

Bold color and prints are nothing to fear



KAREN DASKAS

Spring fashion is jumping with exciting graphics and clothing styles that celebrate the modern feminine form.

This season boasts electrifying prints, graphic leathers, sexy heels and brilliant combinations of black and white.

While some shoppers may approach the new styles with caution, Spring 2001 offers promising designs that appeal to truly everyone's fashion tastes.

Break into color

Every day, women are faced with the age-old question: What should I wear?

While you might feel the need to slip into head-to-toe black, now is the time to celebrate spring's bright floral and pop graphics. And, hey, you can mix them up with the season's best black-and-white combinations.

Don't fear color, embrace it!

Bold prints

The new season pays homage to the godfather of prints - Pucci. With bold designs in bright hues of cherry, coral and emerald, spring's electrifying colors and sharp graphics burst into fashion and make for an exciting opportunity to update the wardrobe. But the question remains how to capture the look without going overboard? Simply follow a few basic steps, and you'll feel confident wearing color prints and void of hesitation.

Step one is to flatter your figure. You certainly don't want to look like one big floral garden, so start by identifying the smallest part of your body, whether it be your waist, hips, shoulders or bust.

The key is to use a colorful and fun print to balance out your body, while at the same time incorporating a fresh new look into your wardrobe for the season.

If you're pear-shaped, wear a graphic black-and-white print top with slim pants and heels.

For women with slim waists and narrow hips, a coral-colored pencil skirt with floral print can be paired with a solid top in complementing hues of mandarin or melon.

Karen Daskas is co-owner of Tender women's clothing boutique at 271 West Maple in downtown Birmingham. Every season, Karen travels to Milan, Paris and London to see the latest trends in ready-to-wear and accessories. Call Karen with your questions at Tender at (248) 258-0212.

Rabbit in the rain forest

Troy mall combines Easter with adventure, learning

By NICOLE STAFFORD
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Apparently the Easter Bunny has acquired a few more survival skills. Otherwise, dwelling in a cave beside a Red Blood Python doesn't seem possible.

Then again, anything's possible in the mind of a child. That's why the Easter Bunny is happily going about his business, sitting for spring time photo portraits with visiting children and passing out Easter eggs, yea, in a cave within an Amazon rain forest at Oakland Mall in Troy.

While the setup may seem surreal to adults - won't those snakes eat the poor Easter Bunny? - children seem to find the environs more engaging than a traditional spring gazebo or garden background.

Indeed, most of the mall's young visitors like the big bad snake more than the Easter Bunny. And older children, not to mention adults, got a kick out of learning about the rain forest.

"It's more for the kids," says Tara Cardella, Oakland Mall's marketing director. "There's more for the kids to see. It's more magical for the kids."

And, magical it is. Giant boulders atop a bright purple carpet make up the Easter Bunny's cave where inside vibrant colored butterflies hover above baskets overflowing with gigantic Easter eggs and orange carrot sticks.

Throw in a few tropical plants and a park bench for the Easter Bunny to hold court, and it's kind of a *Mad* magazine version of Bugs Bunny role-playing in New York City's Central Park. Just outside the cave is the Amazon rain forest complete with tropical flowers, grass huts, a waterfall and that Red Blood Python, in a cage, of course.

Located in the mall's center court, the exhibit runs through April 14 and is being co-sponsored by Nationwide Insurance and the Detroit Science Center.

Rounding out the imaginary jungle are activity posts where visitors, both children and adults, can learn about the rain forest. Several are interactive computer stations housed inside straw huts. Others are tables where children can smell exotic spices and make rain sticks. The exhibit's guides don khaki and tropical print uniforms.

Oakland Mall annually hosts two major children's exhibits, and Amazon Adventure is one. Last year's spring exhibit, Space Adventure, came in May following Easter.

"We try to do something different every year," says Cardella. "They've come to expect it from us," she says of mall shoppers.

While combining their spring exhibit with the Easter Bunny's visit certainly is different, Cardella can't say it was planned all along. Putting the world's most famous rabbit in a rain forest emerged during discussions about the Amazon Adventure exhibit, and "we thought it was a neat idea and a way to have a brand new Easter," recalls Cardella.

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Adventure for all: Oakland Mall's combination exhibit appeals to kids of all ages. Ryan Novak, who's in the sixth grade, is too old to believe in the Easter Bunny, but seems to be enjoying himself as he tests the rain stick he just made.



