

Fashion TRENDS

Classic Casual: Building A Better Wardrobe

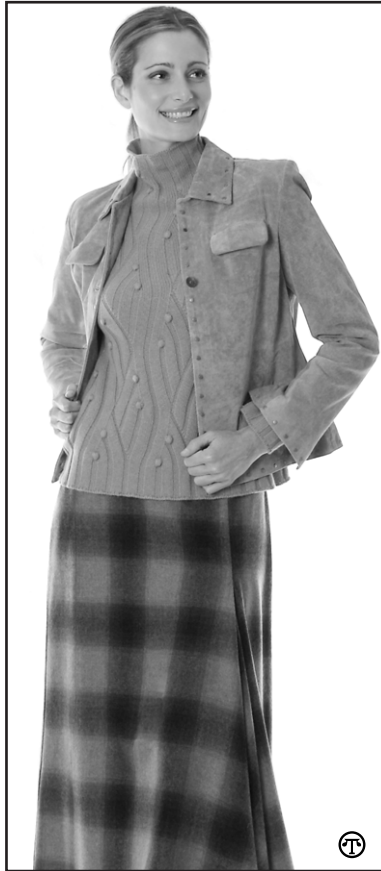
(NAPSA)—Flash-in-the-pan trends may come and go, but there's one style that designers consider distinctly American: casual. Think plaid, herringbone, leather, denim, fur trims, colorful knits and classic pants. The looks are refined and consistent, subtly chic and serve as a sophisticated backbone to most any wardrobe.

"So many of the pieces become wardrobe staples—that's why we call it 'seasonless dressing,'" explains Elizabeth Giebel of David Brooks, a fashion label of the Hampshire Group Ltd.

Giebel says the strength of the label's new collection is fourfold—color, quality, coordination and continuity—largely because designer Joan Brush added her unmistakably personal touch to bring its clean wool knits, tweed and leather separates together.

What else is hot? Jackets. "The novelty jacket business is on fire right now because it can go so many ways: with a matching or mixed-print skirt to work, to jeans for the weekend," says Giebel. David Brooks offers jackets ranging from silky suede in aquamarine to embossed microcord cadets in raspberry. Or their Edie Sedgwick-worthy topper in glen plaid can smarten up a black-flared skirt, or matching tartan trousers, while adding a cool sixties edge.

The designer's country-weekend-worthy sweater jackets command attention, too, with their bright-brass military buttons. And as always, Brit chic continues with tweed jackets, pants and



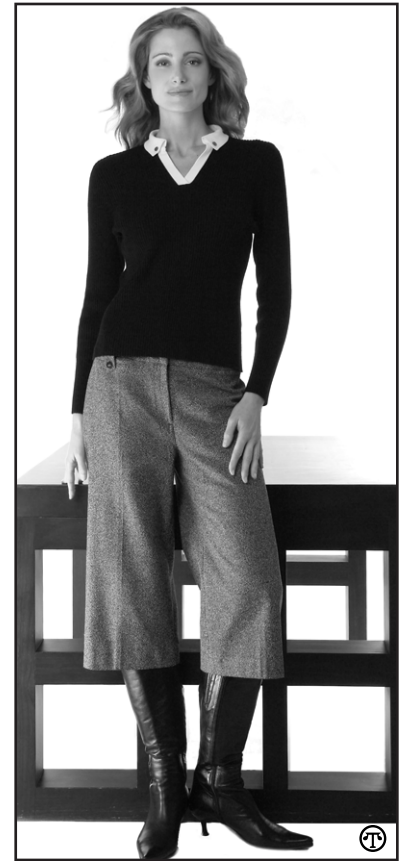
Suede jacket paired with a fisherman mock turtleneck sweater and ombré blanket plaid skirt.

flirty skirts.

Aspen-perfect-patterned sweaters and faux-fur-trimmed fitted denim jackets underscore the season's "Back in the Saddle" theme. Plus, they partner well with stretch cotton feather cord pants or ombré blanket plaid

skirts. Bold-hued cord jackets, quilted vests and windowpane jackets are important, too, keeping company with fruity-colored twill pants, floral skirts or classic denim cuts for both comfort and a sexy fit.

The line is carried in specialty stores and boutiques.



Ribbed polo with contrast collar worn with Donegal tweed gauchou pants.