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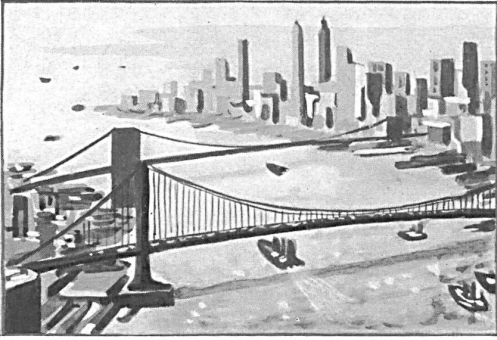
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ELEGANCE

from New York to Mexico

While New York is the fashion centre of North America, Mexico City is the capital of elegance for the whole of Central America. Although very different from each other, these two big cities keep in close contact. Large numbers of North Americans are continually pouring

into Mexico lured by its climate of perpetual springtime. When New York is in the grip of winter frosts and snow, in Mexico women are wearing light cotton dresses or smart little tailormades of tropical fabrics. When the dog days leave the people of Washington, Philadelphia,



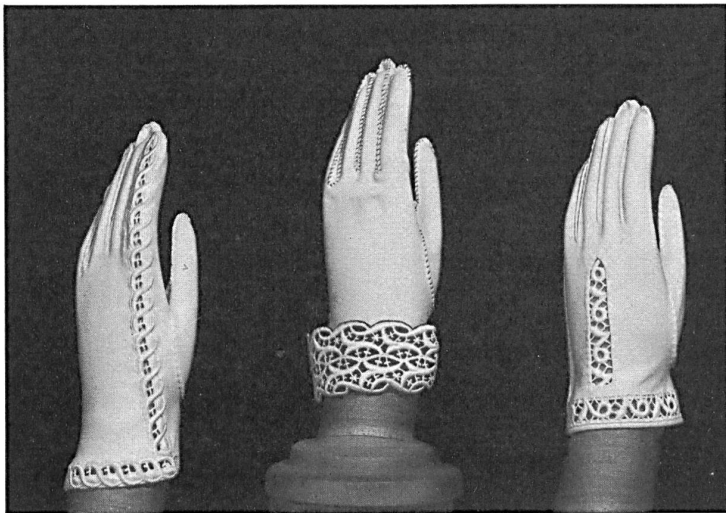
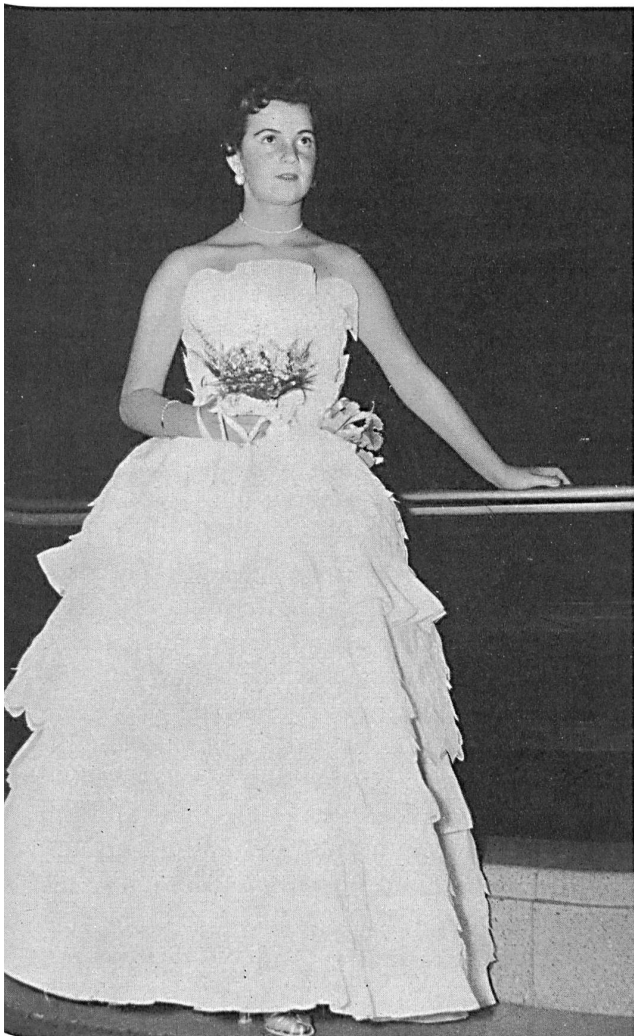
**Barbara Costumes Inc.,
New York**

Embroidered Duchesse satin by
*L. Abraham & Co., Silks Ltd.,
Zurich*

Houston and Dallas limp and listless in the sweltering heat, Mexico once again beckons with the sunny coolness of its high sub-tropical plateaux. In addition to its natural advantages, Mexico can also offer a favorable rate of exchange for the dollar. All this has resulted in growing prosperity for Mexican tourism and the local industries dependent upon it, those of fashion and clothing in particular.

