

LUXURY WITHOUT COMPROMISE

# Robb Report


Going...

Going...

# GONE!

SINGULAR GIFTS FOR  
JET-SETTERS, GEARHEADS,  
AND GOURMANDS





# The Answers with... **ARNAUD ZANNIER**

*Though Arnaud Zannier comes from a family of fashion and wine, his own interests lie in something less tangible: travel. The 45-year-old hotelier—whose father, French businessman Roger Zannier, is known for his ready-to-wear brands and vineyards—opened his first hotel, an exclusive chalet in the Megève, while he was still in his 30s. He has since created a second-generation empire for the Zannier name, with properties in Namibia (where he also established a wildlife animal hospital with pal Angelina Jolie), Cambodia, Belgium, and soon Vietnam. Robb Report caught up with the always-exploring entrepreneur on a layover in Bangkok, somewhere around midnight local time, to talk fast bikes, slow fashion, and the freedom of going analog.*

BY JACKIE CARADONIO PHOTOGRAPHY BY THOMAS VAN DEN DRIESSCHE

### How often do you train?

I have a personal coach that comes to my house at least four times a week at six o'clock in the morning and trains me for an hour. I have a home gym. I'm aging slowly but surely, but I love sports and I always want to be able to jump at the chance to go golfing or waterskiing at a moment's notice.

### What do you do that's still analog?

Read the newspaper. I'm quite classic in certain aspects of life. I like touching the paper; I like the smell of it. There are some things that the digital world can't replace. Feelings and emotions are very important, and for me digital is killing a lot of that.

### What in your wardrobe do you wear most often?

A very good pair of shoes from the brand that I created 15 years ago called NDC.<sup>2</sup> They were very well-made shoes—probably too well-made. And they weren't about trends at all. They were more classic in terms of technique and using leather from the best Italian tanneries, but had a contemporary twist in the way they were finished. It's not my brand anymore—I sold it earlier this year—but I still have quite a big stock of my own.

### How do you find calm?

I ride my BMW GS bike<sup>3</sup> on a daily basis. I find it very calming. And working on motorcycles calms me even more. Every winter, I buy an old vintage bike, and I spend the next six months rebuilding. I've been doing this for the past five years now, so I have five so far. It's very meditative to build something.

### What song is currently in your head?

Tupac's "Are U Still Down,"<sup>4</sup> which is a bit bizarre and old-school, but I have been listening to that song a lot lately.

### What's the most recent thing you've added to your collection?

It's a small thing, but I just changed the dial on my Rolex Daytona. I got my first Daytona from my mother for my 20th birthday, and when she passed away last year I decided to start wearing it again. It's an iconic watch and I wanted to do something with it after owning it for 25 years, so I changed the dial from a white one to a black one.<sup>5</sup>

### What's the last piece of advice you gave?

To my youngest son: "Stop looking at Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat!"

### If you could stick to one age, what would it be, and why?

I like the age that I am at right now. At 45, you reach a certain maturity. You have enough experiences, and you also have sharpened your skills, but you're still young. So you can do anything you want. We'll see though—maybe 46 is even better.

### When was the last time you completely unplugged?

Last weekend for three days while motorbiking in Spain. I was in the mountains north of Barcelona.

### What's your favorite cocktail, and how do you make it?

Whiskey sour. I like it made very classically. A whiskey sour is not a difficult cocktail to make, but having the right balance is not easy. I prefer it made with a beautiful single-malt whisky.

### What's your dream car?

I'd love to buy a Porsche 911 from my birth year, 1973.<sup>6</sup> I'm actually looking into it at the moment.

### Bowie or Dylan?

David Bowie. Because he's European! Joking—his music is better.

Read the full interview online at [robreport.com](http://robreport.com). 

2. NDC is an acronym for nom de code, or "code name," a reference to the label's focus on materials and construction over branding.

4. Released by R&B singer Jon B., "Are U Still Down" features the last known rap verse recorded by Tupac Shakur before his death in 1996.

6. Porsche's 73 and 74 Carrera RS models are considered by many collectors to be the greatest classic 911s of all time.

1. That smell—the scent of black ink on newspaper stock—was turned into a candle in 2011 by designer Tobias Wong.

3. The 125 hp BMW R 1200 GS can reach over 125 mph.

5. Though we love the sentiment, changing the dial on a Daytona Rolex can potentially decrease its value by more than half.