

Thursday, August 16, 1979

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# Furs Furs Furs

## In the forefront of fall fashion

By SHIRLEE IDEN

Don't settle for something as soft as a kitten's ear if you can manage chin-chilla or silky beaver.

Furs this season are a delicious feast for the eye and a delight to the touch as well. Color, shape and length are all part of the message.

Colors range from vibrant jewel tones to subtle earth shades, and exciting combinations of both. You can have an emerald green ribbed beaver, a herring bone pattern worked in mink, or a kicky vest hung with fox tails.

Shapes are everywhere in the spectrum from important fitted jackets to flared skirts to slim line numbers with squared shoulders.

As for length, it's a moveable feast. No fixed matter, it changes according to the shape and mood of the fur itself.

Furs can make you look a dozen different ways this year from mysterious and exotic, to sporty or trendy. No one kind of skin dominates the market, which offers a zoo full of varieties.

Susann Bohnet, a free lance model, made the rounds of several area furriers, discovering designs that can be bought for prices in the four figure range and several more, including luxurious sables, exciting enough for today's oil millionaires.

FURS CAN be at home in a football stadium, the local ice rink, on a shopping trip, in the poshest of restaurants or just out for a walk, she discovered. What milady has to decide is what

she wants her fur, or her fur wardrobe to do for her, beyond keeping her warm.

As for the designers and furriers, they continue to make new moves such as crocheting mink and opossum and adding their own personal touches.

If opting for an unusual color, such as green, blue stripe or wine seems impractical, then a down-to-earth buyer will find furs are being fashioned that can be worn several ways. Some are even reversible.

"The worst thing is the prices," one local merchant lamented. "They're just astronomical."

Some name designers are putting their well-known labels on lower-priced furs this time around. "It's a first to get so much fashion in the lower-priced lines," said Hal Dittrich.

Each of the local furriers Ms. Bohnet visited had a unique look and his own favorites. But they all agreed on two things. First, prices are very high; and second, there may be shortages of skins as the season advances.

Reaching the younger buyer is the announced goal of most people in the fur business. And furs are looking younger because of it.

**LONG-HAIRED FURS**, such as fox and lynx, remain strong favorites and raccoon is still a big, big contender. But don't overlook fox bellies, coyote, and the new resurgence of super soft chin-chilla, now in silver gray and rich beige.

As in other fashion, collars are notably smaller. Women who wear fur because they want winter shelter still opt for warm hoods.

"American made furs are still by far the best," said Robert Roberts, adding, "that's why the Japanese and Germans come here in great numbers to buy our products."

Changes in furs this season are so dramatic they equal the innovations of the previous three years, one fur merchant said.

And another who's a fourth generation principal in his family's fur business said buyers still need the help of a reputable furrier.

"A lot of people don't know a good coat from a great one," he said.

Your fur can be a Halston, a Zandra Rhodes, a Geoffrey Beane, a Bill Blass or bear the label of a local company in which you have confidence.

All that's needed is the time to scout around and eyeball the rich offerings and the wherewithal to pay the check.



Snug as any bug, a warm fur hood is the answer to anyone's prayers when the chill winds begin to blow. Some hoods are made to be detachable for more versatility (above). George Tunis of Furs by Bricker designed the shadow fox coat (at right) with raccoon inserts. As fashion dictates this season, it has slim lines and a new smaller collar but still can bring warming comfort on a brisk day. Squared shoulders are still another trademark of the season.



Photographed  
by  
Gary Friedman



From rich Russian fit to sportive raccoon, fall's crop of furs is a bountiful harvest. At left, straight lines in a stroller length jacket distinguish a fit jacket by Bricker's with detachable hood-scarf. The interplay of horizontal and vertical fur add to the eye appeal. Above, a raccoon greatcoat with notch collar is a great thing to take along on a stroll through your favorite shopping mall. This one goes as well with jeans and shirt as it would with a slinky cocktail dress or a pleated skirt and the new shorter boots.

Furs in this story were furnished by Dittrich Furs, Roberts, and Brickers. They were photographed at Somersett Inn, Jacques Restaurant and the City Ice Co.



Foxy lady in a fox jacket (above) by Dittrich Furs is ready to withstand any blizzard. For the glamour girl with everything, a Golden Russian Sable coat by Roberts is done full length and reversible to poplin.

