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ONE HEEL OF AN IDEA

By RAAKHEE MIRCHANDANI

May 29, 2007 — New York women know the routine: the relief of throwing their high heels in a bag and slipping into flip-flops in the cab.

Enter possible salvation: Camileon Heels, a Transformers-inspired shoe that ingeniously morphs from a 3 1/2-inch stiletto to a 1 1/2-inch kitten heel. The idea for the \$280 shoes came to inventor Dr. David Handel while sitting in a cab traveling down Fifth Avenue in 1989. Handel, a diagnostic radiologist, was watching New York women in painful stilettos and realized if his son's robots could turn into cars, he could turn heels into flats.

He came up with a design in which the heel pulls apart and tucks into the arch.

"I've met so many women who have so many pairs of shoes stuffed in their desk drawers," says Lauren Handel, CEO/designer of Pennsylvania-based Camileon (camileonheels.com). "Being able to have everything you need from one shoe is something you haven't been able to get."

The concept is simple - but the execution isn't quite there. The styles don't seem sexy enough to pair with a great summer wardrobe. And while the adjustable heel is fun to play with, a simple Post road test made us feel like the short heels would wear out quickly. But that doesn't mean we don't hope for a better version 2.0.




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