

# FASHION GOES GLOBAL

The catwalk's gone international as designers take inspiration from travels far and wide, bringing home decorative looks with world-class style. **Paul Ewart** takes a look at how our wardrobes are going to be enjoying the trip of a lifetime this season...



Alessandro Dell'Acqua

## Memoirs Of A Geisha

Hand-painted kimonos, Japanese prints and waist-nipping obi belts were spotted in abundance this season, with **Alessandro Dell'Acqua** leading the way. Taking inspiration from Japanese photographer Araki – who is notorious for his images of tightly bound women – it is obvious that body-con is going to be Alessandro's word du jour.

Stunning silk obi dresses in fuchsia or shot blue silk were teamed with matching silk cabled shoes and corset-like wide obi belts. Japanese vine prints grew up skirts and one-shouldered shift dresses finished off his Oriental collection. Meanwhile, **Dries Van Noten** focused on mismatched orchid, hibiscus and frangipani-print cotton and silk, wrapped and draped in kimono-like folds, while **Sophia Kokosalaki's** hand-painted Japanese scenes on black silk dresses, were our pick of the look.

**Get the look for less:**  
For vibrant Kimono-like dresses, Shanghai Tang and for the accompanying obi-style belts, pick up a corset belt from Stradivarius.







## DAYS OF THE RAJ

Madonna isn't the only one who has developed a recent love-affair with India; designers from [Jean Paul Gaultier](#) to [John Galiano](#) have also designed their current collections around the subcontinent. And with good reason. This hub of vibrantly coloured materials and versatile aesthetics is a fashion trove ready to be discovered.

For his Hermès collection, it was apparent from the word go that Gaultier's inspiration came from India. Preceding his impending trip to Mumbai – Hermès is opening a store there this year – with a line-up of reinterpreted saris in golden silk chiffon and jade and hues of purple and aubergine.

"For me, the sari is the most pure garment," raved the designer. "I can play with it in so many ways, with amazing fabrics and incredible colours."

Worn with matching shorts and with their traditional six metres reduced to a fraction of the length, these sari dresses are bang on trend with spring's most important neckline: the one-shouldered cut.

In [Dior's](#) Cruise collection there was an equal appreciation for Indian flamboyance, with a host of bright tunics and lavish jewelled headpieces. And with the recent launch of *Vogue India*, the relationship between this hub of vibrantly coloured fabrics and the fashion world looks set to become even stronger.

Get the look for less:

Every season, Monsoon produces a selection of Indian-inspired dresses, and Splash also has a selection of one-shouldered dresses in a range of vivid colours.



Jean Paul Gaultier





## HOLIDAY IN THE HAMPTONS

East Coast chic is revisited year after year by American fashion stalwarts such as **Ralph Lauren** and **Armani**, who admittedly err on the side of caution when dealing with this stateside style staple. This year, however, designers are exploring new facets in the classic preppy look.

Using the work of Slim Aarons – the late celebrity photographer, who documented American royalty such as Jackie O – as inspiration, **Michael Kors** produced a fresh take on American sportswear with soft and supple shapes. Elegantly tailored shorts, floral jersey shifts, slouchy pocketed minidresses and crisp, white, wide-legged trousers – with a cashmere sweater tossed casually over the shoulders – equated to retro sun-kissed glamour at its best. **Marc Jacobs** also referenced East Coast style icons, such as Bianca Jagger, with Halston-esque slinky jersey dresses that wouldn't look out of place in Studio 54.

In a collection that was quintessential **Galliano**, the master of excess transported his audience to a dilapidated East Hamptons beach for his ready-to-wear show. Inspired by the cult film *Grey Gardens* and the accidental icon Edie Bouvier Beale (Jackie O's cousin), who's faded grandeur and eccentric fashion sense has captivated many a designer since, Galliano offered the perfect foil to the gentrified all-American look of the Kors collection. Pastel pinks and floppy hats, 30s frills, frothy coral chiffons and printed bathers were intermixed with twisted and knotted knits.



Michael Kors

**Get the look for less:** Topshop is the first port of call for sexed-up East Coast wear. Pair a pastel cardigan or sweater with some of the store's beachwear separates for an instant look.





Proenza Schouler

### Get the look for less:

Accessorize has some great wooden bangles and tribal jewellery – perfect for injecting some Africana without the overkill – and Club Monaco is essential for khaki basics.

## African Safari

Fashion went on a safari adventure this season with a wild assortment of African field jackets, safari suits, zebra and leopard prints, khaki, and chunky tribal jewelry.

There was a definite safari feel to the more casual pieces at **Versace** – white and tan sleeveless safari jackets, tailored shorts and lots of khaki – proving even more that the label is distancing itself from its garish uber-bling past.

“There’s softness to the collection,” says Donatella Versace. “The shoulders on the safari jacket are structured rather than over-padded; the kangaroo-skin effect is as delicious as silk.”

And in London, Donatella’s protégé **Christopher Kane** also jumped on the African Queen bandwagon, with chiffon snakeskin and camouflage print dresses with rah-rah ruffles and tribal jersey prints. And Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez – the design duo behind **Proenza Schouler** – worked the trend with cinched hemp waistcoats paired with sexy short skirts and stilettos.

But the designer to pay the most homage to Africa was **Roberto Cavalli** in his ‘La Mia Africa’ collection for Just Cavalli. Inspired by his travels and African art, the collection merged the natural with the urban. Multi-print dresses with Masai beaded necklines or loose fringing and feathered skirts and flowing dresses in sparkling leopard print, were some of the highlights. And bright colours including fuchsia, yellow, red and aqua in bold patterns and cut-out swimsuits created a modern tribal aesthetic.



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