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Looking Good in Lamorinda

By Moya Stone



The Cassie cross-body bag. Photos Moya Stone

anyone who is into collecting Chanel or LV to contact her. Gemlust is open by appointment only. Gemlust.com, (925) 385-7121.

Following Westwood's advice, when we do purchase something new, go for lasting quality, such as the Cass Clutch handbag by Lafayette designer Debra Szidon. I checked in with Szidon, who started her handbag line in 2016, and she tells me that lately she has been considering different shapes and sizes. New this season is The Cassie, a cross body bag that can be worn five different ways. Szidon says she added this style because customers requested an option to the original, which was inspired by a vintage 1970s bag. Made in California in small quantities, a Cass Clutch handbag is an investment piece that is made sturdy and it improves with age. "It's a bag built to last that works for any season," says Szidon, who is thinking sustainable by avoiding waste and using leftover materials to make smaller items like wallets. <https://thecassclutch.com>.

Cashmere is another investment piece and Wayside Inn Thrift Store in Lafayette is having their popular annual cashmere sale on Oct. 8. The shop puts aside the best in their cashmere selection for this special one-day event. While there, look for fall 2019 fashion trends, many of which harken

The buzzword in fashion this season is "sustainable," as consumers become aware of the negative impact clothing manufacturing has on the environment, including air and water pollution, overproduction and waste. According to Vogue magazine close to three-fifths of all clothing ends up in a landfill or is incinerated. Designers such as Stella McCartney and Eileen Fisher are shifting their business practices to become more sustainable and cause less harm to the environment.

Back in 2013 British designer Vivienne Westwood was ahead of the curve when she said, "Buy less. Choose well. Make it last. Quality not quantity."

One approach to sustainable fashion is to buy secondhand, which is currently a hot shopping trend. Lucky for us Lamorinda has quite a few thrift and consignment stores including the high-end resale shop, Gemlust in downtown Lafayette. Seven years ago proprietor Renee Kubryk opened up the bricks and mortar where she specializes in selling pre-owned upscale designer handbags, in particular the ever-popular Chanel and Louis Vuitton. Additionally she offers antique reproduction engagement rings that she has designed herself. Kubryk says business is strong in consignment. She sells handbags at 20-30% below retail and she accepts only mint condition bags or for a special bag she'll do restoration. Kubryk is very knowledgeable and "loves to talk handbags." She's thinking about starting a meet-up and invites

back to past eras: brown and various shades of green are the "in" colors, capes, suits, animal prints (are they ever not in?), long coats, and vintage `70s long shimmery gowns are all the rage for evening wear. Wayside Inn Thrift Store, 3521 Golden Gate Way, Lafayette.

After having heard of the untimely death of fashion designer Isabel Toledo I reread her memoir, "Roots of Style: Weaving Together Life, Love, and Fashion" (Celebra, 2012). Known for designing Michelle Obama's 2009 inaugural day outfit, Toledo died in August at age 59 from breast cancer. I enjoyed her story of starting out in Cuba and moving to America with her family when she was young enough to see it as a big adventure. I also appreciate her positive attitude and of course her amazing talent, which began with desire to see how machines work and soon shifted to how clothing is constructed. While in high school in New Jersey she met her future husband Ruben Toledo, an artist and now a renowned fashion illustrator. The book is full of his charming illustrations. The two moved to Manhattan after graduating from high school and as a couple they forged ahead in their careers in fashion and art. Roots of Style is a great read for more than just Toledo's personal story, it's also a fascinating piece of fashion history, specifically 1980s Manhattan when the city was edgy and raw and full of opportunity for young novices.

Embrace the change of season and go forth in style.

Moya Stone is a fashion writer and blogger at www.overdressedforlife.com.



Photos Moya Stone

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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