

Hats a perfect top to summer wardrobe



CARI WALDMAN

THE REAL DEAL
Hats make it possible to transform any look, with effortless, stylish ease. Hats seem right for so many occasions in the summer.

Just between you and me, I wear them on laid-back Sunday mornings at the fruit market, when hair and make-up rituals do not make top priority.

What do they mean to you? Garden weddings and hot afternoons at the beach? Nonetheless, hats scream to the ease of summer. And right now, there are no shortages of options. There is an emphasis on comfort, (notice the lightweight, crushable styles below) and on trendiness (bucket hats are key, in distressed canvas). Hats are one of the few accessories where function, actually meets fashion.

The traditional straw topper gets a ladylike look in the Bella Fiori collection of vintage hats from Paige Stanton Handmade in Franklin. Adorned with sheer abaca ribbons and loads of sweet old-fashioned flowers, these hats add instant femininity to any outfit. And when you are not wearing them, they make a notable decorating statement—add them to a coat rack, edge of a mirror, or back of a door.

Yet, if your summer is devoted to quick weekend get-aways, a "crushable, packable" hat will be a summer, must-have. This clever concept, which is perfect for carefree carrying, claims to never lose its shape. It rolls up like a towel, has an inside strap to pull around it, and buttons to keep it secure.

Even if you never leave town, these soft, moldable hats offer stylish sun protection. Here are a few I spotted around town:

- Dayton Hudson's version retails for \$24
- Liz Claiborne stores have one for \$22.
- Talbots at the Somerset Collection sells their interpretation for \$25.

To head to the top of the trend charts though, opt for the "Bucket Hat."

Inspired by California surfers and East Coast fishermen, these cotton, floppy hats are perfect for the lazy days of summer.

Pint-sized versions for babies and toddlers can be found by Tommy Hilfinger in adorable denim and madras plaids at Hudson's. Or, for a festive Fourth of July picture near the lake, The Gap can outfit the entire family in matching buckets.

Bring on the sun — with these hats — were protected.



Packable straw hat: Travel anywhere with this hat from Dayton Hudson, \$24.



Bucket hat: Sophisticated herringbone raffia bucket hat by Liz Claiborne, \$32.

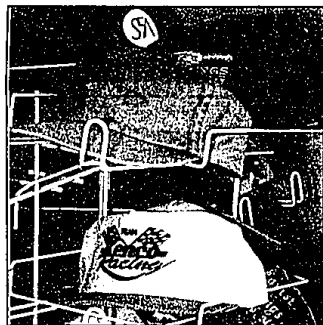


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Please send your style and shopping questions to Cari at OERealDeal@aol.com.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHN STOKERMAN



Checking inventory: Founder James Bender and sales representative Carol Lang go over items in the Troy store.

Capping it off: Logo Outfitters has a display room full of merchandise examples like these caps.

Good fit New company tailored to clothe corporate world

BY LARRY RUKHLEN
STAFF WRITER

James T. Bender, president of Logo Outfitters, a Troy-based company, thinks he has found a niche in the competitive market of corporate fashion.

While most uniform companies conduct business through mail-order mail catalogs, Bender's concept includes showrooms with more than 300 garments on display, in-house computer aided design and a commitment to personal service.

I came up with the idea while I was waiting for a plane at St. Louis airport," he said. "Just about every worker I saw had a logo on their clothes, but most of the uniforms, in my opinion, didn't portray the professional image most businesses desire. I walked around the airport and asked people if they were happy with their work clothes; most said they wanted more options. I decided to start a company that would provide those options."

Bender, a former president of Ziebart Corp., began the venture by conducting market research to discover the wants and needs of his potential customers. He then based his entire concept for the company on what he learned.

In December, he opened his first store in Troy at 5373 Crooks Road. A second store opened five weeks ago in Southfield at 29911 Northwestern Highway and a third is expected to open later this month in Royal Oak at 29108 Woodward Ave.

A visit to one them is much like shopping at a specialty boutique — products ranging from casual T-shirts to designer dress shirts and leather bomber jackets are on display in a wide spectrum of colors and fabrics.

