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## A pastel spring in your step . . .

Pastels are everywhere! As I checked out the shops last week, ignoring the sale merchandise, I was thrilled to see refreshing sherbet tones in turquoise, peach, lemon, tangerine, lilac and powder blue, clearly the colours of the season ahead...



As my clients know well, I am committed to showing you what shapes, styles and proportions make the best of your figure and lifestyle. Many of the clothes I am seeing are not new shapes, but those that have worked well in these austere times. So, simply update your wardrobe by adding new fresh colours rather than making radical changes.



I've suggested before having white or soft taupe colours for your spring/summer basics such as denims and skirts. Adding any or several of these new pastel tones will both update you and help you feel fresh as the weather becomes spring-like. Whistles have some great pastel denims like this one for £75.00. If you love colour show off your sense of style by clashing these tones together...what fun!

Peplums on jackets and added to dresses or tops are another emerging strong look. I noticed this in last autumn's collections and see it continuing into spring/summer. Peplums are flattering if you have a hip or upper thigh issue as they soften that part of your body. If you are boy-shaped, they can give you the hourglass shape with a bit of structure at the same time. The key is paying close attention to where the peplum hits you. As I always say, ensure the length finishes at your widest point; otherwise if it is short it will focus on what you don't want to see...wider hips! I think this Peplum style top coming soon from Topshop is the style to look out for especially layering a contrasting long sleeve under to give it style.



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Sheers and see-thru tops continue. What I love is that these are easy to put over a tank, or ribbed tee such as American Vintage, C&C, or even those I have shown numerous clients at our pit stops in Topshop. The key is to cover the arm either with the same tone or contrasting colour to either give you a body or simply show how effortless layering can be.



If the sheer neckline is a slash or boat or a scoop, wear it sexily off one shoulder. Bear in mind this doesn't work for narrow or Victorian styles. Remember too if you need structure at the shoulder avoid raglan style sleeves as they soften wide shoulders. Another trick is to use an arm covering such as the ones Mary Portas has developed for her Mary brand at House of Fraser aptly called Armory. They currently come in black, magenta and a great lace that is not aging and are made of the same material as opaque tights so they give you structure and balance the upper body at the same time. I am hoping that Mary will bring out her armory in softer tones for summer.

Short or long, the skirt debate is on, so find the length that works best for your figure. I am seeing sheer long and short skirts that (unless you are a rebel and 19 years old) should be worn over leggings, opaque tights or skinny denim. What makes these lengths so appealing is they allow you to dress your look up or down.



I love a long sheer skirt teamed with a simple tank and a cropped biker or denim jacket and finished off with an ankle boot or, come summer, a gladiator sandal. One clear favorite is this sheer maxi skirt from Reiss at £129.00. Equally, a shorter length can be a perfect way to create a layer that again softens the hip or thigh. Again team it with a cropped top or peplum jacket. Remember elongating the leg is what can dress your look up. To achieve

this I recommend a platform wedge, stacked ankle boot or, until the weather breaks, a to-the-knee boot with a blocked heel or platform. Another strong trend is the narrow or tube style skirts to anywhere from mid-calf to maxi length. I adore the midi powder blue one I spotted recently at Top Shop which has spring written all over it!





Ankle boots, wedges and flats abound and, if nothing else, this is another way to add trend without indulging in a complete wardrobe. You can so easily add that dash of pastel with your footwear to a pair of white denim, long skirt or easy day dresses. Easy day dresses are more sack-like or a sheath: one or the other will flatter any figure. The brogue for women also is another very pretty way to add a twist to a shirtdress or soft pleated skirt. As I always say...try it you might like it!



Fresh modern styles for men are my biggest challenge this season. I always turn to John Smedley first for colours as their Sea Island cottons are some of my timeless favorites. They have unsurpassed quality that makes them not only investment pieces but classic, making any man look smart and effortlessly modern.



Colour wise, be prepared, pastels are what you should look for. If a pastel coloured trouser makes you nervous, remember white or stone can be the perfect alternative and team it with a pastel coloured polo style from John Smedley.

Slim cut trousers continue into this spring too. I mentioned last spring/summer that they are replacing denim as the choice for smart casual. This is a good thing and I like how you can even turn them up to create a cuff. It's nice touch and helps make them look a bit personal.



I am still pondering on jackets or cardigans. I think with all this pastel around, it will be seersucker or soft needlepoint corduroy or madras, as these always work so well in softer tones. Add that ever-important pocket square, the perfect touch for Henley or a summer wedding.

I am a big fan of the marshmallow soles on shoes, a refreshing touch on footwear that is perfect if I can find my way to the seaside this summer. If you need to update your day suits try this one from Alexander McQueen in this powder blue. Perfect for a Spring wedding or Easter Break.

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Continuing my wish to attract new clients and keep my face on the street and in the press: if you recommend a friend this month, you as one of my many valued clients can receive an additional 10% off your already 20% discount.

Have your friend or relative mention your name and I will reward you with an additional 10% off your next shopping trip with me.

This special offer applies to all returning shopping clients only so please contact me within the next 3 months for your offer to apply.

Very best regards,

*Patrick Swan*