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THE SPRING-SUMMER COLLECTIONS 80



Lanvin

PROPORTIONS

Even though the latest fashion trends revealed in the Haute Couture collections have nothing revolutionary about them, there is nevertheless a very marked change — a change in the proportions. Hems have become moveable, swirling around knee level, sometimes above, sometimes just below, at other times high in front and low at the back. The same mobility applies to waistlines, which wander from Empire level down to the hips. The consequence — a striking change in a woman's proportions — takes a little getting used to. On the whole, Couture has chosen the path back to elegance, quality and femininity, seen above all in the two leading collections of Yves Saint Laurent and Hubert de Givenchy.

Suits as popular as ever

Shoulders are still slightly marked, but — except at Cardin's — they are mainly softer and more rounded. Jackets are sometimes short, sometimes double-breasted or even edge to edge. Long jackets tend to follow the body shape loosely, without moulding it at all. Bolero and spencer styles are rare. Blazers — with long pointed lapels or shawl collars — and simple cardigans are as fashionable as ever, the former often decorated with a half-belt. Skirts are mostly narrow, but vary between wrap-around, sun-pleated, box-pleated and bell shaped. Under the jacket are worn strapless tops, T-shirts and very feminine blouses with bows at the neck or little stand-up collars in silk fabrics, both plain and figured or with prints in small repeats. Stripes are the height of fashion. Pants are reserved mainly for the leisurewear sector, where there are many shorts, bermudas or cor-sair pants.

Coats remain slim

Often in shirt-blouse styles, they also come in the form of swagger-coats or narrow chesterfields. Their length ranges from just below the knee to $\frac{3}{4}$ length. However there are far more jackets than coats to accompany this season's dresses.

Asymmetric effects, flounces and ruching

These are the outstanding features of the new swirling spring and summer dresses that can be worn from morning till evening. Asymmetry prevails not only in the diagonal cuts but in the arrangement of flounces and ruching. The later in the day it is, the more fluttering panels and ribbons there are, the more flirtatious the swirling flounces twining liana-like round the body. Bustles are back, sometimes in the form of gigantic bows, while a new "femme fleur" blossoms delicately enveloped in soft fabric petals. Bare shoulders, deep décolletés and discreet glimpses of bare flesh add a sensual look to many models. There are also slinky sheaths, tunic outfits and once again many more two-piece outfits for day and cocktail wear.

Long, narrow tops are just as popular as exaggeratedly loose Charleston waists; shirtwaisters are more feminine than ever; white trimmings and dainty buttonhole flowers are legion, while elbow-length sleeves are back in fashion again. Dior's sailor-look adds a dash of fun.

Prominence of Swiss novelties

Once again the contribution made by the Swiss textile industry to the new fashions is considerable. The Couture showings again featured over 400 models created with Swiss fabrics and embroideries. Novelties like chintzed shantung — which can be

considered as an offshoot of taffeta — with large floral prints in bright and luminous colour combinations or a fine guipure which shines and shimmers in softly matching metallic colours achieved by means of a new process, aroused great interest. Stiffer fabrics like gazar, grosgrain and Moroccan crêpe are used, without ousting the lovely supple crêpe de Chines, the soft silk mousselines, chiffons and georgettes, whose enchanting prints create a neo-Romantic look and an aura of femininity. Just as original as the fabrics are the embroideries whose beauty helps to emphasize the luxuriousness of the couture models and the great value of knowhow and quality. The great creativity of Swiss specialities serves talented fashion designers — not only in Paris but all over the world — as inspiration for some of their finest models, as so strikingly shown in the present number.

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TAKE ON ANOTHER LOOK