

# Fashion FORECAST

## Fashion Must-Haves For Spring

(NAPSA)—There's no way to skirt the issue. Designers say this spring marks the return of the dress. Women can choose from flouncy and flirty fashions, with a definite vintage feel, or sleek, haltered items for a more contemporary look. Fashion overall returns to a more feminine mode. Intricate detailing such as crochet edging, lace, embroidery and double mesh eyelette cut-outs are a must.

"Today's women want clothes that are fun to wear. Wearing a dress in a shimmering pastel or a blouse in a luxurious fabric can make you feel absolutely wonderful. And that's really what fashion is all about," says Laura McDowell, fashion consultant for T.J. Maxx.

• **Over The Rainbow**—Spring's new color palette includes brights, pastels and, as always, white. There's a virtual rainbow of colors—beautiful shades of turquoise, emerald, lavender and fuchsia. Solids are mixed with patterns: Look for polka dots, stripes and florals.

• **Dress Up Or Down?**—In terms of skirts and dresses, the hemline debate seems to never end. While the micro-mini may not be practical or comfortable for most women, a '50s-inspired pencil skirt can help update a look. Keep an eye out for pretty linen skirts in bright pastels with embroidery detailing.

• **Suit Yourself**—Today's suits are non-traditional with a variety of options: long tunics over pants, a crochet sweater with a flirty skirt, a flouncy blouse with a skirt that hugs the knee. Capris are a



**Spring Fling**—Soft colors and intricate details are must-haves for this year's fashions.

style essential that can now be worn in most offices.

• **It's In The Bag**—The tote is the bag of the season; the bigger, the better. Leather, straw and quilted fabrics rate high this season, and colors run the gamut from white to shocking pink and canary yellow.

McDowell's list of "must-haves":

- A flirty, flouncy dress in a great color
- Capris, a bit longer and looser
- A '50s-inspired pencil skirt
- An oversized tote bag
- A long tunic top

"There's a range of options this season," says McDowell. "The key is to shop off-price so you can enjoy more of them."