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MONEY
MAKERS

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—LIZZIE TISCH,
CO-FOUNDER,
SUITE 1521



ONE-ON-ONE

Lizzie Tisch (left) and Kim Kassal, co-founders of the fashion gallery Suite 1521, in which they're pictured here, offer their members exclusive designer wars in a personal, private setting.

Artwork by Jessica Lichtensetin

[MONEY MAKERS]
PROFILE

PRIVATE PRACTICE
Suite 1521 co-founders
Lizzie Tisch (left) and
Kim Kassel in their
members-only Upper
East Side showroom



SUITE SUCCESS

FRUSTRATED BY THE LIMITATIONS OF DEPARTMENT-STORE BUYING, STYLE MAVENS **LIZZIE TISCH** AND **KIM KASSEL** FOUNDED **SUITE 1521** (980 MADISON AVE., SUITE1521.COM) AN EXCLUSIVE, MEMBERS-ONLY BOUTIQUE DEDICATED TO MAKING THE HIGH-END SHOPPING ENDEAVOR A CUSTOMIZED, RELAXING EXPERIENCE.

By Anne Marie O'Connor

When one of NYC's best-dressed women bonds with one of the town's most experienced fashion executives over their shared frustration with shopping, it's no surprise the result is a brand-new retail experience. That's what happened when Lizzie Tisch, a *Vanity Fair* Best-Dressed Hall of Famer and the chair of the Friends of the Costume Institute group at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, met Kim Kassel, a fashion marketing and public relations vet (Tommy Hilfiger, CK Calvin Klein, Tuleh), when Tisch was a client at Tuleh.

"People would always compliment us on our Tuleh outfits and say, 'Where did you get that? I didn't see it at Bergdorf's,'" says Tisch.

"Women were frustrated with department stores where they could only see one rack of a designer's pieces," explains Kassel. "We were sure we couldn't be the

only two people who wanted a better experience."

So in September 2013, they launched Suite 1521, a members-only "salon" where they host two-day events featuring a ready-to-wear designer (such as Libertine, Arto, Edie Parker, Giles Deacon and Roksanda). After a one-time \$500 registration fee, members make private appointments and have a chance to shop the presentations in a relaxed environment, often with exclusive pieces.

"Our clients love that we're bringing them fashion that's not easy to find," says Tisch. "They know they're not going to see these pieces coming and going on the street."

Hunting for new designers is Tisch's job. "She's always looking, whether she's abroad or traveling with her husband [Loews chairman Jonathan Tisch] looking at hotels," says Kassel.

Suite 1521 goes the extra yard to insure perfection. "We often have stock available so people can try on [current season pieces]," says Tisch. Seamstresses are also on-site to do fittings. "We do everything possible because we want the fit to be perfect." In addition, bespoke opportunities, like custom lengths or specific fabrics, are sometimes offered.

Working closely together has given the women new insights on business partnerships, trust and compromise. "The best part about working with Kim is that we don't even have to speak anymore," says Tisch.

"There are times when Lizzie will recommend a brand and I'm not so sure, and then it will sell really well," adds Kassel. "Lizzie has a plaque up in our office that says, 'I'm not arguing with you, I'm just telling you why I'm right.' And she usually is."