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FIT FOR ROYAL-TEE

DAME HELEN MIRREN may be known for her regal demeanor, but it seems she's as thrifty as the rest of us – as US T-shirt company Liv'n Out Loud! discovered when she called their office to redeem a gift certificate they'd placed in this year's Oscar goodie bags. "We put the gift certificate in each bag as a strategic move," says co-founder Alyson Bruu. "As much as we hoped, we never truly expected anyone to give us a call and redeem it." But clearly not one to turn down a bargain, Dame Helen selected her T-shirts – two for herself, emblazoned with the slogans "Never settle" and "Yagottawanna", plus a further four for her husband, Oscar-winning director Taylor Hackford – and phoned through her order in person. The call was a breakthrough moment for the small New Hampshire based company. "Luckily, just like in the movies, we had a bottle of Champagne in the fridge just waiting for a reason to be uncorked," laughs Bruu's partner, Kristine Fichera. "And man-o-man if this wasn't the moment, nothing was!" Liv'n Out Loud!'s trademark inspirational messages, which come splashed across 100% cotton T-shirts and vests, are suddenly feeling very now. Log onto www.livnoutloud.com to see the selection and call 001 603 329 9599 to place your order – prices start at the distinctly un-queenly sum of £10. (April 30 2007, AM)

Leisa Barnett