

# Style

TRENDS

## Thrills without frills

An unadorned sheath spiced with ruffles by Bottega Veneta.  
 NEW YORK TIMES PHOTOS



Consumers appreciate sophisticated styles, don't demand bling.

By Ruth La Ferla  
 New York Times

NEW YORK — It's a cherished maxim in the retail trade. "Buyers tell me all the time that their customers like things with stuff on it," said Sharon Graubard, a fashion trend forecaster in New York. How else to explain collections last year that groaned with fancy trims: faux gems, fringe and enough gilt to trick out a mini-Versailles?

You could all but hear those merchants goading designers to pile on the frills.

But Graubard, for one, isn't buying it. "Consumers are getting sophisticated enough to understand pure design," she said. "They don't need junk on their clothes to feel like they're getting bang for their buck."

Plenty of industry insiders say designers are purge their collections of showy trims and cacophonous prints in favor of a pared-down, genteelly nuanced look.

"For fall, we're going to see a sobering up, less hoopla, less bling," said Stephanie Solomon, the fashion director of Bloomingdale's. Several seasons of frivolity, she said, are about to give way to restraint and, among consumers young or not so young, a heightened attention to overlooked features like shape, proportion and fit.

"The public's eye changes," said Colleen Sherin, the senior fashion director of Saks Fifth Avenue, pointing out that seasoned shoppers have grown increasingly appreciative of tailoring, construction and couture dressmaker touches. Some of those shoppers are

If rigorously streamlined looks strained last season to compete with lavish embellishments, today the scales are tipping in favor of an understated look brought to life by well-considered details like asymmetric necklines, reverse lapels and exaggerated collars that signal, as Sherin said, "that we are moving into a new cycle."

"Most influential designers today are known for simplicity," said Jeffrey Kalinsky, the executive vice president for designer merchandising at Nordstrom, citing Phoebe Philo of Celine and Raf Simons, whose seeming straightforwardness is actually the product of deft cutting and brash experiments with volume and proportion, and a near-compulsive attention to detail.

Prefall collections shown last month hinted that autumn would usher in a more serene, though hardly austere, approach to dress. Alexander Wang unveiled a selection of Donegal tweeds, their plainness discreetly relieved by leather shawl collars.

Narciso Rodriguez used col-



Narciso Rodriguez made color his focus by using shades of red.



A deftly tailored trouser suit by Dior offers a modern look.

or as embellishment, working subtle gradations of red in a leather tunic and trousers. At Bottega Veneta, fabrics were double-faced, lending jackets and dresses new firmness and structure. An otherwise unadorned sheath was sauced up at the hip with diminutive ruffles, a modified take on the peplum.

In a world of increasing complexity, focusing on an isolated detail can be reassuring. "We've come to a point when even the tools made available to us can make us feel like simpletons," Murray Moss, founder of design art company Moss, said in reference to the tablets, cellphones and outside flat-screen TVs that require hefty manuals to explain their operation.

Simplified pieces "can make us feel smart," Moss said. "Isn't that one reason people buy clothes?"

### Eyecatchers

By Nedra Rhone  
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#### MAKEUP INSPIRED BY NATURE



Aveda's Art of Nature limited-edition makeup collection for spring/summer is inspired by the pastels and vibrant colors of the seasons. Two Nourish-Mint smoothing lip colors, one Nourish-Mint rehydrating lip glaze, two Nourish-Mint lip liners, one Petal Essence face accent, two Petal Essence eye definers and six Petal Essence single eye colors complete the collection formulated with natural plant ingredients that are gentle to skin and the planet. Priced from \$14 to \$25, the collection is available now at metro area Aveda stores.

