

'Designing' lady reaches for high fashion success

By SHIRLEY IDEN
Suburban Life Editor

Lydia St. Martine is a designer who thinks every woman should have someone to help her dress, make up and carry her self properly.

I like to see a woman look good from the shoes up and anybody can do it," she said. "Even a lady with a hip problem can look good. At least I can help her to look good."

Ms. St. Martine creates a complete line of clothes for the modern woman in her town Park shop called simply, Lydia St. Martine High Fashion.

Her fall collection shown recently consisted of bathing suits, leisurely gowns, casual wear and even a wedding gown. Although she believes that some American fashions are even ahead of Europe today, she has definitely been influenced by her own French exposure.

I was born in a French colony in Africa (then Algeria), she said. Yves St. Laurent was born there too and I went to school with his sister. When Algeria became independent in 1962 I moved back to Paris and finished my studies there.

Her training includes studies in design at the Lycee and studies in fabrics at Ecole France.

Actually, my family was all involved in fabrics and design. We are three generations of designers," she explained.

SHR. DESCRIBES her coming to Michigan as an accident.

"I just got to this area six weeks ago

around the states with my family," she said. "I liked this area best and so I've stayed here."

A Farmington resident, she lives with her mother, sister and eleven-year-old son, John, Andrew.

He's a fantastic designer," the proud mother said. "He plans to design cars and planes. When he came here a year ago, he told me I had picked the right city for him."

Ms. St. Martine said her mother is the one who taught her the tricks of the trade. She's a traditional seamstress and I hate to say, but I have to design," she said. "I really love to cut the fabrics."

Sympathetic with every woman's problem about having clothes she can wear over and over again, Ms. St. Martine emphasizes mix and matchability in her designs.

"Every lady should have a mix-match outfit with three basic pieces that she can change around and get ten different looks from," she said. "That's what people should think about when they buy clothes."

He French designer Jean Cachereau started this with his odds in Paris.

She thinks a woman should be able to go from the office to a dressy evening simply by changing her shirt.

CLICHES IN THE St. Martine collection are made to standard sizes and altered for the customer. They run from \$30 to \$250. I just started in this business and I can't afford to be expensive," she said.

Once I sold a design to another man, father but I was unhappy when I saw it

on to different people. I want to sell people an exciting original."

The versatile designer said she has studied hair styles and make up and can even sell her customers in those areas as well as in selecting a wardrobe.

If I think something doesn't suit someone I will tell the customer," she said.

She said her customers call her and ask advice about what to wear to special parties and events. "You just don't sell a dress," she said. "You should take the time to help a woman look good."

Ms. St. Martine favors waifish and gaucheness and said she never wears knits. In her opinion, people have come back to traditional fabrics recently.

I love silk," she said, "and I show several gowns in silk. It's very feminine. I like solid colors and white and brown are my favorites."

She favors a soft, sexy, but simple look for dresses and tell us what she calls "find frou."

FABRICS For the St. Martine line are bought largely in France by the designer who travels to France at least once a year.

I like to choose fabrics not duplicated at the stores or else use them in an unusual way," she said.

She buys plaiders and quanas in this country.

Ms. St. Martine is planning to show her clothes in some small fashion shows in restaurants or hotels. Meanwhile, she's at her shop in the GreenLine Building in Greenfield and Lincoln from noon to 7 p.m. daily.



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— Lydia St. Martine



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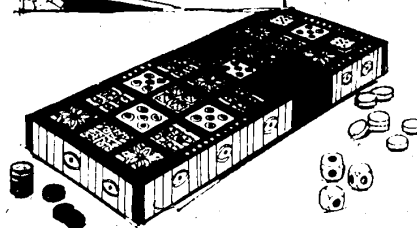
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Lydia St. Martine's designs reflect her meticulous training in France. The energetic designers prefer to cut interesting fabrics which she chooses in this country and in France. She favors solid colors but will design an occasion-

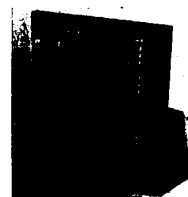
al print, such as this long flowing gown. Her fashion philosophy of mix and match is carried out in the suit (above right) which features a plaid jacket over a solid colored skirt and four button vest.



Royal Game of Ur, a challenging game of skill and chance for two players. one of the oldest table games in the world. The gaming board is a photographic copy of one excavated from the ruins of the ancient city of Ur in Mesopotamia, now known as Iraq. The player's object is to get all his counters onto the board, around it, and home before his opponent does. This intriguing set includes the board, 14 chips, 3 dice. \$9

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