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Tote Couture

By A. Charlotte Riley

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Handbags, purses, totes, clutches, shoulder bags - I don't care what you call them, I love them all. I am a handbag addict. I have them in a countless array of styles and colors.

Trends come and go, but "tote couture" remains. True handbag fashion is timeless. It is not about seasonal fads, but about creating a personal style and reflecting your good taste. A good purse will last not only for this season, but also for years to come. This means investing in quality bags, taking care of your purses and totes, and shopping for styles that work best for you.

Here are a few simple rules:

The Person-To-Bag Ratio

Do not carry a bag that overwhelms your body size. Petite women should not be lugging around oversized bags that slap their thighs because they hang too low from the shoulder. Not only does it look bad, but can be harmful to your lower back if your bag is too big and too heavy for your frame. Conversely, tall women look silly with a wrist purse. Shop according with proportion in mind.

Summertime is Fun Time!

Enjoy your summer and be more playful with your purse selection. Invest in straw bags, brighter colors, clutch purses with retro designs or a Pucci pattern shoulder bag. Generally speaking, summertime purses are less expensive and so it is easier to experiment with a variety of styles and colors. Find bags that complement particular outfits.

Quality Is In the Details

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Before screaming, "I love it - it must be MINE!" and running to the cashier with credit card in hand, take a good look at the bag. Examine the lining to make sure it fits properly and isn't too loose. Be sure the clasp or closure of the bag works properly and looks solidly made. Inspect the stitching and see if there is any fraying or other sign of poor quality.

The Care and Feeding Of Your Purse

Just as leather and suede shoes need a little TLC, so do leather and suede bags. Purchase products to help keep the leather soft, supple and lustrous and apply them several times a year. Remove any stains on fabric bags with warm water and a mild detergent. Rub in a circular motion, and never, ever scrub at the fabric. Check the maintenance instructions that come with your new purse and follow them.

Choose Your Bag According To the Occasion

Are you going to an evening gala? The beach? To a little café to meet some friends? Is the bag for work? All of these situations require a different purse to suit different needs. A hobo-style bag is too unstructured for a formal event such as an evening gala. A better option is a clutch or wrist bag, with beading, a luxurious fabric, or an eye-catching color to accent your little black dress. Despite the popular trend toward casual office attire, a student-style knapsack is inappropriate corporate attire. Women should look at other options such as a Kelly bag, a supple leather school bag, a structured messenger bag or even a large leather tote.

Mixing and Matching

Should you choose your everyday black handbag, or go for your new aqua Mulberry Roxy bag? It may sound simple, but it really depends on what you are wearing and how you feel. At one time, it was de rigueur to match your handbag and your shoes. Over the years that rule has become less important. Nowadays, handbag fashion is more about creating a look. Consider the color of your outfit, and choose a handbag that accents it. If your look is monochromatic grey, you might want to consider something that will make your outfit pop, like fashionista pink. However, if you are wearing a highly patterned dress, consider a simple cigar box purse, pulling one of the colors from your dress.

Style - It's in the Bag

Attention shoppers: Get out there and express your personal style and attitude through one of the most fashionable accessories on the market, the handbag. When shopping for your new best friend consider your lifestyle, your body type, your wardrobe and the quality of the goods, but most of all have fun and look fabulous, darlings!

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Hobo purses, handbags and tote bags are smart and comfortable to carry, and come in amazing variety of colors and styles.

By Lynn Donn

Hobo purses, handbags and tote bags are designed to fit snugly around your shoulder, so they're comfortable to carry around all day, and the rounded shape means you can easily fit everything you need to carry. The hobo purse style is becoming a really hot fashion item, and you'll be amazed at the wonderful range of purses, tote bags and handbags which are easily available to purchase online. You'll find them in luxurious Italian leather and soft, buttery suede, chic and stylish modern designs, cool and casual totes, and unique creations with printed photographs, embroidery, and all kinds of weird and wonderful decorative clasps and closures. You can choose from a plain and simple design, or one which features handy pockets and compartments. Good quality hobo purses and bags range in price from around twenty dollars up to three hundred or so, and they make a wonderful gift for someone special.

Choosing hobo purses, handbags and tote bags.

There is such a vast range to choose from, the hardest thing is knowing where to start. Most people tend to think of hobo purses and handbags and as a casual type of bag, but there are some very stylish and elegant designs which are perfect for business. Nothing makes a big impression quite like an elegantly designed handbag or purse in genuine Italian leather. A suede hobo purse or handbag has a more relaxed, casual feel and looks fantastic with a soft, layered fashion look. If you're very petite, there are tiny hobo purses, tote bags and handbags which are cute, sexy and stylish, and will suit you perfectly.

Lynn Donn is the webmaster for <http://www.unique-handbags-and-purses.com> Her website offers tips and information on all the latest trends in purses and handbags for the fashion enthusiast.

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