



Patrick Swan

Image Consultant, Arbitrator of Style

Issue No. 15

Warming Thoughts/Chic Touches!

We've tricked and treated, bonfire-nighted and switched the clocks back. So it's official: it is now winter. But there's no need to lose all your leaves over this. You can stay a bright shiny bauble on the tree with a little planning!

This year, capes are big on the scene. I saw the perfect example of this last week. My client was a delightful young woman of 24, about 5' 5", with lots of very dark curly hair, strong brows and pale skin, and a tiny waist. I was commissioned not only to shop but also to look at her current wardrobe. Understandably emerging from student mode, it proved to be messy, showing little respect for her clothes, some of which were several seasons old or were garments that had been given to her. We actually discovered that some of them had been lunch for moths!



Now I have views about how you should keep clothes. Little biscuits of cedar wood or lavender bags will keep your closets moth-free, and this is the right time of year to install them. I believe in good hangers - try John Lewis or The Holding Company



- along with shoe trees and those excellent sprays that protect suede. By the way, any of these items make excellent Christmas presents for your chums.

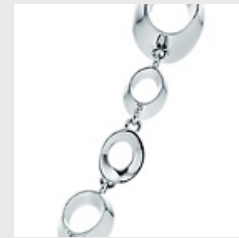
My client prefers not to wear heels as she has feminist inclinations. She is a brilliant young woman, highly intellectual, but given to looking like a student, which is why my expertise was enlisted. We started with boots and headed into Selfridges (whose new shoe hall is the largest shoe department in the world) and found black suede boots by KG by Kurt Geiger for just £199. They come just above the knee, but you could make a turnover so they are knee length.



On to Whistles where we found jersey knit skirts for just £40. They are double knit so, while comfortable to wear, they will keep their shape. These pencil skirts come in two lengths: either above the knee or with a high-waist and midi-length. We bought both. They flattered my client with her small waist but more generous hips and thighs. There is a trend for high-waisted, A-line skirts at the moment but they really only look good on a boyish figures.



While still at Whistles, we teamed the mid-length skirt with a cropped jumper with elbow length sleeves, in a subtle black and off-white pattern. For the shorter skirt, we found a fawn colour sweater with a scoop neck and long sleeves that could be pushed up the arm. Both were about £90. For accessories, we added a long strand of pearls, which could be double or even tripled. They were a mere £10 at Top Shop



and earrings in silver with a slight architectural feel reminiscent of Frank Gehry's gorgeous but very expensive pieces for Tiffany.

And then we topped off the new looks with the Whistles cape at £235, in black and grey wool. My client looked chic but sassy at the same time and ready to start her professional life.

To wear a cape you must create a slim silhouette underneath leggings and a knee-boot or a Capri trouser. Ensure the boots have a heel and your top reaches your widest part. For other winter coat options these great styles all come from Joseph.



Note the new moves in clothes for work. Trousers are back but they are high-waisted, often with a wide or straight leg (think Lauren Bacall), worn with a tucked-in camisole, or body like those from Wolford, a white shirt or if you want to be more dressy a chiffon blouse with a pussy cat bow. Throw over a classic,

single breasted wool coat - to the knee if you are under 5' 7" or three-quarter length if you are tall.



without a tie.

Men also like to party and I would direct them this winter to a velvet jacket in a jewel tones such as ruby, the dark blue of lapis lazuli or classic black with a peaked lapel. Team it with black denim if you want to look cool, or an evening dress-style trouser, and dress shirt, with or

Remember Christmas is just around the corner and I love being the present that has lasting memory.

Love you!

Patrick Swan

PS - Remember - 20% off for all returning shopping clients!