



Above: Elie Tahari manages to create a sleek yet feminine look with his black leather and lace combo for fall. Alexander Wang's all-black outfit is cool but luxurious with a fur-collared jacket.

FALLING FOR FASHION

Fall's new looks offer a treasure trove of hipness and luxury.

by Illysia Neumann-Loreck



Rodarte has invented its own style with wearable yet highly unique pieces that celebs, including Natalie Portman, covet.

It's that time again – fall fashion! I worked backstage at seven shows last February when the fall fashions were shown in NYC, and it was amazing! This fall is just as luxurious, wearable and gorgeous as last fall was. There are five big trends to look for.

SLEEK & COOL

This season, a lot of designers seemed to use Catwoman as an inspiration. They showed

black, shiny, body-conscious silhouettes. While this look could be monotonous due to its all-black color, its shimmer and shine give it an edgy attitude that is far from flat.

Alexander Wang, darling of the fashion world, did a great job of creating complexity within his simple color scheme by pairing different fabric weights and feels together, such as a silk skirt with a heavy wool sweater

FIND YOUR LOOK THIS FALL

- If Sleek & Cool is who you are (or want to be), black is your color. Mix different fabrics together for visual stimulation.
- If you are drawn to Downtown Hip, go for something funky with stripes, plaid or bold colors.
- If you like Sophistication & Glamour, buy a piece with a fur collar or a fur hat.
- If an Asian Vibe is what you want, find garments with rich embroidery and mix them with plain silk pieces. Bright red is always right for this look.
- If Ultra Simple is your mantra, look for clean, straight lines and simple colors.

Check out my article on color in our May issue at www.mymetroyou.com to see which colors will work for you this season.



Left: Plaid has never looked as hip as this fall with L.A.M.B.'s modern take on a suit. Below: Military chic is one of Gwen Stefani's (designer of L.A.M.B.) other capsule looks for fall.



and high, quilted black leather boots – and it worked. He achieved an interesting look visually as well as tactilely.

Elie (pronounced El-lee, not E-Lie) Tahari is my absolute favorite designer because he can create a well-cut garment with exquisite details such as silk lining, lace insets and gathered collars. (I have a

pair of black leather shorts with tiny, square cut outs lined in cream silk by Elie Tahari. I was so in love that I slept with the shorts by my bedside for a month - I couldn't bear to have them out of my sight!). Elie did not disappoint me this season with his mix of black leather, lace and silk. He managed to design a collection that was slick without being masculine, which is hard to do with black leather!

DOWNTOWN HIP

Gwen Stefani always goes by the beat of her own drummer (no pun intended). The show for her brand, L.A.M.B. (it stands for Love Angel Music Baby), had a very energetic and urbane vibe to it. I was lucky enough to work backstage at the show, and between all the paparazzi, models and celebs walking around, it was entertaining but crazy. Gwen designed several small collections that she showed together including military aviator, urban street, plaid invasion, Boy George and polished chic.

Below: Badgley Mischka created a stunning outfit for fall with high-waisted pants and a chic sweater set in a long length. The necklace and hat add to the glamour of the look. Right: A fox collar and richly dyed green leather skirt make for a gorgeous look by Oscar de la Renta, the reigning king of sophistication.



Some brands have invented a new style. Rodarte, designed by the Mulleavy sisters, has made ghostly, ethereal design fashionable. Because of their attention to detail and one-of-a-kind looks, they have garnered a huge celeb following, including Natalie Portman. In fact, they designed the ballet costumes for the movie, "Black Swan." This season, they mixed soft beige, blue and grey in a variety of silhouettes that ranged from Victorian to masculine to Bavarian dirndl skirts. I know it sounds weird, but weird works for them.

SOPHISTICATED & GLAMOROUS

Oscar de la Renta is always at the top of the heap of luxury and sophistication. His fabrics are rich in both color and pattern. This season brought form-fitting skirts, Dr Zhivago fur hats and leather in beautiful fall tones. I love working at this show because Oscar, who seems to float across the floor,



is as elegant as his clothes are. The designs he favors could be matronly in the hands of someone else, but his pattern mixing and modern colors keep him a favorite of young socialites all over the world.

Badgley Mischka is another one of my favorite shows to work



Left: This gorgeous white cashmere coat with black embroidery is a perfect example of how Vivienne Tam seamlessly blends Asian and western elements in her clothes. Below: Her red silk dress is modern yet has traditional Chinese elements.



ASIAN VIBE

Asian designs have always been popular because their patterns, colors and fabrics embody a jet-set elegance. Michigan's own Pamella Roland added an Asian twist to her collection, inspired by her travels. Rich red silk, cut into a traditional Chinese dress called a cheongsam, coats embroidered with flowers and soft, fall paint-stroke patterns representing Asian landscapes marked her gorgeous and elegant collection.

This season I got to work for Vivienne Tam, a Hong Kong designer who I have admired since I lived there 10 years ago. She manages to seamlessly blend together Asian and western elements that result in a very wearable yet unique collection. She showed lots of tweed in shaped jackets and short skirts with tights and knee-high boots. Because she mixed patterns, the look was modern rather than stodgy. In addition, I loved the subtle fish theme she had running through the collection

because the designers (Mark and James) are so down-to-earth and just plain nice. They epitomized a return to old-fashioned Hollywood glamour with veils, updos, rhinestones, fur, feathers and lace. They showed a range of long and knee-length dresses, high-waisted pants, knee-length skirts and luxurious coats with fur details in black, grey, amethyst purple and deep green colors.

Below: This fall's ultra-simple trend can look super cool in a tangerine frock by Isaac Mizrahi or rich with a leather dress in a camel color by Calvin Klein.



with scales (navy knit into a navy sweater, woven black on a black dress, etc), sea green and embroidered silk as the thematic elements.

ULTRA SIMPLE

In the 80s, Calvin Klein was an anathema to the excess that showed up in everything from lifestyles to clothes. He showed the world that dressing well can mean a simple silhouette done in a luxurious fabric, and he never looked back. The designer world has caught up to him this season with a wide range of beautiful, effortless clothes. He led the pack though with leather, cashmere, silk and wool pieces in a range of cream, camel, grey and black.

Isaac Mizrahi, the first upscale designer to develop a line for Target in 2002 (the line was discontinued in 2008), showed a collection with lots of straight lines, small-scale, simple



patterns, knee-length dresses and skirts. A lot of his looks were reminiscent of traditional Japanese dressing: jackets cut like kimonos and belts and collars formed into obi-shaped bows (an obi is the tie used to belt the kimono).

This season has something for everyone. If these gorgeous clothes don't make you long for cooler weather, then nothing will!