In Mexico, the tourist can buy not only souvenirs but also dresses, finely worked blouses, hand-made lingerie and suits made to measure. There are countless 'boutiques' and little shops specialising in smart clothes for sport, for town, beach and evening wear as well as for cocktail parties. The society life of the foreign colony overlaps that of the Mexican smart set and these two groups each strive to out-shine the other in elegance. Mexican women, like the French and Spanish, dress with taste and distinction, with a preference for the little black dress for town and evening wear. The Mexican woman attaches great importance to beautiful work done by hand, to exclusive models and high quality fabrics, particularly those imported from France, Switzerland,

Miss Eva Kaiser wears a Swiss organdie ball gown by de Mundis, Mexico



F. Zeller, Mexico

Hand-made gloves. Swiss embroidery by A. Naef & Co., Flawil

Great Britain or Italy. Even with the present restrictions that make imported articles so much more expensive, the well-to-do Mexican woman likes to wear dresses made specially for her from imported fabrics.

Mexico has made considerable efforts to increase her textile production, and the home industries not only answer the needs of the population but also export large quantities of their products to the neighbouring states of Central America. But Mexican fabrics, which are accessible to all, do not always meet the requirements of all classes of society.

It is not surprising therefore that the finest textiles of St. Gall and Zurich find their way to Mexico, where they are sold in the best shops and by the representatives of the big firms of St. Gall. It is possible to see whole collections of the loveliest embroideries of St. Gall and other articles such as the fancy straw braids of Wohlen, ribbons, embroidered braids, etc. During the last three generations, all these high quality Swiss articles have won a well-deserved name for themselves in Mexico. At present the high customs duties limit their consumption, but let us hope that they will soon be made available again in the medium price ranges as in the United States.

Among the well-established agents representing Swiss textiles, let us mention some of those that have done so much for the prestige of the embroideries and fine fabrics of St. Gall, such as Madame P. Kaiser, de Mundis and Mr. F. Zeller who makes the embroideries he imports into fashion accessories such as blouses, high novelty gloves, christening robes, communion dresses and wedding gowns. The great variety of de Mundis fabrics is admirably suited to the whole range of haute couture and fine ready-to-wear models for all occasions. Mr. Fr. Straus also imports these articles and shows great skill in his selection of the novelties that are likely



F. Zeller, Mexico

Mexican blouses
 Swiss embroidery by
A. Naef & Co., Flawil

to please the Mexican customer. One has only to visit the big stores and shops in Mexico City to see for oneself the fine reputation enjoyed by Swiss embroideries and fine cottons and how well they are suited to the climate of the country and the taste of its inhabitants. Once some of the import restrictions have been lifted, these specialities will certainly meet once more with increased popularity, especially as they do not offer any competition to the local products.

American high-class ready-to-wear clothing too is well represented in Mexico where it is to be bought at haute couture prices in the Parisian type 'boutiques'. This brings us back to New York where we saw a very interesting collection of dresses by Claire Schaffel, all admirably suited for wear the whole year round not only in Mexico but also in Florida, California or on cruises to the Bahamas. Claire Schaffel, who was born in Switzerland, handles the light fabrics and embroideries of St. Gall with a skill and an intuition that set off to perfection the exquisite daintiness of these flattering materials.

Her models are equally suitable for town and resort wear; they are easily adapted and travel well. With a practical sense all her own, Claire Schaffel creates outfits for rapid day into evening conversions. This idea is perfect for women who travel a great deal — and what American woman does not travel extensively today?

One of Claire Schaffel's convertibles consists, for example, of a severe sheath in dark silk with a high-collared bolero which may suddenly blossom forth with large lapels in white encrusted embroidery. She uses flowered fabrics which she loves for their youthful charm — either brocaded flowers in relief, colored embroideries or flock prints such as dainty mimosa on organdy.

Her love of beautiful fabrics has led Claire Schaffel to try out some original refinements of her own. She will have a single length of embroidered organdy made according to her own specifications in order to make the big ball gown of her collection. She brightens up the surface of a matelassé organdy with applications of pearls or sequins. She handles the silks of Zurich and crystal jerseys with the same mastery as organdies and cotton satins.

Florida, like Mexico, enjoys a climate that is ideal all the year round for light cotton fabrics and soft silks. Margaret Newman has a very special flair all her own for giving her cotton dresses that high fashion look — as, for example, her dresses in black cotton satin with their slenderising cut, one with a big shawl collar in heavy white embroidery held by a rose in red organdy, or her dresses in embroidery over a cotton satin ground of the same colour.

T. de Chambrier