

A Hint Of Things To Come

How Do Experts Predict the Trends?



Cast for a stellar role is this tone-on-tone tweed of wools loomed in America. Its princess line falls as softly as a spring breeze. In bright white, pink, powder blue, grass green, honey beige.



White whipcord three-piece suit with silver stitching on the cardigan jacket and a multi-colored silk paisley blouse . . . from the spring 1964 Oleg Cassini Young America collection.



This orange coat of light and loopy wool is lined in printed silk chiffon to match the dress. Easy gathers at the high-belted waistline give supple motion. The dress is sleeveless.

Months before designers and manufacturers present their fashions for the season ahead to store buyers, there are predictions of what will be the popular styles, fabrics and colors.

These forecasts would be of little interest if it weren't for the fact that most of them turn out to be accurate.

Where does this information come from? The designers and manufacturers guard their plans as securely as if they were Fort Knox. Competition is too keen in the clothing industry to "give away" ideas.

There is no simple explanation to this mystery; in fact, "my intuition" is a popular phrase among those whose business it is to know fashions. But, there is more to it than "guesswork" or "intuition".

WHAT YOU WANT

First of all, the clothing industry is interested in making a profit. That means that they are going to offer the fashions that they feel will sell. Their first consideration is to discover what you want (even before you know you want it).

Of course, there is something which is done in every major industry. For example — millions of people didn't band together begging for an electric toothbrush. When they were first introduced, few people thought they wanted them. But now witness the sales of these brushes!

Look at Muu Muu which took the country by storm. Did you or your friends flood the mails with requests to manufacturers for such a style. Of course not. But these smart makers of fashion knew you wanted them.

So the first thing to look for when making predictions of what's ahead in fashions is the desire of the woman who is going to buy and wear the new styles.

WHERE TO LOOK

Sometimes, but not always, a well-known lady or group of ladies will establish a fashion ahead of the industry. Jackie Kennedy's influence on styles is a good example. In the distant past, it was often Queens who set the pace.

At other times, a popular, well-publicized movie, book, play or event may be responsible. Wars, naturally, effect changes on fashions, as do times when the economy is particularly good.

Fashions, too, are closely related in change to trends in home decors and cars, and the influence of arts and sports.

So the second thing to look for in making a forecast of fashions is to see what is currently popular (in all fields) with the feminine public.

CHANGE IS SLOW

Step number three would be a look at the trends fashion has followed for the past few years. If necklines have been slowly rising, chances are that they won't go dipping low until they have been established at a high point for at least a couple of seasons. Change is gradual, although it may not seem so at first glance.

Radical changes, such as the hemline furor set off by the house of Dior several years ago, are almost always made by the very exclusive designers. These changes will not show up in the mass produced fashion lines until at least a season later.

Forecasters watch the high fashion lines, and are guided in their predictions of what will be important in the popular field by the news they find in these expensive collections — but they do not use these lines as an assurance of what's ahead.

RIGHT "GUESSES"

As far back as last September, and in a few cases even longer ago than that, the fashion experts were beginning to say what they saw

coming up for this spring. Here's a run-down of a few trends they saw, which have indeed blossomed forth for spring.

In the color spectrum, they saw a lightened look with white most important, followed by a paling of fall's reds to pinks and lilac. They saw all colors on the softer side except for blue where navy was expected to ride in on a wave of renewed interest.

The experts saw a move towards the romantic fashions which took second place to the Sportive in the fall lines. Along with this general trend, they saw ruffles, capes (also important in the sportive mood), softness, flares, raised waistlines, trims of flowers and bows.

From one of the romance lands, they saw another trend on the way — the Spanish or South of the Border look. This direction may have taken shape from the world of furniture where the Mediterranean influence has been strongly felt.

And these "crystal gazers" saw that necklines would be dipping—they had been at a stationary high for quite sometime. The lower neckline also fits in much better with the move to the more feminine, soft, romantic look.

WAIT AND SEE?

Now perhaps you're wondering why anyone would go to all of the trouble of trying to decide what will be important in fashion for the season ahead — why not just wait and see?

There are a number of reasons why — but the big reason is one of the cash register. If an item is going to be "hot" the designers and manufacturers want to have it in their line.

Forecasting the trends in fashion is perhaps the most valuable job in the clothing industry. Without those people whose backgrounds are steeped in knowledge of the business and the market and who devote so much in study to the subject, a manufacturer might well end up way out on a limb with his collection. Today, few do.

Fashion's Personal

Fashion is an exciting, mysterious business and has come a long way from the time when a dress was merely a covering for the body.

The way a woman dresses today is often a clue to her personality. (In fact, some psychologists say that they can generally learn quite a bit from a lady's wardrobe).

But, whatever fashion is, or isn't, it can be fun, and there's no better way to prove it than to go on a shopping spree this spring among all the beautiful clothes that have been whipped up for us by smart designers and manufacturers.

Updated Reminder for Esquire

This is a reminder—an updated one.

It has to do with the availability of ready-made clothing to fit practically every man, and it's an even more-complete picture this year than in the past. In most conventional clothing stores, they can supply you—either from their stock or by a quick-delivery special order—suits from sizes 33 all the way up to 56!

Should you require a larger size than that, there are specialized stores in almost every city that cater to the "large" or "tall" men. These establishments also stock shirts, pajamas, sportswear, sweaters, socks—practically everything else for the big fellows.

THE VARIETY of apparel using stretch fabrics is constantly increasing in scope, say our local merchants. As one example, take the trouser or slacks category—with offerings running the gamut from dungarees all the way to most expertly tailored striped trousers for daytime formal wear.

Easy-fitting jackets with looseness around waist and extra width at the shoulders, in a slightly-longer version, with make a man look broader—thus shorter. . . in patterns, heavy plaids are good—



ADVANCE LOOK

and, in fabrics, the heavier-looking fabrics like chevrons and tweeds are preferred. . . In sport jackets, the fuzziest and thicker-looking fabrics lend the proper look. . . Tall men should wear hats with low crowns, cross-striped ties, shirts with spread collars and heavy thick-soled shoes—all contributing to a broader build.

THE BIG SHADE for Spring in sportswear is called "Old Salt"—the natural, off-white color used as ground and mixing shade—and the deep-sea accent colors such as bottle green, spanish sherry, dark rum and weathered blue. . . Stretch business shirts are beginning to be available—eliminating binding and supplying great comfort. . . And the new shoes for Spring are lighter and softer—yet as durable as the heavier models.

Those ploomif bags, that come from dry cleaners, are ideal covering for any clothes being stored. Just slit one side and you'll have a big sheet that will protect and keep things clean. . . Shirts wear out not so much from steady wear as from any of the following: heavy starching, over-bleaching, allowing stains to set before laundering and allowing them to whip on a clothes line.

Children's Wear Shows New Trend Toward Romantics

It's a soft and swingy Easter for children, with capes and drapes and ruffles and flounces, with new fit and femininity in little girls' dresses, coats and suits — new softness in shaping, color, fabric—and lots of romantics in all of children's wear, even the sports clothes scene.

In reviewing the new spring lines, it is noted that romantic dresses are skinny with a difference—softer, sweeter, more little-girl—lots of pleats and yokes, sheers and soft fabrics—lots of white, yellow and pastels.

Waistlines show up here and there: some high, some low, some droopily bloused, some right at the waistline.