

# stylish traveler

## Resort Chic Casual, Chic, Cool... Tips on Achieving a Year- Round Effortless Holiday Style

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In the tropics, every season is beach season (lucky us!). But should one require a year-round effortless style, turn to the fashion runway for the latest trends for fun in the sun, from sailing the high seas to looking cool by the pool. Here's the rundown on 2012's hottest trends and how to wear them.

### Go Bright, Go Bold

On the whole, bright and bold is the message on the Spring/Summer 2012 runways, especially when it comes to swimwear. Color blocking, the technique where blocks of various fabrics are sewn together to create clothing with a few different solid colors, appears frequently in various designer collections, providing sunny splashes of color to the tropical landscape.

Modern shapes, vivid prints, sporty motifs, and nautical stripes are also in. Florals have also made a big splash, creating a look that is the essence of tropical glamour, and subtle Asian prints offer a rich and luxurious take on the eastern theme.

La Perla, the world's leading creator of luxurious and fashionable lingerie, nightwear, and swimwear, epitomizes these trends. Inspired by the energetic colors and geometric symmetry of artists such as Andy Warhol and Piet Mondrian respectively, La Perla's Spring/Summer 2012 swimwear collection features large psychedelic flowers and primary squares with black lines. The collection is available at La Perla boutiques in Bangkok's The Emporium Mall and Gaysorn Plaza.

Also, prints are going crazy this season, with basic bikinis vamped up by a mix of prints on the same piece. In addition to florals, tribal, animal, and geometric prints have made an appearance on the runway. From python scales and leopard spots to stripes and kaleidoscopic zigzags, designers have thoughtfully chosen patterns to mix and match, selecting complementary color palettes or themes to create a coherent design.

### All that Glitters

Fabrics for swimwear are becoming more versatile; and this is apparent in designers' penchant for metallic fabric, including shimmering panels, and metal hardware. Metallic swimwear in a shockingly bright color makes a bold statement, adding to the wow factor. A more subtle silver or gold shimmer will complement all skin tones, from a sun-kissed glow to beautiful bronzed skin.

Shiny material such as sateen is also often used, as both the main swimsuit material and trim. Sequins are also everywhere, appearing in all colors and complemented with beading, crystals, and embroidery. Sparkling studs afford a bit of edgy glamour - a sure hit at the beach or by the pool this year.

### For all Shapes and Sizes

One-piece swimsuits have been steadily making their way back onto the swimwear scene for the last few years. There are many figure flattering benefits of wearing a one-piece, and they are thus suitable for all body types. For example, the one-piece can create the illusion of a longer torso and better define the waistline to give the appearance of a flatter, firmer stomach.

They are also highly versatile: new sculptural styles with cut out details or statement straps appeal to the fashion conscious wearer, while the modesty of more traditional (and covered) suits appeal to the shyer set. Women also have their choices of halters, low backs, one-shoulder, and strapless versions.

La Perla also features swimwear designed in conjunction with **Jean Paul Gaultier**; such one-pieces reflect the designer's penchant for daring corsets and lace-ups.

While the timeless barely-there string bikinis remain a staple, many designers have paid tribute to and modernized the 1950's style swimsuit, resulting in classic and high waisted bikini styles. These functional pieces are made for lounging around the pool, evoking an era of unencumbered living with a hint of retro glamour. The high cut of this style makes legs appear longer and waists smaller. It can be tricky to pull off for those who are curvier around the hips and bottom, however, as the high waist can emphasize a fuller figure.

Such high-waisted bottoms are often accompanied by a more structured top with bra cups and underwire, creating an ultra-feminine silhouette. They also pair nicely with a bandeau bustier top.

Keep in mind that bandeau bikinis generally suit women with small breasts, as support is not their strong suit. While this is a hot



Last May, Hansar Samui launched its own collection of beach wear (shown on these pages), which consisted of 10 different styles of beach dresses and caftans to fit all sizes. Designed by the general manager, Indra Budiman, they can be worn over bathing suits around the pool or throughout the resort. The beach dresses are made of floaty silk crepes and cottons in a variety of colors and ranges from Bt1,400 to Bt2,000. Photos by Hansar Samui.

trend, they do not work for everyone, and may have disastrous consequences. Another feature that requires some caution includes ruffles. They have been everywhere on the runway, adding a touch of sweetness and innocence. But for those who want to look slimmer, ruffles are to be avoided at all cost, as they draw attention to the hip area.

The rule of thumb for great swimsuit style is that body shape should always be taken into consideration and there will be a style that better suits certain body types than others. Also, the swimwear color, pattern, and form should also be reminiscent of the wearer's personality!

### Covering Up

Cover up beside the pool or beach with a choice of funky kaftans, maxi dresses, printed sundresses, crochet dresses, light cotton shifts, cotton pants or shorts. These items help protect one's skin from the harsh rays of the afternoon sun, as well as keep the wearer looking casual and chic.

One favorite is the billowy La Perla cover-up made of satin with contrast trim. With a boat neckline and wide three-quarter sleeves slit from the shoulders, this light garment hits above knee, adding instant luxe to any resort ensemble.

Outside of swimwear and cover-ups, the resort chic looks encompass light neutrals. Lightweight and breathable fabrics, such as sheer and natural cotton and linen, are ideal. These can be paired with bright, sunny colors. Khaki, shades of white and ivory with sea foam, orange, fuchsia, and azure look great by the shimmering sea.

The glam factor is augmented by accessories such as large cuffs, a cocktail ring, or more demure gold jewelry. Worn with simple cotton clothing, accessories can instantly create a more polished, sophisticated look. An easy wedge, flat sandal, or leather flip-flops completes the effortless look. ■

