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Looking Good in Lamorinda

By Moya Stone



"D.V." by Diana Vreeland Photos provided

Gracing the cover of Vogue magazine this month are the four super models of the 1990s - Linda, Cindy, Naomi, and Christy - wearing the monochromatic trend for fall 2023. While "Barbie Pink" was the unofficial color of summer, the trend this season is Oppenheimer head-to-toe neutrals - beige, grey, and black. I say, why not add a touch of color to the neutrals with accessories? Such as a red scarf, a magenta handbag, or purple shoes. All black may be chic, but all black plus a pink belt is better than chic!

Other trends for the season include the loafer shoe, pleated skirts, narrow scarves, oversized everything including shirts, sweaters, and blazers. (Consider adding a wide belt to the blazer.)

We might think of fall as the season of cooler weather, but often the temps are still warm if not hot. So how does one shift into fall attire and stay cool? I do it with cotton fabrics and color. Lightweight cotton dresses, skirts and tops in autumnal shades such as green, brown, burgundy, and dark blue are perfect for fall, but are comfortable in the heat.

Speaking of cotton, the Cotton Patch in Lafayette was recently featured in Quiltfolk, a quarterly magazine about all things related to quilting. The latest issue highlights quilt artists and businesses from all around the Bay Area. The Cotton Patch, which opened in Lafayette in 1978, is family run and the go-to shop is not just for local quilt artists, but also for seamstresses looking for novelty cotton prints, which make for unique sartorial creations.

It was a loss to the community when SewNow Fashion Studio in Lafayette closed, but luckily there's a new sewing studio in Walnut Creek. Studio Dawnatella located at 546 Ygnacio Valley Road just opened in July and offers an array of sewing and jewelry making classes for kids and adults. Proprietor Dawn King says that the class schedule includes Basic Machine Sewing, where students learn how to use a sewing machine, as well as a hand sewing class "for the little ones who can't use the machine yet." In other more advanced classes students can make pajama pants, circle skirt, or a fairy (tulle) skirt, which King points out is "a fun Halloween costume, or fun anytime." As for jewelry, sign up with a friend for the Silver Spooky Halloween Pendant class or the Silver Stack Ring class. Also, think ahead to the holidays and take one of the gift making classes.

King is also offering Permanent Jewelry. A popular trend in recent years, Permanent Jewelry is a piece of jewelry, usually a bracelet or necklace, with no clasp. "It's soldered on by means of a very precise welder," explains King. And therefore permanent (but it can be easily removed with a pair of kitchen shears). "People many times choose to get one with a partner or child as a symbolic piece of jewelry," says King. Find out more about Permanent Jewelry and all the classes at Studio Dawnatella on the website: studiodawnatella.com.

My favorite reads are fashion memoirs because each one is a unique peek into the inner workings of the fashion industry. I recently reread "D.V." by Diana Vreeland (Knopf Inc.), fashion editor at Harper's Bazaar magazine in the 1930s, then editor-in-chief of Vogue magazine until she was unceremoniously let go in 1971. Undeterred, the flamboyant Vreeland soon moved on to become consultant to the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Vreeland's memoir was first published in 1984 and is akin to an evening of theater. Her writing style is informal and chatty, as if she's sitting in front of you sipping champagne while sharing her extraordinary life. The travel, the people, the parties, the fashion are all presented in vivid detail, and embellishment. She spills the tea about the fashionables of the day - Chanel, Balenciaga, Wallis Simpson and the Prince of Wales among many others. It's an entertaining, informative, and sometimes shocking read, but also an important contribution to fashion history.

Embrace the colors of autumn and go forth in style.

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Make a set of three Stacker Rings at Studio Dawnatella.

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