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New York Letter



SWISS FABRIC GROUP

PAT PREMO

Exciting multi-metallic
printed cotton cham-
bray from Stoffel & Co.,
St-Gall.

Twin Arts Photo

SWISS FABRIC GROUP

KENNETH TISCHLER

Washable cotton that looks and feels exactly like fine silk shantung from Stoffel & Co., St-Gall.

If France has its Riviera, America too can boast a myriad of sunny beaches, oases of verdure amid the scorching deserts of Arizona, Texas and California, where an ideal climate makes it possible to spend the winter in the open air. In addition, the numerous neighboring islands, Cuba, the West Indies, the Virgin Islands and the Bahamas are like a ring of sunny paradises round the Southern states, easily accessible by plane and the winter cruise boats which are bringing them within the reach of an ever wider public. It is so simple nowadays to take off for a long week-end or a short Christmas holiday in one of these enchanting places which can be reached in less than five or six hours by plane or in a night at the most by boat. Thus more and more Americans from all walks of life are spending their winter holidays under tropical or subtropical skies.

These winter migrations are having an appreciable effect on American fashions. Winter is the season when the prettiest summer dresses make their appearance in American ready-to-wear collections. The light cotton dresses on display in the shops in December and January are designed for a life of leisure in some pleasure resort, for a smarter, less active life than that of gardening and housekeeping that one leads during the summer months at home.

In winter then, American couturiers and ready-to-wear manufacturers show their smartest models for the sunny resorts, many knitted and jersey dresses as well as new swimsuits and beach wear, which will be adopted later, in the summer, on beaches all over the United States.

Cotton dresses are again the top favourite. The many shapes and forms now assumed by cotton fabrics give them a real superiority, to which is added the advantage of being reasonable in price. Their great variety makes it possible for them to be used for suits as well as light coats, for blouses or dresses for day or evening wear, for wear on the beach or in the smart restaurants. The popularity of cotton fabrics, although it has lasted for several seasons now, has by no means resulted in monotony! Linen too plays an important role in fashion, although reserved more for high class products. Silks are as varied as one could wish for resort and cruise wear. Like cotton, silk is so versatile, so varied in appearance, that it can now be worn for both traveling and dancing. Embroidery is also popular for the charming frivolity of present-day fashions. Embroidered allover, fine organ-dies and fancy embroidered and printed fabrics, re-embroidered lace and tulle are just right for tropical evenings. Among the newest embroideries, those of synthetic straw are particularly striking. The dresses



of straw braid from Wohlen — amusing and original in texture with their rows of ribbons sewn close together so as to form the complete, full skirt — are light for traveling and very becoming. This material has all the suppleness of a fabric while remaining remarkably fresh in appearance and to the touch.

Knitwear is favored for all kinds of suits, little traveling dresses, coat dresses, play clothes and especially swimsuits. There is a return to the dark, knitted one-piece bathing suit, classic in style but made more individual by a detail of cut or trimming. The latest trend is towards the less revealing swimsuit.

The development of new or revived fabrics enables top clothing manufacturers to continue to interpret, create and compose to their hearts' content and to give their models a personal and original touch. American fashions today are far from being standardised and the splendid contribution of the fabrics imported from Switzerland helps in a noteworthy manner toward giving them their individual touch of youthful and refined elegance. This

SWISS FABRIC GROUP
WILL STEINMAN

Swiss organdy combined with lace effects from Christian Fischbacher Co., St-Gall.



was particularly striking to all those who attended the tenth fashion display of the Swiss Fabric Group held in New York at the beginning of February.

The purpose of this elegant display, organised each year by over 50 Swiss and American firms, which was once again honoured by the presence of members of the Swiss Legation in Washington and the Swiss Consulate General in New York, is to present the latest trends in fabrics and to show the variety of their possibilities of use.

Swiss textile manufacturers are pioneers in the development of modern cotton fabrics. Thanks to the progress achieved in the field of finishing, the simple materials of some years ago have become luxurious fabrics that remain impeccably fresh and are graced with many new attractive features. There are lacquered effects, prints of fine painted designs enhanced with a touch of gold,

copper or silver which have inspired, among others, the Californian houses of Pat Premo, De Johnson and Cole, for use in models for the beach as well as evening dresses. The reliability of the chemical treatments and the fastness of the dyes make it possible to use these fabrics not only for evening dresses but also for swimsuits that need have no fear of sun or seawater.

Embossed fabrics on a plain or printed shiny ground are made with crêpe effects in the pattern only. The cotton chiffons and voiles are adorned with small woven motifs that were hardly ever seen before except on heavier fabrics. Striped satins, striped and checked cords, dotted Swiss, plumetis and chenilles are made in an infinite number of original combinations, as also the flock prints which will be used to make dresses not only for winter evenings but also for summer balls — proof indeed of the tendency to wear cotton in all seasons.



SWISS FABRIC GROUP

PAT PREMO

Plastic-printed cotton from
Stoffel & Co., St. Gall.

Twin Arts Photo

In the heavier suitings, completely new poplins, tweeds and panama alpacas of cotton are admirably suited for those semi-light two-piece outfits that American women love to wear all the year round. The semi-sheer blouse fabrics are particularly suitable for the smart, travelling or more sporty blouse, whereas lighter, more vaporous fabrics are used to make dressy blouses for the silk suits to be worn at cocktail parties and for dining out. Cotton shantungs remain classics of rare distinction. Tina Leser has chosen a printed fabric in an exclusive design for her «yac-yac» models. She also advocates giant checks for swimsuits, and stripes and tartans woven in satin for the summer. Laddie Northridge uses an original design for an amusing, befeathered beret.

Cotton lingerie in silky batiste is particularly popular. Voiles are full of fancy, in checked bouclé, decorated with satin stripes or checks, trimmed with clip-dots, chenille

and colored polka dots. A particularly smart black and white voile has been chosen by McMullen for town dresses in a shirtwaist style. Jerry Greenwald has used an original fabric combining a ground of highly mercerised voile with a thicker texture, in pastel shades. Finally organdy, the American woman's favorite fabric, in its thousand and one new aspects, is used for countless blouses, bridal gowns, dresses for teen-agers, for graduation ceremonies, dancing or summer afternoons.

Among the newcomers are the cotton georgettes, the cords with close stripes, the checked cords, the shiny satin cottons with shaded effects like the one Elizabeth Arden chose for one of her models.

Once again then, as we have already pointed out, Swiss cotton fabrics are holding a prominent position in American fashions.

Th. de CHAMBRIER.



CHRISTIAN DIOR, NEW YORK
Plain Super Miyako.

CHRISTIAN DIOR, NEW YORK
Scotch Pirate silk.

All fabrics are from
L. Abraham & Cie,
Soieries S. A., Zurich



ELIZABETH ARDEN,
NEW YORK
Printed Atout.