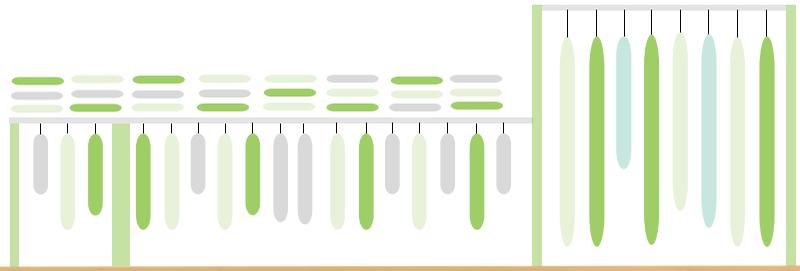


Style On Demand



Quarterly Newsletter

Quarter 1 - 2009

Style Tip of the Month

Recession Proof Style

Recessionista.... Leave it up to the fashion industry to coin a catchy term for those of us who, for the past year, have watched our monthly shopping allowances diminish along with our 401ks. In a world of diminishing hedge funds and financial industry bailouts, the subject of fashion, style, and all things related, has taken a back burner to more, *meaningful (depending on who you ask)* topics such as economic stimulus packages and increasing unemployment rates. Regardless of the state of world affairs, we all continue to long for that new dress or fabulous handbag to update our look or make us feel good. On a recent visit to the Ferragamo boutique in the Houston Galleria (*I was on a mystery shopping assignment, before you judge me...*), I ran into a prominent, Houston socialite, who should, by no stretch of the imagination, be concerned about cutting back or adapting to the current economic crisis. She commented on how, "Everyone was cutting back these days" and how she was now, "Shopping her closet", instead of splurging on huge, big-ticket, items (*She was, by the way, only purchasing a scarf...*). I concurred and it dawned on me – regardless of social status, everyone is being a bit wiser about how they spend their money these days. Gone are the days of buying "just to buy". During these times of economic uncertainty, how do we maintain our sense of style and satiate our appetite for those fabulous frocks and shiny baubles without seeming gauche or contrite?

Shop/Organize Your Closet – How many times have you searched for something to wear, proclaiming that you have "NOTHING to wear", only to come across a skirt or top (*tags still attached*) that you had forgotten you owned? Even though we stand in our closets with that *deer in the headlights* look, convinced that we have no pliable options, that is, the majority of the time, seldom from the truth. With a little closet editing and organization, you will be amazed at the many wardrobe choices you actually do have. Purging items that are outdated, or that you have no plans of wearing, will help you develop a functional wardrobe by clearing out the junk and allowing you to focus on the quality pieces that you love. Try classic combinations (*classic white shirt and trousers*) or create new ones (*trench coats as dresses with statement jewelry to accent*). If you have no idea how to get started, nor have a desire to do so, hiring a personal stylist or someone to organize your closet is a great idea. If you feel like tackling the project on your own, taking pictures of combinations and planning your weeks' wardrobes in advance is also a good place to start.

Buy Smart – It's not how many clothes you have, but what clothes you have. Buying well made, classic essentials, such as tailored trousers, cardigans, and classic pumps and handbags, will ensure that you have a proper foundation to build upon. As trends change from season to season, these pieces remain constant wardrobe staples that can be updated by adding color, accessories, or the like. If you can only purchase one or two items, rest assured, these key pieces will stand the test of time.

Upgrade with Accessories – Statement necklaces, cocktails rings, and bangles, are gaining popularity and becoming, what I consider to be, classics within their own right. They need not be Harry Winston to be relevant or impressive. The look of your simple sheath dress can go from classic to eclectic with funky bangles stacked on each arm. A basic, black t-shirt and jeans, accentuated with a bold turquoise necklace, makes a strong statement, without attaching a huge price tag. Accessories are fun, versatile, and available in a variety of price points, allowing you to create a look that's all your own.

As you adapt and embrace your inner recessionista, remember that true style is about personal expression, not about wearing the newest trend or fad. The economy *will* improve and the retail industry will bounce back from fashion Armageddon, allowing that discretionary shopping allowance to slowly creep back up. Investing wisely in the basics and adding your own personal flair will ensure that, in times of abundance or dearth, your style will stand out, stand alone, and most importantly, always endure.

"Fashion fades, only style remains the same"

Coco Chanel

SOD's Top Shops/Websites of the month:

J Silver

www.jsilverjewelry.net
2412 Rice Boulevard
Houston, TX 77005
713-807-1644

Owner, J. Landa features fabulous pieces from his own eponymous line, plus acclaimed designers such as Chan Luu and Dian Malouf.

Liz Claiborne

www.lizclaiborne.com

Isaac Mizrahi is the new designer! Great classic and colorful looks for spring!

Your Slip is Showing

www.yourslipisshowing.com

Mini and knee length slips with "meant to be seen" borders... ADORABLE!

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