

# Fall Fantasy



*Styles react to a dipping DOW  
with a dark, sumptuous palette  
set off by flamboyant flashes.*

By Lisa  
Randazzo

Madison Avenue turns the tables on a wan Wall Street this season with an unpredictably uplifting response to a down economy. Indeed, designers refused to roll over as the NASDAQ nose-dived, reacting instead with a chameleon's wardrobe that's spiritually equipped to see us through the toughest of times.

Fantasy is the impetus behind fall outfits, and the stories staged on the runways ranged from the gender-bending androgyny of equestrians and soldiers, to bohemian themes surrounding Spanish Gypsies and medieval warrior princesses.

***“The real underlying story seems to be in the juxtaposition of hard and soft touches.”***

Tiny pleated skirts and empire-waist dresses spoke of schoolgirl charm; puffy sleeves and Victorian lace lent an air of propriety; and monogrammed bags, bejeweled purses and boots with *everything* offered an opportunity for opulence. Black is back but in aura only: Deep plush plums, burnt browns and molten metals create the smoke that sings the eyes and edges of the season’s sartorial scene.

“Fashion this season is definitely going in lots of directions,” says Ellen Genco, Orly International, Chatsworth, California. “But the real underlying story seems to be in the juxtaposition of hard and soft touches—say a ruffled blouse with worn jeans, for instance, or a baby doll tank with zippered leather pants.”

## HAIR

The duality of extremes that defines fall fashion is cut clearly into the season’s variety of hairstyles. Dressy and dramatic, casual and cool—the common goal is an attitude that can be achieved from a variety of angles.

“I think we’re heading into a kind of oxymoron of the ‘undone’ look,” says Mike Karg, stylist, Goldwell, New York. “It’s kind of *Moulin Rouge* but in a futuristic kind of way. There’s still a hint of the classic, but with a touch of raggedness to it. The idea is to add something to the classic-ness that sort of ‘undoes’ it, so that it’s ‘done’ but ‘not done.’ It’s an oxymoron. For instance, if a client’s roots grow in, instead of re-dying them, add some highlights all over the head. This of course has a touch of ‘80s to it, but we’re pursuing it differently. The ‘80s were sort of an



Courtesy Nexus

***Popular fall hair lengths are to the chin and shoulder.***

experiment in excess—hairspray, makeup, money and drugs. Now, 20 years later, we’ve learned a thing or two, and found a way to make it more beautiful.”

There’s a kind of organized chaos to the look at large, and, according to Karg, the true nature of it is a work in progress. “The cuts are definitely disconnected layers—very unconventional layers. It’s sort of a ‘cut what you see’ kind of thing. It’s almost not the full haircut anymore; it’s more of a progressive change as you go along.”

Incorporating extremes into the same style is a trick of the season that imparts texture and movement for an easy kind of drama.

“I’ve seen a lot of texture and movement with the combination geometric/asymmetric cuts,” says Louis Perez, Nexxus Design Team member, Dallas. “You can have a geometric bob with an asymmetric fringe, for instance. Basically, the theme of the season is ‘hair in motion,’ with emphasis on asymmetry.”

**Texture.** Texture remains an integral element to the season’s styles, whether hair is pulled taut and spiked with product, swinging sleek and straight or in wisps and waves.

“There’s a lot of texture in the hair,



Courtesy Nexus

***Long layers offer volume and movement to fall hairstyles.***

***“We’ll be seeing beautiful browns, especially chocolate browns, and browns warmed with red.”***

and product and cut both have a lot to do with achieving it,” says Richard Dalton, fashion director, John Paul Mitchell Systems, Los Angeles. “On the runways we saw a lot of the wet look—like you’ve spent the day at the beach. Mid-length, wispy hair got a fair amount of play, but really length is up to the individual; a lot of clients are into sports, so they want to be able to pull it back, then do something more glamorous for evening. All styles are in, but people want volume again, so perms are coming back, but in more natural, soft waves instead of intense curl. Also, we’re still seeing ponytails. At the Alice Roi show we did ponytails and braids—sort of a little girl look but off the face for sophistication.”



