



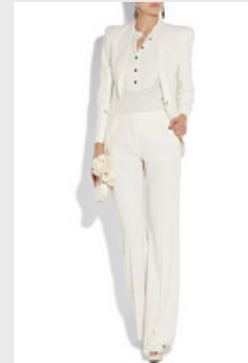
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It's Spring... so shake a leg!

Great fashion is always about proportion and silhouette. There's little point in taking just one element; the art form is to engage in the total look. This spring, note the super wide leg trousers - sheer or Katherine Hepburn-inspired - perfect for sexy summer days out or disco nights. It's what Halston did so well in the 70s. The secret to the look is to team the trousers with a ladylike blouse, in a sheer fabric over a cami or with a pussycat bow. You will also find massive bell-bottoms that make hips shrink out of existence. If you are vertically challenged, elongate the leg with a wedge. I think this Alexander McQueen wide leg crepe trouser at £455 is an investment piece.



Skirt lengths range from floor length to just below the knee. The latter is where heels make all the difference for what otherwise is a challenging length. Many skirts are soft, yet full A-line with the focus on the waist. This only works with a fitted top and a flat tummy. If this is not you, focus on sheath styles that are more forgiving. Another option is this J Crew is a soft pleated organza style which works perfectly with a tucked in top and unstructured blazer. May I add this favorite American brand J Crew is now available at www.net-a-porter.com

Animal prints - from leopard and python to giraffe work brilliantly to lift or confuse the eye, as I repeatedly stress. They work well with white or cleverly optioned as a bag, belt or shoe. Stripes are huge and remember, the bigger you are, the wider the stripe you can carry. Many are vertical so they slim the silhouette beautifully. Mixing prints and stripes, abstracts with stripes or animal print gives the opportunity for individuality, particularly for those who want to stand out from the crowd. I love this "All-ages-Day" dress at Urban Outfitters for £160.00 which can be belted too!





As I predicted last year, white as well as soft putty tones continues into this summer too, so enjoy how fresh and versatile shades of white can be. Mix with stone shades or layer sheer pieces over well-fitted camisoles (a trick that allows you to get away with murder but only if you are svelte). The key is to avoid looking as if you have just checked out of hospital, so mix with coloured accessories or go natural with soft leather shade, wood bangles and skinny belts at the waist or slung low on the hip. I think Kate Hudson has this layered look perfectly done.

Denim is washed and as soft as putty; mix with oranges, lemony, or fuchsia shades to give life to this versatile, smart casual option that goes through the day to a pub night out with friends or packs for the summer beach getaway. This brings me to leggings, specifically denim coloured leggings. They are an update on the jean and, as they have spandex in the fabric, benefit from giving support and a higher rise which my clients are always commenting on.

A good example is at Warehouse for just £25, much to the delight of a lady I took shopping recently. She had a starting budget of just £300.00, but in the event, probably spent £600.00. An American in her late 30s, about 5' 7", she has short blond hair, just long enough to tuck behind her ears, rather like Emma Watson's style for the BAFTA awards. My lady longed for boots and we found her the perfect pair, flat in taupe suede, in Top Shop for just £82.00. They compared well to a similar pair at Gucci, priced at £400.00!



We were also at Top Shop to complete the outfit: first a longer cut ribbed tank top in a light colour, over I added a soft sheer cashmere racer back with deep-cut sleeves. This layering does not make you look bundled, merely modern. We finished with an 80s-inspired cardigan. A chunky-knit cape would also work.



Men too can rejoice with more soft colours this season. Ralph Lauren does a classic twist with soft coloured narrow-to-skinny shape chinos **which are firmly the new denim** in light blue and Burberry has lovely shades of green and mustard as well as stone, white and kaki. Muted shades give a lift to



denim too which I love from these Burberry Steadman Birch Grey colour wash denims here at £195.00.



Key to this trend is the slightly shorter length, softening by turning up the bottoms to reveal an espadrille, boat shoe, or (my personal favorite) a Lanvin trainer which can be found at Brown's for £390.00.

Acne has some killer boots in white snake skin, and white patent leather is a great twist for night-out looks with white denim.



Love you!

Patrick Swan

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