STAFF PHOTO BY JIM JACOBOWITZ

Hut gathering: A group of students from St. Clement school in Center Line explore the Amazon through an interactive software program entitled *Swinging Through the Canopy Layer*. Oakland Mall's Amazon Adventure exhibit features hut-enclosed computer stations where kids can learn about the habitat.

Nonetheless, the mall strives to present programs that appeal to a wide age range, though catering to children is a strong focus, says Cardella.

"We're interested in cross-generational programs. Everybody's always looking for something to do at the mall."

Oakland Mall's Easter Bunny will be available for photos 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday through Easter. Photo packages begin at \$9.99. For more information about the Easter Bunny's visit or the Amazon Adventure exhibit and to schedule a school group visit, call (248) 585-6000. Information is also available at www.oaklandmall.com on the Internet.

See list of other retail Easter events on next page

Retail, style and special store events are listed in this calendar. Please send information to Malls & Mainstreets, c/o Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 806 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. By fax, (248) 644-1314. E-mail, nstafford@oe.homecomm.net. Deadline for publication is two weeks in advance.

SUNDAY, APRIL 8

AMAZON ADVENTURE
Oakland Mall in Troy hosts Amazon Adventure, an interactive, technology-based exhibit that allows visitors to become explorers in a rain forest and includes live animal programs through April 14. For complete schedule and other information, call (248) 597-2200.

GLASS EXHIBIT
Native West, 863 W. Ann Arbor Trail in downtown Plymouth, hosts Etchings in Glass, a glass exhibit to mark Michigan Glass Month, through April 30. For exhibit hours and other information, call (734) 455-9838.

MONDAY, APRIL 9

TRUNK SHOW
Neiman Marcus, the Somerset Collection in Troy, presents their exclusive Turnbull and Asser spring collection for men in a trunk show accompanied by Robert SALTER of the Turnbull and Asser show in London, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Men's Furnishings, first floor. For details, call (248) 643-3300.

TUESDAY, APRIL 10

HEALTH SCREENING
Bedford Hospital offers dozens of free and low-cost health screenings for the entire family at Livonia Mall, 29514 7 Mile Road, through April 12. For details, call (248) 476-1160.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11

INDOOR EGG HUNT
Cookies & Milk Drop-in Play Center at the Golden Gate Shopping Center in Canton hosts an indoor Easter egg hunt for children through age 4, 9:30-9:45 a.m. Admission is \$7 for a parent accompanying up to two children. Call (734) 207-1655.

BOOKS EVENT
Neiman Marcus, the Somerset Collection in Troy, presents several trunk shows, including such collections as St. John, David Yurman and Kieselstein-Cord. Peter Rabbit also makes an appearance at the store. Event runs 10 a.m.-10 p.m., storewide. For additional information, call (248) 643-3300.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12

BARBERY IN FOCUS
Saks Fifth Avenue, the Somerset Collection in Troy, holds a Barber's coat focus day, Coat Department, third floor. For more information, call (248) 614-3330.

SPRING CARNIVAL
Get into the swing of spring with a Spring Carnival presented by Pugh Shows at the Livonia Mall. Hours vary. Call ahead for a schedule at (248) 476-1160.

MONDAY, APRIL 16

MOTHER'S DAY ESSAY CONTEST

Art Van Furniture stores sponsors a Mother's Day essay contest. Children, age 7-14, are invited to write a brief essay (100 words or less) on "Why I Love My Mother," including a special story, memory or occasion. Essays will be judged in two categories, age 7-10 and age 11-14. Entry deadline is May 5. All stores, including Livonia, Novi, Royal Oak, Southfield, Waterford and Westland, are participating.

TUESDAY, APRIL 17

PROJECT HEALTHY LIVING
United Health Organization sponsors free and low-cost health screening tests and services at Tel-Twelve Mall in Southfield through April 18, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. For test fees and additional information, call the mall's customer service line at (248) 363-4111.

THURSDAY, APRIL 19

INSTYLE MAGAZINE VISIT
Neiman Marcus, the Somerset Collection in Troy, hosts a "Getting Gorgeous" event with a guest appearance by Hal Rubenstein. InStyle magazine features editor, 6:30-8:30 p.m., third floor. For information, call (248) 643-3300.

FRIDAY, APRIL 20

BEAUTY EVENT
Ruby's Balm in The Boardwalk on Orchard Lake Road in West Bloomfield presents former model Sunny Griffin and her Astara Conscious Skin Care line and Daniel John Fry, skin care consultant and clinical intuitive. They will discuss the importance of good nutrition and exercise and the developments in skin care technology through April 21, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Friday and 1-5 p.m. Saturday. For details, call (248) 626-7829.