

Casual Dressing turns on Kinetic lights

If you'd like your life to be charged with megawatts, this season's work and play clothes will give you the lift.

"You have to decide what your style is and create your own classics," said Annie Bower, fashion coordinator for Saks Fifth Avenue.

In a season sparked by a variety of styles, shapes and moods the decisions on wardrobes are interesting and ought to be pleasurable.

"Today's fashions reflect the contemporary woman. One day she might want to be a romantic and the next day project a different image while conducting a business meeting," said Brenda Rosenberg, Hudson's executive vice president of fashion.

Designer Perry Ellis designs casual dressing with a long white cotton sweater, belted at the hip with a turtleneck and short puffed sleeve.

Calvin Klein puts casual looks together in a bold striped tunic with a bateau neckline, worn over a full skirt.

NORMA KAMALI shows work or play in angular sweatshirt pieces; Ralph Lauren does likewise with full skirts topped with peplum blouses, sometimes made of super, supple chamois.

For peak load performance, designs are best when they blend and tone that which existed in the past — the gushy feminine, the too-macho masculine for looks that are strong and pretty, powerful yet graceful and subtly dramatic.

It's a terrific season to change the way you look and have fun in the process.

"I never take a serious approach to fashion," says Mark Keller, owner of a Birmingham clothier bearing his name.

His store boasts his philosophy where Norma Kamali's high-energy sweats in sweet pinks and standard greys, (plus squash, black, light olive and green) crowd the racks. Her clothes are the kind you put on when you'd rather wear nothing at all.

ANOTHER of Keller's favorites is Willie Wear, this season featuring a line of prairie skirts and ¾ length pants.

"All are very clean, very active and very funky," he said.

"We're seeing a little of everything," adds Ms. Bower of Saks.

"Lengths are midcalf to midhigh; colors are primaries with a new twist, a pinkish red or an

orangey red, for example. Lots of black and white — and stripes, excessive stripes vertical, horizontal, pinstripes and even some awning stripes.

"Skirts are fuller and there's a lot of interest in the new shoulder: puffed sleeves are important, so are gathered drop sleeves and dolmans" she added.



High powered dressing comes in many shapes. Here she wears a Trick Trac free size Victorian blouse and Trick Trac "putts" pants, both in cotton and a Stephanie Frank white concha belt. Available at Mark Keller, Birmingham.



Linen electrifies, especially when it's a split skirt suit. This Restivo jacket and matching skirt along with the silk blouse are available in the Woodward Shop at J.L. Hudson's stores.

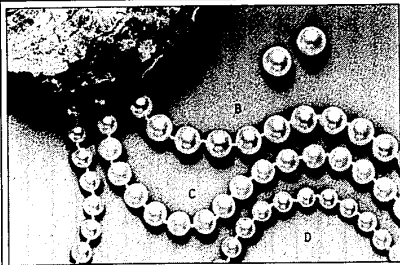


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