



Patrick Swan

*Image Consultant, Arbiter of Style*

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## *The Season to Change!*

It seems to be inbuilt: as the leaves crisp, berries ripen and the children return to school, we start to rethink our look and weed out our wardrobes to see what we need, what can be revamped or be given a new twist for the coming autumn/winter season.



Several of my recent shopping ladies confirm this trend. The first was a terrific French lady of 24, who was seeking a new job in marketing. She wanted clothes that stressed her professionalism, but at the same time suited her size and colouring. Petite in height, with brown hair and eyes, she was troubled by having recently put on weight, particularly around her hips. Normally, I would have headed straight for the pencil skirts that often appear to reduce wide hips, but the shape did not flatter my lady's thighs. We soon discovered that an A-line worked far better for her. I opted for solid colours rather than prints, the exception being under a jacket. Once again, Banana Republic proved to be a treasure trove and my lady was soon buying a dress, jacket, T-shirt and even shoes.



I also updated my lady's make-up. She had chosen to use rather a lot of pink, around her eyes, on her cheeks and her mouth. Using just one colour rarely works and so I introduced her to a trio of eye shadows called Delphes from Nars, using an iridescent light shade on her lids and a darker green in the crease and under her upper and lower lash lines.

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Instead of lipstick, I selected a light coloured gloss, and finished with a soft colour to go under her cheekbones.

Et, voila!

My next client was in her mid-50s, which gave me the chance to research Mary Portas new collection on the third floor of House of Fraser in Oxford Street. She is targeting women of 50 plus rather than the girls for her shop within the shop. Its clever marketing and a refreshing new destination in central London for me to introduce clients to, I just hope she embraces all body shapes as I did feel there was a lot of items that I could see only someone as well toned as Mary in. In addition to her own designs, Mary has collaborated with Clarks to provide shoes, Levi and MiH for the jeans, Charnos for tights and Radley for bags to name a few collaborations. She also has carried a few choice pieces from Whistles and Max Mara and Barbour...so this is a boutique in the making. The price points, you will be pleased to know, are not scary.

I was particularly taken with the Mary Portas high-waisted slim trousers. My lady had a bit of a tummy and found the trousers not only chic but also comfortable. I teamed them with a wedge boot in black suede from Clarks, which with a slightly wide fit also suited my client at a very reasonable £109.00.

(She subsequently bought some suede shoes at Hobbs that were more expensive at £139.00!)





To go with her trousers, I discovered a snakeskin print blouse in polyester, which hit her perfectly at the widest part of her hip. The fabric allowed her to turn up the collar and roll up the sleeves, adding character to the outfit.

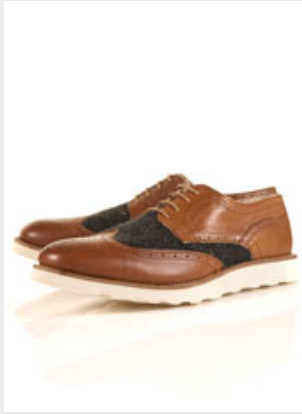
Again, we considered her entire look. She had chosen to let her hair grow a little longer and this both suited her face and made her look younger. Sometimes, unless stylishly cut, very short hair can look mannish and be ageing, especially if you don't wear some makeup! I also suggested that she added blond highlights instead of colouring her hair to her original colour which was starting to grey. This is a way to deal with the problem of that hard line of growth in between colourings.

My client was also seeking a special occasion dress, preferably in red. After considering a number of options, we discovered that a structured, waisted A-line was perfect for her. The Phase 8 dress in Scarlet was £110.00 durably constructed of 62% Viscose 32% Polyester 6% Elastine and had a contrasting back belt that finished the look.



Guys...it seems that the check shirt is here to stay for a while. Taking a look at spring 2012 Mark Thomas Taylor who is part English part Thai will be launching a very interesting take on the traditional check and giving it a twist that will work with a Friday suit or for smart casual...

[www.markthomastaylor.com/lookbook/](http://www.markthomastaylor.com/lookbook/)



Another continuing trend in footwear is the updated brogue; like this one called Lincoln at £75.00 from Topman. I find this style is perfect for the new slim chino which in my mind is a great update to denim for smart casual.

I know I mentioned this in the spring and there are many slim chinos to

be tempted by... I am very keen on these from Burberry and even these from All Saints at £95.00.



Are you revamping? Don't forget that I have special shopping day prices for returning clients – 20% off my normal fees.

*Patrick Swan*