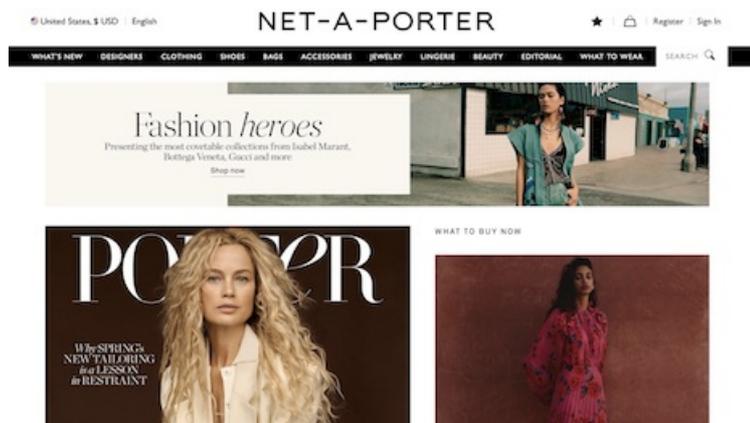


RETAIL

Net-A-Porter predicts continued return to black, trophy dressing for FW22

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Net-A-Porter announced how it is advancing its pillars as well as trends currently permeating the fashion sector. Image credit: Net-A-Porter

By KATIE TAMOLA

Evocative and romantic fashions are expected to be the dominating trends for fall/winter 2022, according to online retailer Net-A-Porter.

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Sticking to its three key buying strategy pillars, elevate and curate; discover, disrupt and raise; and emotional escape, the retailer is looking to aid consumers in offering pieces that excite them and help them become their most expressive selves. Net-A-Porter sees some key trends permeating including a return to black apparel, reliance on fashion foundations, trophy dressing and more.

"Our proposition is to serve our customers and be their guide in choosing the pieces they'll treasure for years to come," said Lea Cranfield, chief buying and merchandising officer at [Net-A-Porter](#).

What is to come

Net-A-Porter continues to show dedication to providing a wide array of apparel and accessories for consumers looking for optimal looks.

The retailer is increasing its offerings with several new additions from Gucci, Bottega Veneta, Chlo and more. Net-A-Porter has also increased its bags, shoes and accessories assortment by an immense 65 percent and seen an increase in demand for homeware, specifically tableware.

The retailer is also highlighting its efforts in nurturing the next generation of future fashion talent and lovers.

Earlier this year, Net-A-Porter established The Vanguard Education Fund in conjunction with the British Fashion Council (BFC). The fund will provide monetary support and mentorship from industry experts including Christopher John Rogers, Eva Chen, Libby Page and more.

The retailer is also increasing brands across all categories within Net Sustain, an edit established in 2019 which is dedicated to environmentally conscious apparel and accessories. The number of brands has increased by almost 600 percent since its inception.



Black never went out of style. Image credit: Net-A-Porter

This season is seeing a return to fashion's most versatile color: black. After several seasons of bold and bright colorways, consumers are once again seeking the versatile color, as it remains Net-A-Porter's top-performing color to date as well as the retailer's largest investment.

Both Balenciaga and Valentino retreated to reverence for the shade, with Balenciaga having introduced 18 looks that were head-to-toe black and Valentino contrasting its pink opening with 33 black looks.

Net-A-Porter is also seeing a return to fashion foundations, a concept that puts a twist on classic pieces. These are not simple or uninteresting staples, but chic pieces including the tank top, the fight jacket, the suit, the shirt, the mini skirt, platform shoes, pumps and the investment bag.

Next is trophy dressing what Net-A-Porter defines as cult products and collections that both emotionally grab consumers and are also perfect for showcasing on social media. Some looks that can be considered trophy dressing items include Valentino's One Stud bag and Loewe's silver-bow shoes.



Trophy dressing lends itself well to consumers who love to post on social media. Image credit: Net-A-Porter

The retailer predicts this trend to be prominent as they are already seeing traction from evening-wear and half of their top 10-performing dresses this year being gowns and midi styles compared to last year's top performers of day dresses.

An additional enthralling trend is "The Great Reveal," a trend centered on female empowerment and being confident enough to own one's style, regardless of their age. Some pieces in line with this trend include the Gen Z favorite of a crop top or a versatile slip dress which can be romantic, sexy, cool or feminine.

Highlighting the versatility of the slip dress, Gucci and Fendi both styled a faux-fur coat over the lingerie this year.

Finally, consumers are feeling "The Look of Love" a more romantic season in which brands and designers are looking to convey love and peace. The trend speaks to a season of love, unity and togetherness amid global strife, which was conveyed by brands through stunning hues of red and pink.

This was seen in Valentino's inclusion of a great deal of pink, which also happens to be one of Net-A-Porter's top-performing colors, with the retailer seeing an immense increase in searches for "pink," driven by shoes, where searches were up by 30 percent versus pre-fashion month.

An emotional appeal

Fashion is not at all a realm without feeling, a fact that Net-A-Porter and several other retailers and brands recognize.

At the end of last year, Miu Miu examined power dynamics in its latest commission for "Women's Tales," the label's ongoing film series ruminating on modern femininity.

Directed by Tunisian director Kaouther Ben Hania, "I and The Stupid Boy" is a cautionary but empowering film that follows a vibrant and assertive young woman. While the series primarily serves to elevate female directors and explore different themes around women's experiences, the wardrobe from Miu Miu is an integral part of the lead character's story arc and how she presents herself to others ([see story](#)).

Net-A-Porter is also focusing on inclusion, working with brands including Jimmy Choo, Manolo Blahnik, Christian Louboutin, Emporio Sirenuse and others to implement more inclusive size ranges across apparel and shoes.

Brands are seriously contemplating how to be more inclusive, with Tapestry, Inc. reinforcing its commitment to diversity and sustainability with a new C-suite role.

Last week, the group named David L. Casey as its first chief inclusion and social impact officer, effective May 16. He will be responsible for leading Tapestry's equity, inclusion and diversity strategy as well as its social impact efforts through advocacy, philanthropy and volunteerism ([see story](#)).

Between spreading the love and making sure there is room for everyone to enjoy all of its offerings, Net-A-Porter is continuing its commitment to making fashion an enjoyable, self-affirming experience.

"This was a season like no other with a message of love, unity, empowerment," Ms. Cranfield said. "Emotion was super, super clear.

"For us, emotional escape taps into the very core of our mission to capture the hearts of our customers through the joy of fashion and incredible products."

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