Customers avoid the pitfalls of catalog shopping because they are able to see, touch and try on the merchandise before buying it. They can also choose from five logo application techniques, including digitally-cut fabric, digital printing, multi-media application, embroidery and screen printing.

"I would say 98 percent of our customers have purchased clothes from another company before coming to us," Bender said. "They find it so refreshing to see different garments because ours have a feel, look and quality they are not getting from other suppliers. They are also happy with the fact that we process orders in two to three weeks instead of the industry standard of six weeks."

Success, Bender predicts, is just around the corner.

"We started out with a direct mailing to all 4,857 business addresses in Troy," he added. "The response has been great — Ameritech, Bank One, Century 21 and Ford Motor Co. are just a few of our new customers. Our average order is about \$1,800 and we expect to show a profit by the end of the summer. The customer base is almost unlimited as

Please see L600, C7

Somerset offers summer camp close to home

Kids can go to camp this summer without worry of homesickness or a backpack full of mosquito repellent.

Camp at the Collection, presented by the Somerset Collection in conjunction with The Children's Theater of Michigan, is reinventing summer camp — expanding the activities that kids love in an indoor setting.

Camp will be held in Somerset Collection's community room which will be transformed into the rugged outdoors, complete with chirping birds, park rangers and log accents.

From cooking classes to dinosaur "hunting," the two-hour camps offer a

variety of experiences. Camp at the Collection, designed for children in the first through fourth grades, offer two sessions daily, one from 10 a.m. until noon and another from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. In response to parents' requests, this year's Camp at the Collection is being extended to four weeks and will run from July 12 through Aug. 6.

"Last year more than 400 campers visited Camp at the collection in a two-week period; parents gave us suggestions as to classes they would like included and also wanted more opportunities to send their children during the summer. This year's camp reflects

Camp at the Collection

Two sessions daily July 12 - Aug. 6
10 a.m. - noon • 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
(248) 643-6360 for information

that input," said Linda McIntosh, Somerset Collection marketing director.

Sessions are limited to 30 participants and average one camp counselor to four children. Center security officers, dressed as park rangers, are on hand at all times and children are not permitted to leave the camp area without

an escort.

Parents are given a pager so they can be easily reached or alerted five minutes before they are expected to pick up their children.

The cost for the camp is \$20 per session, which includes a T-shirt, a \$5 gift certificate, coupon for an snack in the Peacock Cafes and a grand finale "campfire."

Parents are encouraged to pre-register for the camp 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. July 5 through July 10 in the Somerset Collection Grand Court. Parents may also call (248) 643-6360 to have registration forms sent to them in the mail.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

MONDAY, JUNE 28

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING
Botsford General Hospital will offer free blood pressure screening from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. in the Jacobson's Court at Laurel Park Place. No reservations are necessary.

DONNA KARAN TRUNK SHOW
View Donna Karan's 1999 fall collection from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Somerset Neiman Marcus. Informal modeling will take place between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. in the designer sportswear department on the third floor.

SPORTSWORKS STUDIOS TRUNK SHOW
Rox & Sherrin presents its premier trunk show of the Sportsworks Studios fall collection beginning June 28 and running through July 3. The show will feature knits for all occasions. The store, on Telegraph near Maple, is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. with extended hours (until 8 p.m.) on Thursdays. (248) 855-8874.

TUESDAY, JUNE 29

SAKS COSMETICS
Saks Fifth Avenue at Somerset is featuring a Clarins Skincare Center on June 29 and June 30. Call (248) 614-3364 for an appointment.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30

FIREWORKS
Hudson's will present its 41st annual fireworks display at 10:06 p.m. on the Detroit River. The display will be visible for miles, though Hart Plaza and the Detroit river front will be the center of activity. The 30-minute show will include more than 10,000 pyrotechnic effects and will be broadcast live on WDIV Channel 4, beginning at 9 p.m. For more information, call the Parade Company at (248) 855-6777.

THURSDAY, JULY 1

SAKS SKIN CARE
Visit every cosmetic counter for sun-centered skin care and make up activities for summer fun at the Saks Fifth Avenue store at Somerset. Consultants will offer special tips, tricks and surprises. (248) 643-9000.