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Boston Fashion: Style Secrets From The Pros

Women struggle every day to find the right outfit -- the one that looks good on them. We have closets filled to the gills, bursting at the seams, yet we still say we have nothing to wear. We look at the women in Hollywood and wish we could have the stylists on their payrolls to help us look red carpet ready for the boardroom and for the night out on the town.

Bostonist has done the next best thing. We contacted three of the top stylists in Boston. They've worked with everyone from school teachers to socialites. They've dressed everyone from dudes in jeans and t-shirts to women who refuse to be seen without something Coco Chanel approved. But, most importantly, they want to make sure you feel as good on the inside as you look on the outside.



Ginger Burr started [Total Image Consultants](#) in 1987. She wanted to prove you don't have to give up your personal style for the sake of your professional style. Even though she's had major success as a image consultant, she's started a new career as an author and published her first book, *Fashion Secrets Your Mother Never Taught You*.

Alice Miles is the Senior Fashion Stylist for [Stilista](#). Stilista was created by a group of stylists who wanted to help teach people how to shop for clothes properly. They run monthly seminars and shopping events to help people find everything from the perfect pair of jeans to the elusive bra that actually fits!

Rebecca Woodfork is the newbie on the stylist scene and is ready to make Boston beautiful!

1. *Besides the little black dress, what should every woman have her in closet?*

Ginger: A terrific pantsuit in a good basic color (black, brown, or navy – whichever is your best neutral). It is up to you whether you choose one that is tailored and professional, soft and casual, or slightly trendy. The

most important part is that it needs to be versatile so you can mix and match the pieces with other pants or tops and add color and accessories to change the mood.

Alice: A great pair of jeans, definitely a straight or trouser leg in a dark indigo wash. Jeans can go almost anywhere, and a clean dark wash is a must have for its class and versatility. Also, a day dress in an easy to wear and travel jersey fabric. Wrap styles are a great place to start in a punchy solid or small print. It's a great piece that easily transitions from work to casual to night.

Rebecca: I think besides the LBD every woman should have clothes that fit in her closet. This is more important than any single item, because when your clothes fit properly your confidence is the best outfit.

2. For those who want to avoid looking like a slave to trends this season, are there any hot new looks you think will last the test of time?

Ginger: No. Trends are by nature fleeting. They are supposed to feel fresh and new and are generally a bit edgy. There are certain trends we see a lot of right now like jackets with 3/4 sleeves, big, bright colorful handbags, and peasant tops. Most of them won't be hot a year or two from now or will have been altered just enough to make last year's style look outdated.

Alice: The leather jacket. Definitely a hot trend right now, (especially motorcycle styles) but is always a must have staple item in any stylish gal's wardrobe. Look for classic silhouettes with some but not too many extra buckles or accessories in classic black or tobacco brown.

Rebecca: Depending on where you are in your life, trends can be a very vital piece to your wardrobe. I truly believe trends are called "trends" for a reason. They are created to last you through a season or just a season. Holding on to them is silly, that's why I always buy the knock-offs when it comes to trends. Stores like H&M, Urban Outfitter, Target are great for filling that void in your closet without emptying your wallet.

3. What items are most figure flattering for someone who's a plus size?

Ginger: Plus size women can wear any of the trends. Like everyone else, it is a matter of choosing styles that suit your coloring, height, lifestyle, and personality. The most important concern (and this is true for all women) is that clothing cannot flatter you if it doesn't fit well. Every woman needs to have a good tailor available to make sure every item she purchases (whether it costs \$10 or \$1000) fits her perfectly.

Alice: Overall simple pieces such as a classic black pump paired with a trouser leg jean or black pant help elongate the leg and balance out the frame. Single button jackets or blazers with princess line details or seams nip in the waist and help achieve a slimmer silhouette. Darker colors worn where most of the weight is carried (whether top or bottom) paired with a bright color or print also help balance out the figure.

Rebecca: Plus size and all woman alike should pay more attention to their under garments. A supportive bra can make all the difference in the world. A woman should be concentrating on keeping her best assets in place. I live and die by my Spanx, since gravity and genetics play a part in all body types. Spanx act as a Lyra/Girdle that comes in many different arrangements and options depending on your needs and body type. Appreciating your body at any size is the best way to flatter your figure.

4. What big ticket item should we bite the bullet and buy?

Ginger: A beautiful handbag.



Alice: The above mentioned leather jacket definitely. Also every woman should have one fabulous non-black evening or cocktail dress that truly makes her feel fabulous. Oh, and you can never go wrong with a pair of diamond earrings.

