

# Dottie's Delights

Burlesque and pin-up inspired lingerie for the vintage aesthetic connoisseur.

**1.) We are honored to chat with you! Let's start off with an introduction, where you are based out of and where we can find you online.**

Hi! I'm originally from Chicago, where I started Dottie's Delights in 2010, but I moved to Nashville in 2015 where I keep my work studio. I do a few in-person events and work with a few select boutiques nationally and internationally, but the best way to find all of our pieces is our direct website - [dottiesdelights.com](http://dottiesdelights.com). I'm also on pretty much every social media platform as @dottiesdelights.

**2.) What inspires your work and what sets you apart from everyone else?**

It depends on the season, but I like to create a full story around each collection, with detailed historical references and a unique mood. I tend to switch around between eras 1920's through 1960's to keep things different and interesting, often blending them together. A lot of times inspiration can start with a certain fabric that I love, maybe I've been hoarding it for years, or maybe just stumbled on it. Lingerie has so many opposing requirements - it needs to be sturdy but delicate, soft and stretchy but supportive....fabric is always the most fun challenge. I try to select the highest quality materials that are as period appropriate as possible, even using authentic vintage materials on occasion. That probably sets me apart a bit, plus the fact that I still sew most of the pieces myself, so you are really getting that personal touch. I try to make my work functional and supportive but still something of luxury quality that you'll want to prance around in.

**3.) What is your background and how did you develop the skills to start your business?**

I've always been in to vintage things, and growing up I thought I would own a vintage clothing shop one day. But there is no direct college degree in that, so my brilliant teenage mind decided that fashion school was the closest thing. I worked really hard at two prominent fashion schools (FIT in New York and SAIC in Chicago) and found I loved working small and intricate, so a niche in vintage inspired lingerie was the perfect fit. I started working with a few local burlesque performers in Chicago and expanded from there. I worked with the Chicago Fashion Incubator in order to learn the business side of starting my own line and I am very grateful for their guidance.

**4.) What has been your biggest success to date?**

All of our collaborations with pinup icon Mosh have been huge hits. She has a real eye for detail and the work we do together is indeed a true collaboration - she steers the designs from start to photoshoot finish and I love having a unique perspective different than our other collections. From another aspect, we've been very lucky to get wardrobe pulled for all sorts of tv shows, magazines, music videos, and celebrities, without any kind of help from a PR agency. Seeing my work on Nicole



Kidman was amazing, and as getting a request from American Vogue was a very surreal moment, even if nothing really came of that (at least not yet!)

**5.) What has been your biggest challenge?**

Behind the scenes production is always the number one biggest challenge, but it was especially hard around 2015 when I moved to a new city and basically had to start over in a lot logistical ways. I never really imagined that I'd still be sewing so much myself at this point, but I've come to really love it most days and it takes that stress out of constantly struggling with

quality control, production delays, miscommunication hassles, overstock/cashflow, etc. etc. Fortunately, I have an amazing assistant and some outside sewing help on our biggest sellers - the dressing robes and babydolls. I can't imagine I'll ever let anyone else take over sewing the bras because they are so complex to sew, but I'm OK with that.

**6.) Describe your typical work day.**

There is a lot of variety! But usually, I spend the morning on personal errands, reading the news, and emails. By early afternoon, I meet my assistant at my studio and get her set up on the tasks for the day - usually cutting out fabric and prepping whatever orders have come in the past couple of days. I'll start sewing the queue for the day and/or packing up orders that are ready to ship. I'll try to make a social media post in the evening and maybe a second round of emails. In between all of that, I might try to squeeze in updates to the website, research new collection development, order supplies, plan events or photoshoots, input accounting data, coordinate with contractors, etc. Unless I happen to be meeting someone for dinner or drinks, I typically work until I get tired and then I go home and crash for the night.

**7.) Which small businesses are you inspired by?**

So many!! Trashy Diva is probably a big one for me, I have been in love with their dresses since just after high school and I've been so happy to see them grow and expand. They sometimes carry our dressing robes in their lingerie shops and I could not have been more flattered when Candice first reached out to me about that. Cora Harrington of The Lingerie Addict is hugely inspirational with her dedication to creating an inclusive, diverse community with her blog (and now book!); she brings a really smart perspective and draws attention to lots of aspects of our niche community that most people may not have considered - like why lingerie is so expensive!

Other brands I admire are Evgenia - she is another solo lingerie designer who pulls inspiration from early 20th century with the most luxurious fabrics - and Besame's dedication to vintage authenticity with their makeup. And about a hundred local Nashville businesses like Ranger Stitch, Darlin', Fables by Barrie, and CaityPie Handpies. I fully endorse supporting small businesses whenever you can.