#### PLUGGZ THAT ENERGIZE FEET

I love shoes, but on any given day, I'm happiest walking around barefoot. Apparently that's because we absorb the earth's energy in the form of electrons through a process called grounding or earthing. Now there is a shoe that keeps you connected to the earth while your feet stay covered. The black plugs in Pluggz shoes sit under the weight bearing part of your feet to create electrical contact between you and the earth. The payoff? You feel more balanced, calmer and have fewer aches and pains. I tried these on after an eight-hour day and my feet felt energized. The best part is, they look cool. Styles include flip-flops for men and women (\$39) and Mary Janes and ballet flats for women in leather and suede with patent or leather toe caps (\$129). The shoes are available online at [www.pluggz.com](http://www.pluggz.com).

#### BATTLE AGING WITH ONE BOTTLE

Premier Cru the Cream by Caudalie (\$155) — an exclusive blend of all the Caudalie patents — treats all the signs of aging in a single step. Resveratrol-Oleyl, Viniferine and Polyphenols combine to battle wrinkles and free radicals, while delivering firmness and radiance to skin. Premier Cru The Eye Cream (\$98) provides the same benefits to the delicate eye area. The products are available now at Sephora stores, Woo Skincare and Cosmetics and Perrine's Wine Shop.



WEDDINGS

## How to have your dream event without overspending

Simplify details, trim guest list and downsize drinks.

By Nedra Rhone  
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If you're a soon-to-be bride, you've probably noticed that it's wedding expo season.

But before you grab your BFF, MOM and HTB (husband-to-be) and head to one of the many wedding extravaganzas over the next few weeks, heed these money- (and sanity-) saving tips from celebrity wedding planner David Tutera, who recently made a personal appearance in Atlanta.

Tutera, host of We TV's "My Fair Wedding" and his upcoming "Dream Bigger Tour," travels the country talking to brides. Their No. 1 question:

How do I have the wedding of my dreams without breaking the bank?

"It is the question consistently asked," Tutera says by phone.

While industry figures for the cost of weddings have increased overall, the average price of individual weddings is down from \$32,000 to \$22,000, he says.

And though many people see the grandiose weddings Tutera plans on his television show, what they don't see are the ones he plans for folks on a budget.

Atlanta brides (and Southern brides in general), he says, tend to be much more traditional. They typically have longer lead times to plan their weddings — at least 12 months — and more time to plan may mean more time to save.

Tutera has a few suggestions for using your planning time wisely:

**Simplify.** "Simplifying the details doesn't mean you're doing a less than over-the-top wedding," Tutera says. It means getting the details just right and not overspending on things that are not as important to you.

**Less (money) can be more.** "I just did a wedding a couple of months ago that was \$2.5 million," Tutera says. "It was an amazing wedding. Have I done weddings that are a teeny percentage of that that were better? Absolutely." It is not about the money, he says, it is about the energy of the event.

**Trim the guests.** "If you have 150 guests, really look at the list and see if you can scale it down to 100," he says. His rule of thumb? "When you

look at the photos in 10 years, will you know who these people are?"

**Downsize the drinks.** Choose a specialty drink and serve wine and prosecco instead of Champagne, he says. But never have a cash bar. "I never have cash on me, so I would be (very upset)," Tutera says.

**Cut the cake.** Do you need a \$2,000 cake? Really? Maybe you and your HTB met over ice cream — have an ice cream bar and a small cake instead, Tutera says. Which brings us to ...

**Be a trendsetter.** The biggest trend going forward is being you and not copying someone else, Tutera says. "(Couples) get lost in all the craziness. They are so blurry-eyed by too much information, (the wedding) loses the personali-

ty of who they are. If you can remind yourself that there are two of you and you need to tell the story of who you are as a couple, you set the trends."

**Get the right dress.** Tutera launched a line of bridal gowns to address one of the biggest problems in the industry: "Girls don't have a good place for solutions. They go to the places that have the worst product," he says. "Brides now more than ever are doing this without their moms. They don't know fashion; they don't know their body types."

**Take advantage of bridal shows.** The shows are a great place to understand industry pricing and learn what you don't want, Tutera says. They can be overwhelming, but if you weed through and find a vendor you fall in love with, it is well worth the time.