

FALL FASHION OUTLOOK

Paris influence seen in this season's styles

There is a scent of Paris in the fall fashions wafting from New York. It's a style, an attitude, a mood riding the ever-changing wind of women's ready-to-wear.

And yet, at least for this fall, the old French proverb holds true: "The more things change, the more they remain the same."

That point was amply made at a showing of New York designer fashions sponsored by New York Fashion Creators, where more than 260 creations from 137 designers were paraded down the ramp during the whirlwind one-hour show.

Echoes of the great Paris designers were everywhere — Lagerfeld, Saint Laurent, Givenchy, Montana, and others. The Americanized looks borrowed heavily from the big trends of Europe: international ethnic, street sport outerwear, fabric crossovers from evening to daywear, vivid colors mixed with earth tones, the hourglass silhouette of the '60s, scarves as a most important accessory, and favorite details like hoods, feathers, drawstrings and leggings.

In a synopsis of the Paris looks, Hall wrote, "The collections presented nothing earth-shattering or even controversial enough to garner *Time* covers; but there are some very pretty, sexy, desirable looks."

Among the best are the trapeze-cut coats and jackets that also

work as short and swingy dresses. "The jacket is where it starts. You finish the bottom," with skirts, leggings or pants, Hall said during the show.

The hourglass shape of many designs recalls Hollywood sex symbols of the '50s and '60s a la Marilyn Monroe, to whom Yves Saint Laurent did homage in his January couture collection.

Evening gowns are side-wrapped and draped and always provide a flash of back, leg, bosom and sometimes all three.

Layering gives innovative proportions when done as double dresses or waistcoats and vests over jackets and coats.

Vivid shades of fuchsia, lime green, electric blue, violet and hot orange add dash to the forest tones of evergreen, bark, moss, goldenrod and spruce so popular in Paris and New York fashion for fall. Spice colors of sage, cinnamon, paprika, mustard and ginger also brighten the darker, more somber colors and are favorites in cross-cultural designs. Olive hues, predominant in most of the collections, are best when touched with russet, amber and gold.

And, as usual, there is safety and sophistication in black and white, with navy being the new neutral for night. Iridescent brights like tangerine, ruby and gold are reserved for special

evenings.

One of the most popular looks for fall continues to be international ethnic with the focus on the Russian Steppes, Balkan Gypsies, Middle-European peasants, medieval tournaments and Spanish dandies. Bits and pieces from national costumes, as well as Oriental-inspired silhouettes and fabrics and ethnic accessories add interest.

But presenter Hall warned the assembled buyers to beware of overdoing ethnic.

"A modicum of ethnic goes a long, long way unless you're producing a *Maria Montez* movie."

His evaluation was that the best ethnic looks are sexy thigh-high suede boots, heavy Baroque tassels and passementerie trims for evening, ribbed tights under short belted coats, vests for every time of day and rich embroideries.

One of the biggest fall trends is the use of outerwear. There is an onslaught of parkas, complete with drawstrings that Hall characterized as a "deadly enemy." Most mature women, he argues, don't like drawstrings, and young customers past the toddler age don't like them, either. Under the parka, the best looks are the slim, lean unitard.

In fabric news, velvets are making the transition from evening to daywear. The sparkly look that started in the spring continues

with unexpected sequins, beads, lame and Lurexes for day.

Cashmere capes and coats are a luxury of touch and drape; and fake furs are replacing the real things as designers respond to pressure from animal rights activists.

Other fabric trends: tweeds paired with electric brights in crepe de Chine and silk; suede and leather cowboy trims and fringes paired with boots; black lace over nude fabric; jacquard knits for the folkloric binge; gray flannel paired with white or pastel blouses with big sleeves; those same blouses with long, black skirts for turn-of-the-century elegance; and black satins and crepes for the little, black dresses that are always a staple.

The little details make major statements, and some of the strongest hints this year come from hoods on everything from ethnic knits to velvet; knee-high boots paired with textured leggings and tights; feathers at the neckline and cuffs, or draped over suits and coats; scarves that wrap, drape, tie, swag or hang around the neck, waist, hips; leggings in the forms of textured tights, Lurex stockings, stretch ski pants, stirrup pants and opaque tights; big, long, dangling and oversized earrings; and big, bold bracelets, along with gold coins, mirrors and beads for an ethnic accent.



Big Apple beauties — This year, New York designers emphasize comfortable function and flattering form.

Stylish dressing for the good life

Dazzle them with glitter, knock 'em out with color and resort to theatrics if you wish.

Party and resort wear will help you sail through the upcoming cool-weather season in style and all but send those winter wardrobe blues and blahs into hibernation.

Whether you're celebrating in surf or snow, at home or abroad, you will find hundreds of options that go the distance for optimal fashion mileage. In rethinking resort wear, designers have transformed it from a season of throwaways and soon-obsolete fashion souvenirs to one chock-full of practical and seasonless pieces in terms of color, styling and fabrics.

Following is a look at some of the season's best.

RESORT AND HOLIDAY WEAR

evening looks.

Key details and pieces this season include billowing skirts with hemlines turned under harem-style, low-waisted cocoon shapes, tiny skirts of feathers or fringe, jeweled lace pants, elaborately beaded bodices and little black skirts enlivened with trapunto and bright, sparkling sequins that seem to illuminate the night.

This season's snug black velvet jacket will be among the smartest shapes at the party. Awash with jewels, gold braid, coins or other ornamentation, this essential can be slipped on over full-out pants, miniskirts or elegant, floor-sweeping numbers.

miles away, you'll radiate warmth with glowing pinks, tangerines, lime greens and turquoise blues.

The colors themselves are swiped from trendsetting ski-boarders while details — drawstrings, hoods and zip-down fronts — are the sartorial trademarks of cross-country skiers. The result? Loose-fitting, lightweight parkas in a variety of shapes. Overalls and jumpsuits are baggy but never bulky, toasty warm but never encumbering thanks to high-tech insulators. Forgo the hat and pull on a headband and fanny pack, then head for the chair lift.

STYLISH SCHUSSING

Whether you're off to St. Moritz or Sun Valley, chances are you won't be overlooked on the hill if you're sporting the season's neon brights. Even if the lodge fire is

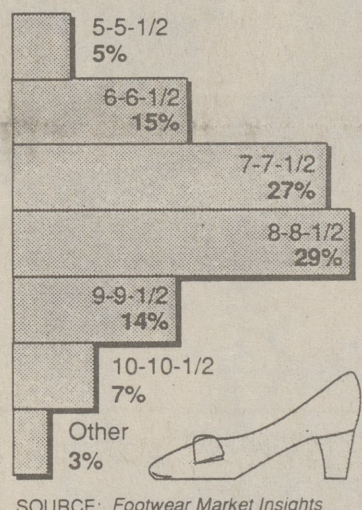
LIFE OF THE PARTY

Tango and waltz the night away on the decks and under the stars or toast the good times with pals at an at-home holiday gathering decked out in the most festive of

FASHIONFACTS

Size eight is most-common women's shoe size

Percentage of women who wear these sizes:



SOURCE: Footwear Market Insights

Copley News Service

The best dressed women

Couture queens who made the International Best Dressed List include *Vogue* editor Anna Wintour, designers Carolynne Roehm and Carolina Herrera, model Ines de

la Fressange and Ivana Trump. New Best Dressed hall of famers include Diana, Princess of Wales, and society matron Brooke Astor. (CNS)

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