Rebecca: When purchasing a big ticket item, be sure to buy something classic. Example: Thomas Pink's dress shirt. Look at buying something you can't grow out of. Example: a beautiful handbag (personal favorites Gucci, Marc Jacobs, Chanel). Or just buy something that makes you feel sexy. Example: a pair of high heels, Louboutins, Manolos, or Giuseppe Zanotti's. You can't go wrong with any of these choices because, I promise you will have them forever.



5. What trend do you hope goes away?

Ginger: How many choices do I get? Let's start with yellow. It looks good on only a handful of people, and yet it is everywhere! Baby doll tops are dreadful (they infantilize women) and generally look silly on anyone over 16. The bubble skirt is another one that seems to be fading (thankfully) but adds pounds where most women do not want to add extra width.

Alice: Well, even though I like this trend, it seems to be really challenging for most women, so I think we can be done with the skinny jean. Straight or cigarette leg is great, but legging tight doesn't flatter most figures.

Rebecca: Mal-nourishment, and dressing that up as sexy, with a side of boring shapeless dresses, in order to hide the spandex that should be thrown away,

topped with MaryKateAshlyLoHanRachZoeCaiforniagirlMishaBarton Look-alikes.

6. What store is a best bet for a good deal?

Ginger: If you like to shop and want to find fashions for less, then Marshalls is a good place to start. It is, however, overwhelming to someone who does not like to shop and sometimes dangerous for those who do because it is tempting to buy something just because the price is so good.

Alice: Loehmanns in Natick (across from the Natick Collection). Much easier to navigate and a lot less crowded than local Filene's Basement. Great prices and brand selection.

Rebecca: I have a couple of favorites. When I'm looking for professional work attire and great deals I head to the Copley Mall to F Carrie, their regular prices are on the higher side, but their sale prices are incredible. If I need a dress for a wedding or a meet the parents luncheon, Lord & Taylor on is where I call home, they always have a coupon in the Sunday Globe for either 15-20% off your purchase. Not to mention they have so much turn over, that they are constantly having big sales. I of course love Urban Outfitters, H & M, Zara, and Target these stores help me nurse my creative vision, by mixing and matching their basic shapes and creative patterns.

7. Best untapped resource for fashion?

Ginger: Smaller boutiques. There are often hidden jewels there that you won't find anywhere else. Even if the price of something is a bit higher, if you love it and will wear it countless times, it is worth the investment. Think price per wear rather than the actually upfront cost of the item. Four great options in the Boston area are The Studio in Brookline, WOW in Newton, Karen Millen in Copley Place, and Andrews and Andrews in Concord.

It is also great fun to shop at consignment stores. While you must be a savvy shopper and not let price alone guide you in making buying decisions, you can find some terrific items for less. Two good choices are The Turnabout Shoppe in Wellesley. They offer incredible designer consignment (specializing in designers such as Chanel and Armani). And, Second Time Around which tends to be a bit trendier.

Alice: Definitely Vintage and Eco-Friendly. I highly recommend local vintage and re-sale places like Poor Little Rich Girl in Davis Square and Cafe Society in Brookline. You can get some amazing pieces, especially jewelry and accessories that are uniquely yours. If you have a car visiting the 5000 vendor Brimfield Fair in Brimfield MA, (coming up May 13th) is also a great way to score one of a kind duds. Eco-Friendly has also really grown around the city and there are some really amazing designs and brands that are super stylish, plus you are helping the green movement by purchasing and wearing them. Envi on Newbury St. is a great place to start!



Rebecca: I recommend that you untap it from within. I get my inspiration from everything I look at, and from everyone I come in contact with. Fashion is an art of costuming, being said you are able to play a character with the way you dress. Becoming your own muse is the best resource you can use

If you have your own questions, contact these talented women! You won't be disappointed. Tell them Bostonist sent you!

If you want to make an appointment with Rebecca Woodfork, she can be contacted at: [RebeccaWoodfork at aol.com](mailto:RebeccaWoodfork@aol.com).

For more information on Ginger Burr's services and her book, go to TotalImageConsultants.com.

Alice Miles can be reached at StilistaBoston.com.

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Thank you so much for saying such lovely things about my most favorite place in the universe.. Loehamnn's!!

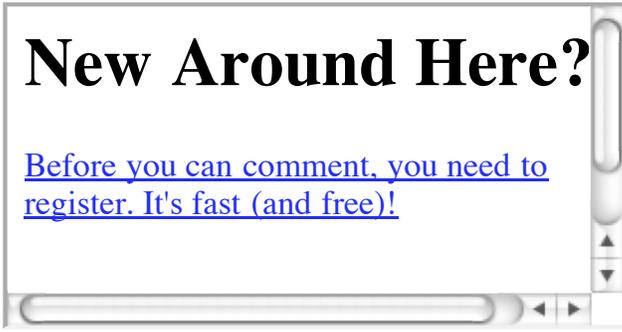
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