

Nota Bene

Fashionable shoes designed for motion—without pain

By Tyler King, contributing writer
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Nota Bene's line of shoes combines fashion, comfort.

Winter Park—Enduring discomfort to look good has been a necessary evil for business women over the year, but local entrepreneur Jennifer Lovitt Riggs is changing the rules of fashion with her new line of professional women's shoes.

Nota Bene shoes—which means “take note” in Latin—are designed to be healthier for feet. The goal with the shoes, says Riggs, is to show women that looking good doesn't have to hurt.



Photo by Tanya Lundine

The quest for a better shoe began in Washington, D.C., where Riggs was a management consultant. Enduring the hectic pace of running and limping around the nation's capital as a professional business woman led her to find a way to marry the comfort of tennis shoes with the style of designer footwear.

In her pursuit of a better shoe, she spent two years in research and development to learn about proper foot support, as well as the needs of professional women. Riggs compiled a team of doctors and other health professionals both in Florida and in New York, including designer Peter Chiara.

The result was the Nota Bene line of shoes, which currently consists of eight styles in various color combinations. Eight more styles are in production now.

Problems related to feet, in fact, are quite costly in both medical expenses and time lost at work, according to the American Orthopedic Foot & Ankle Association. The association estimates that foot-related surgeries annually cost American women \$3.5 billion and result in 15 million lost workdays. And more than 85 percent of patients who receive foot surgery in the United States are women.

But Nota Bene shoes are designed to allow the foot to function “as nature intended—with the right biomechanics for flexing and pushing off during walking,” says Bruce Frankel, a New York podiatrist who was part of the design team.

“These characteristics will definitely contribute to less stress and wear and tear, and ultimately, to less surgeries,” Frankel says.

Local retailers who sell the shoes also are praising the products.

Jill Wallace, manager/owner of Shoooz in Winter Park, says she was hesitant at first to begin carrying the line. But after the first week, she was on the phone requesting additional stock. “The shoes are selling very well,” she says. “People love them.”

Regardless of the praise the shoes are earning, for Riggs, the Nota Bene shoe line is a labor of love that came from her own needs as a working woman.

After all, she notes. “It doesn’t hurt to look good.”