

The fashion plate

Anne Cole will keep you well-suited for the summer

By RUSTLE SHAND

"After the show, stay and we'll talk about figure problems. Even if you don't have any, we can talk about mine."

The speaker was Anne Cole, who has been designing functional bathing suits for Cole of California for many years. She aims to combine the latest swim wear fashions with figure flattery in suits that can really swim.

This season she has added glamour with beach or poolside wraps that can also go into a restaurant for lunch or dinner. One skirt, slashed on both sides to the waist, has a matching bandeau.

"Wear the skirt over lights for disco dancing," recommends Ms. Cole, "the bandeau can be worn as a strapless top or as a waist wrap."

She gives consideration to colors that will make you look tan even if you're not and will enhance the bronze of your skin after you do acquire the coveted sign of summer.

THE COLE of California suits are constructed and designed to flatter a good figure and to help hide the not so perfect body.

Small club tie prints combine raisin with white to minimize the silhouette. Tropical prints are planned and placed to minimize hips. High rise legs slim and lengthen the leg line.

Some suits have bra cups to afford a more comfortable swim for well-endowed mermaids. On the other hand, there are blouson tops that hint at a fuller bosom while hiding an ample waistline.

Those who stayed after the showing at Saks Fifth Avenue Troy store did ask Ms. Cole about camouflaging and about skirted suits for simply sitting at pool side. But most took the suit of their dreams into the fitting rooms and eventually walked off toting the new Anne Cole suit in one of Sak's summer beige shopping bags.

The major color statement in the Cole swim suits centers around raisin, red and ultra violet. Black suits, which have always slimmed the silhouette, come in new tri-tone colors, with yellow and red accents in all the right places.

"WHAT KIND of suit should an older woman wear?" asked one shopper. "The same kind of a suit any woman wears," responded Ms. Cole.

"There's a suit for every body type," she added as she pointed out her Miss America suit with its diagonal over one shoulder body ribbon.

"I call this one Rita Hayworth," she said of her body suit. "This is my Jungle Madness group," she said of her suits and wraps splashed with tropical flowers and foliage. "And here's one with a built-in figure, just in case you're keen on the retro look," she said.

Fit is the most important consideration in the selection of a bathing suit, whether it is for just looking pretty or sexy or is really for swimming, said Ms. Cole.

"When you buy a swim suit," she said, "buy for body length. If you are tall and wear a size 10 dress, buy a size 12 suit. But, if you are short, go down a size and buy an 8," she said.

The tall slender models pictured here wear dresses that are size 9 or smaller. But, because of their body length, they're all wearing size 12 swim suits.



Raisin and white Cole of California bathing suits include styles with skirted leg (left), skirt, bandeau and bikini and belted design.

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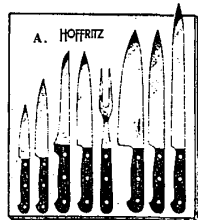
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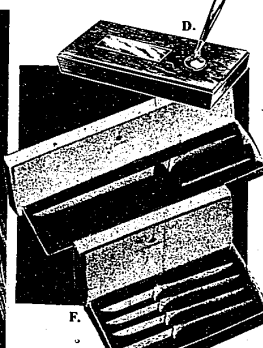
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