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Looking Good in Lamorinda Holiday Fashion Sparkles!

By Moya Stone



The holidays are officially here and this is a good time to spice it up and have some fun with our fashion, not just for parties but also for work, luncheons, shopping, anytime ... heck, all the time.

The big news for holiday 2012 is Bejeweled. Simple sheath dresses adorned at the neck with sequins, cut beads, or chunky brooch-like pieces are festive and an easy no-fuss way to sparkle on a dark winter's night.

Congratulations to Glamorous Boutique in Lafayette which celebrated one year in November and was recently highlighted on Good Day Sacramento. Earlier this season I spotted a nice selection of Bejeweled dresses at Glamorous Boutique. Owner Eliza Jamkochian is right on trend offering an array of colors including always appropriate black and racy red.

But hey, sparkle isn't just for evening. Add a bit of bling to a daytime ensemble with a statement necklace or brooch. I recommend vintage jewelry for this look and Collector's Choice Antiques in Lafayette has the best selection of rhinestone jewelry from the 1950s and 1960s. If sparkle isn't you, consider adding color with Bakelite

jewelry. Bakelite is a type of plastic made in the '20s through the '40s and it comes in deep autumnal colors such as green, red, and orange. Often Bakelite bangles are carved and the brooches come in fanciful shapes like cherries and various animals. Dealers Linda Adams and Kathy Himmelman have a wide selection of Bakelite jewelry on display at Collector's Choice. Pop in, take a look and ask questions. The Bakelite Babes, as they are called, love to chat about their favorite plastic.

Go vintage:

Speaking of Collectors Choice Antiques, owners Karl and Kathy Himmelman have been slowly adding vintage fashions to their stock with plans to devote the entire upstairs to clothing. Right now they have an excellent selection of 1980s sequin dresses, perfect for a holiday gathering and New Year's Eve. By the way, stay tuned for news on their next fabulous fashion show coming up in February.

I encourage vintage in fashion because adding a vintage piece, from hat to handbag, provides style and individuality to any outfit. Cuesta Company Antiques in Lafayette is my favorite local shop to find impeccable vintage accessories. Owners Sarah and Lawrence Siegel stock their tiny store with hand-selected vintage luggage, handbags, and wallets as well as California artwork and small decorative items. The luggage and handbags date from the 1930s to the 1960s and are in excellent condition. No need to feel badly about the exotic skins like shark or crocodile, remember they're vintage. Cuesta is a local treasure chest of elegant accessories guaranteed to make one-of-a-kind gifts for that special someone.

Shop local:

I recently stopped by Lafayette's newest menswear shop, Venture Men's Goods. Owner Tom Stenzel has done such a nice job with the ambiance of the store which is modern and simple, yet brimming with well-presented merchandise. Stenzel is aiming to bring style to our local casual look by offering dark wash jeans by Taylor Stitch, classic wool pullover sweaters and work shirts, and jackets by Patagonia, everything suitable for all ages. The shop also stocks messenger bags, knit caps, and gift items such as wood pens handcrafted by Walnut Creek resident Tim Elliott. Ladies don't despair, Venture has a small selection of casual wear for women including those ever-popular puffer jackets and vests.

Give the gift of reading:

An array of fashion books have been published this year which means I've been doing a lot of reading. I was most impressed with *Fashion: The Definitive History of Style & Costume* (DK Publishing, 2012). Covering 3,000 years of fashion history, this rather thick book is loaded with photos and illustrations. Well researched and presented by editor and historian Susan Brown, this is a must-have for any fashion book collection.

Another standout is *The Truth About Style* by Stacy London (Viking Adult, 2012), co-host of the popular television show *What Not to Wear*. Part memoir, part fashion how-to, this book profiles nine women of various ages. Stacy restyles these lovely ladies and weaves into their stories her own tales of life as a stylist and a middle-aged single woman. With plenty of photos, the book offers answers to many fashion challenges such as weight, age-appropriateness, figure proportion, lifestyle, and more. A fun, informative read.

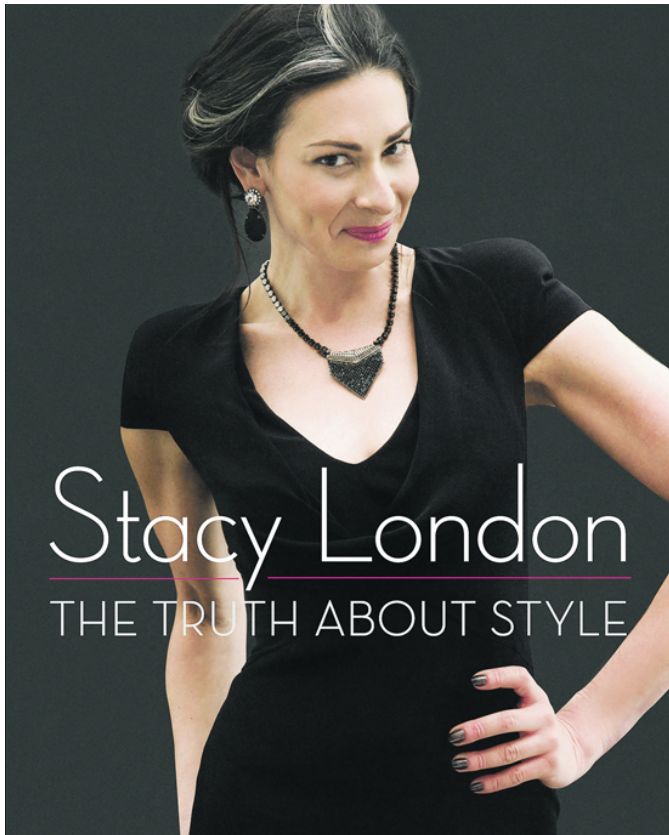
It's always fashionable to support our local shops and Orinda Books is happy to take special orders with delivery usually in just a few days.

Go forth and enjoy the holidays in style.

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Photo Venture



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