

Northern Virginia

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McLean native
and HGTV star
Vern Yip

Style.

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•••Runway

Get the Look, Lose the Price Tag

According to D.C. designers Ean Williams and Kwab Asamoah, 2008's top designers are sitting up and taking note of shoppers (the real kind, too—not the “What’s a budget?” buyers). The looks aren’t only recreatable, they’re past and future season-friendly, meaning you might already have the wear necessities hanging in your wardrobe, and what you do have to purchase will still be trendy in years to come. “There’s a sense of longevity in runway looks these days, that what we’re seeing is going to be around for more than just a season,” said Asamoah, president and CEO of local apparel company Kustom Looks, adding, “the buyer is in a great situation right now. What’s coming out for the spring allows for more flexibility in terms of colors and different accessories.” Williams, director of D.C. Fashion Week and creative director for Corjor International lines, said he traces the for-the-people feel back to an emphasis on endurance. “What’s durable, but still stylish, that a consumer can relate to? That’s what’s working on the runways.” What follows is a close look by Asamoah, Williams, local designers Samira Atash and Luciana Tiktin, and a handful of area professional shoppers at four high-end ensembles. In their piece-by-piece explanations of each outfit, they point out pro-buyer components, offer tips on creating the trend yourself, and make suggestions as to exactly where to find strikingly similar twins in accessories. All so you can go glam for spring. Guiltlessly.

Reality•••

Accessory Necessity

What Helen Moody's 25 years of professional shopping have taught her she can sum up in a single phrase of style wisdom: Stick with what's appropriate. In other words, she espouses the principle that, regardless of the season, less is almost always more. "You have to be willing to let this [hat] be the primary accessory," she says of Lacoste's spring accessory. "If there was a fashion word for it, it would be minimalist."

Still, stresses Moody, knowing when to stop by no means, means you'll go unnoticed. The wide-brimmed headpiece brings a sense of balance to this look in terms of attention. "This is not what you wear when you don't want anybody to see you."



White hat, \$14.50 @ Wet Seal, McLean; 703-847-2306; www.wetseal.com.

Top: According to Atash, we "really haven't seen a [spring 2008 clothing] trend that pops out as 'got to have it,' as we saw last year with skinny jeans and trapeze tops." Female shoppers should instead look to the coming months as their chance to craft something entirely innovative by "mixing the old with the new."

Wrap: When working with a neutral palette, the little things make the biggest impact. A single thrifty purchase can transform an entire ensemble. Brazen bolts of color, Atash insists, contribute to what she considers the season's sense of escapism. "Women's fashion this season is whimsical, feminine and bright."



Lacoste

Pants: For what feels like the first time in a long time, basics aren't only practical—they're posh, Atash notes. And since overdrawn accounts are never en vogue, "not having to spend too much on a new wardrobe ... may be a sigh of relief."