach while staying true to the timeless style and personal touch that generations have come to love.

"I just think it's going to keep getting better and better," Kabinoff says. "We had the best September ever, in the history of the store. So I think that bringing Stacy into the business is the best possible thing. This partnership has brought this family legacy to the next level." ■

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