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'Two' for the Road



Spectator 'Allegra' pumps from Camileon Heels.

Heavy fall fashions may be hitting the stores, but with the summer season officially underway, it's a perfect time to think about lightening your load as you pack for upcoming road trips, weekend getaways, and excursions out of town or country.

While packing light may have always been the smart way to go, it's become a necessity these days, particularly where air travel is involved. Reports of ongoing delays and routinely lost luggage have made checking one's luggage more of a gamble than ever before. But with strict guidelines (which limit the dimensions of a suitcase you can actually stow on board), downsizing, paring down, and editing has now become a fact of life. Talk about challenging!

Needless to say, the key to success is to select clothing and accessories that are lightweight, versatile, and do double (or even triple) duty ("two for one"). My fail safe suggestion would be to edit one's color scheme down to black and white. The color combination is so graphic, clean, and statement making, you really don't need much more. The options are endless: you can wear black with white, white with black, all white, all black; or you can break up the monotony by adding a hit of black and white pattern (stripes, dots, and bold graphics). It all works, you can't tire of it, and it's a no-brainer. (Speaking of no-brainers and black and white, the color combo is so 'smart' and chic, it even made Paris Hilton and 'partner in crime' Nicole Richie look uncharacteristically high brow and elegant as they grace the cover of June Harper's Bazaar, clad in their coordinating black and white Chanel couture outfits. Had to mention it!)

And if you opt for distinctive basics (a crisp white shirt; a lightweight trench, coatdress, blazer, or pea jacket; a tunic; a windbreaker; a knee length pencil skirt; well cut white and black jeans; a pair of white shorts, Bermudas, or capris; a thin cardigan; weightless t's and tanks, etc.) you will be able make the transition from day to night effortlessly by simply adding or subtracting accessories and by changing shoes.

This brings me to another point. There is nothing as smart looking, distinctive, and versatile, as black and white spectator pumps. It worked for Gabrielle Coco Chanel nearly a century ago and it still works today. Sometimes I feel as though I never met a pair of black and white shoes that I didn't like. Well, that goes "double" (literally) for two pairs of spectator pumps from Camileon Heels.



Spectator pumps 'Marta' from Camileon Heels

Not only are 'Marta' and 'Allegra' (the former is a closed pump and the latter is a sling back) good looking and comfortable, you get two heels in one thanks to a patent-pending adjustable height heel technology which enables a 3 ¼ inch heel to collapse into a ½ heel. The revolutionary idea that was conceived in 1989 (and took a decade to perfect), is the brainchild of Donna Lauren Handel and her brother Dr. David Handel (a practicing diagnostic radiologist with a special interest in musculoskeletal problems and thorough knowledge of the human anatomy).

David couldn't help but notice all the fashionable New York women on their way to work wearing sneakers and toting their high heels which they would then change into once they reached their destination. Inspired by his two young sons who enjoyed playing with "Transformers - robots in disguise", he found himself thinking, "If they can turn robots into high performance vehicles, surely there must be a way to transform a high heel into a low-heeled, comfort version of the very same shoe."

The resulting Italian made styles, (which feature an elastic laced vamp, leather lining, leather sole and a lightly padded foot bed for extra comfort), are available online (<http://www.camileonheels.com/>) and in specialty stores across the country.

Unsurprisingly (since 90% of almost all women suffer from foot ailments because of their uncomfortable high heels), this new company is getting their fair share of well deserved publicity. In fact, I first heard about them several weeks ago when Ms. Handel and Camileon Heels were the focus of several segments on our local TV news programs.

As Ms. Handel observed, "If ever necessity was the mother of invention, this is it. Thanks to this unparalleled development, women now have a truly viable alternative to prolonged wear of high heels. And for the first time, Camileon Heels offers women the possibility to combine fashion, comfort and convenience -- all in one shoe."

- Marilyn Kirschner