

# THE PALM BEACH

## BOUTIQUE BUZZ // SHOPPING



## Jofit

*Founder and CEO Joanne Cloak brings Jofit, a women's golf, tennis and fitness apparel brand, to Harbourside.*

By Alyssa Morlacci

Ten years ago, Joanne (Jo) Cloak was teaching physical education and health through the Council Rock School District in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Married with three kids, it could be assumed she'd stay put and retire from the school system—this was until her youngest son took up golf. Soon his interest peaked her own, changing her career path entirely, and leading her to found the athletic clothing brand Jofit, which opened its first brick-and-mortar, flagship store at Harbourside in mid-November.

### The "Jo" in "Jofit"

When Joanne Cloak's son was 10 years old, she spent her summer taking him to junior golf tours. Having played ice hockey, volleyball and softball growing up, and still entertaining an obsession with tennis that started in her 30s, Cloak decided to pick up a club. "It's sort of an addictive sport, and I'm an addicted athlete," she says. Cloak's transition to golf came naturally, but there was one problem—she hated the clothes. "I'm playing golf and I'm [angry] because nothing fits right," Cloak says.

### Building a Brand

Cloak decided she'd simply make her own clothes. "I thought, 'This isn't rocket science ... I'll do it myself,'" she says. Only she had no idea where to start. So, she snuck into a clothing company called Notations in Philadelphia behind a FedEx truck, then she started asking around for the production manager. Alarmed at first as to how Cloak got in the building, the manager eventually offered up some advice. She would

need to develop patterns, for which she traveled to Hong Kong; and she would need a business partner, for which she approached her brother-in-law. While he agreed to finance her business, support from the rest of Cloak's family would be harder to win. "My husband was mad for 5 years," Cloak laughs. "...I kept saying, 'I'm a train with no breaks—either get on board or move out of the way.'" Her family members have since turned to believers, since Jofit is now sold at about 2,500 retailers throughout the U.S.

### On the Fit

Cloak designed her brand to fit women of all shapes and sizes. Bottoms incorporate wide, contoured waistbands to eliminate spillage at the top; pants use a tapered leg with no side seam that can make hips appear wider; and tank tops are cut to show off arm muscles but hide armpits. "My CFO always goes, 'I lose 15 pounds every time I put Jofit on,'" Cloak says.

### Calling Jupiter home

While Cloak's brand is sold nationally in country clubs and athletic-wear stores, she knew eventually she'd open a Jofit retail store. Having a condo in South Florida, and recently purchasing a home in Sewall's Point in Stuart, she'd been keeping an eye on Harbourside. Eventually, she says the plaza offered her a deal she couldn't turn down, so she opened the first brick-and-mortar store in November. There, women can purchase a two-piece outfit for about \$150-\$180, in addition to hats, belts, visors and jewelry pieces exclusive to the store.

Jofit, 106 Front St., Jupiter / 561.295.5091 / [jofit.com](http://jofit.com)