

POCKET GUIDE

The world's most irrepressibly elegant men tend, we find, to have a cache of highly prized bijoux about their person. Here, Ivy Style blogger Christian Chensvold tells us about the personal gems found in the pockets of his daily commute bag.
 photography **stephen landau**



1 You never know when life will throw you a problem — or a meal — that is digested more easily with the rhythmic puffing of a pipe. I've had this one for many years; it's a flawless straight grain from the small English firm of James Upshall, and is my favourite shape — a 'Dublin'. The pipe rests inside my bag alongside a tin of Consummate Gentleman, a tobacco blend by Ashton that, according to the description, "is traditionally English in character," rather like consummate gentlemen themselves.

2 The haute-horology bug, for me, has resulted in four stylish but inexpensive watches (I had a Dunhill watch years ago, but I think I traded it for a Dunhill pipe). With watches, I tend to pay parsimoniously for the timepiece, such as this one by Sartego, but then add an alligator band.

3 Check out the geometric motif on my tie, reminiscent of the 1930s. It's by Ralph Lauren Purple Label, and, making it even more distinguished, was a gift from my *Rake* co-conspirator G. Bruce Boyer.

4 A monogrammed engine-turned buckle in sterling silver by Brooks Brothers on an alligator strap from the same maker is my belt of choice.

5 My sport coat is from Haspel, a century-old American clothier credited with popularising the fabric in the South. Seersucker suits remain a standard to this day as a symbol of Southern gentility, but I prefer a jacket only, paired with worsted or gabardine trousers in charcoal and an Irish linen pocket square.

6 I make the hike down Madison Avenue to my office in a pair of full-strap loafers by the New England firm of Alden. It's a traditional shoe from a traditional maker, but as attitude determines most of what we call style, I love the low vamp which I'll combine with only the faintest suggestion of trouser break and a bold but simple pair of socks, such as these navy nailheads from Ralph Lauren.

7 Men either embrace or despise pinky rings — I'm in the former camp. After searching in vain for a suitable personal motif, I ended up getting a sterling-silver signet ring bearing my initials, which isn't terribly original but at least has some personal significance.

8 I like the classic Americana of the Ray-Ban Clubmaster — its '50s-inspired design is unsurpassed and timeless.

When you're a bridge-and-tunnel commuter into Manhattan, a shoulder bag is an absolute necessity. You're stepping out for what could be 14 hours of work and leisure, and have a lot of stuff to lug: mobile phone, reading material, water bottle, power bar in case of train failure ... And, even a chewing-gum-packet-sized iPod can ruin the drape of a suit and expose one to ruin under the fault-frothing scrutiny of New York's menswear arbiters. So I like to keep my trouser pockets clear of everything, save a handkerchief, while my jacket pocket carries only a small billfold. My real pockets are the ones inside my bag.

The bag itself is a fine piece of craftsmanship from a small Massachusetts firm called Lotuff & Clegg. Inside, you'll typically find a piece of dandy literature, such as the essays of Max Beerbohm, as well as other necessities to get me through the day. ■