Courtesy Matrix

***Red continues to be a hot fall hair color.***

The straight, flat hair of a few seasons ago is making a quick comeback, according to Fernando Romero, hairstylist and founder, Bio Ionic Natural Ion Therapy, Beverly Hills, California. “For fall we’ll see the resurgence of medium length, straight hair. The people in Europe are just now getting into straight hair, and as a result it’s making its way back to New York. But lengths



Courtesy Carlo Buscemi

***Disconnected layers lend a wispy look to fall hair.***

will be to the chin, and not much past the shoulder.”

***Color:*** The trend for mainstream hair color remains toward the natural look, with an emphasis on browns for fall.

“We’ll be seeing beautiful browns, especially chocolate browns, and browns warmed with red,” says Perez. Clients who prefer a little more attention, however, have stylish options. “While blonde tends to go more beige and warmer for fall, we’ll be seeing it accented with pink edges. It’s a very stunning look. In addition, there are some very strong colors in the fall palette, most notably one that I call Crayola red. We’ll also see bold black with blue accents. A lot of the strong shades will have lighter shades—such as lilac on blue/black, for instance—to soften them around the fringe, or wherever there’s an asymmetrical line. Finer lines are subtly blended to take emphasis away from shape. Overall, it’s about soft touches on bold looks; we do this to soften the 80s influences that continue to drive fashion.”

## MAKEUP

The most prevalent look for fall was that of the Bohemian belle, a Gypsy-ish look that's unstuck in time, simultaneously swirling together images and vibes of medieval murkiness, Renaissance rowdiness and the heady hedonism of turn-of-the-century cabaret. It's at once both dark and colorful, and the season's makeup palette takes full advantage with deep, rich shades worthy of the heavily textured fabrics of fall.

***The overall aim of eye makeup is a smoky, smudgy look.***

"We found our inspiration in the medieval influence that found its way into fashion via corsets, boots and deep plum colors," says Julie Sena, co-creator, Alchemy, New York. "It's very *Lord of the Rings*, *Moulin Rouge* and *Mists of Avalon*. The sultry, heavy makeup look comes more from the textures and colors of the clothing than from the look of the women at that time. It's very Goth, with rich undertones of deep blues, plums and auburns. It's dark, but not black. It's still very feminine."



Courtesy Matrix

***Undertones of shades such as violet add softness to bold hair color.***

Blush is in a rose tone, advises Sena, and should be applied on the apple of the cheek avoiding heavy contour. "Eyes are definitely smoky with charcoal lines and dark shadow; lips are glossy plum. I



Courtesy Aveda

***The smoky look of the runways can be watered down for street wear.***

think that matte is starting to make its way back for lips, but women are reluctant to give up the gloss because it's such a pretty look. And lip liner is used for neatness and should not be noticeable."

The eyes were the emphasis on the runways, says Lily Kimmel, makeup artist, Juva Skin & Laser Center MediSpa, New York.

"The smoky eye was shown a lot in sort of a Spanish Gypsy look," she observes. "Eye shadows are definitely murky, deep and dusky, and the overall aim of eye makeup is a smoky, smudgy look. But it's not black-smoky. Eyeshadow colors were olive green, brown, plush purple, ruby red and deep blue. The fall look incorporates both bright and subdued tones—so there are ruffles and romance in the lines, and also military and camouflage. Eye makeup is also more matte than it has been in the recent past. And it's topped off with a heavier eyebrow."

There are no steadfast rules when it comes to individual beauty, however, and Kimmel advises makeup artists to consider the client's needs above mainstream trends.

"My interest is in the individual client, and these colors aren't necessarily good for everyone. I really encourage clients to look in the mirror and mix colors if



***Loose wisps offset a conservative bun for casual sophistication.***

they must. Play with color; colors should be mixed, blended and run into each other like a painting. There should be no harsh lines.”

Cheek color is in the background for fall, acting more as a balance for the rest of the face than an individual feature. “Blushes should work in tune with the most prominent color of the eyes and lips. If you have a ruby mouth, for instance, you want to stay in the same color family for cheeks,” says Kimmel.

## NAILS

The nail polish collections that accompany this fall’s fashions are super-saturated and rampant with reds of all persuasions. Included in the pools of pigment are bottomless blues, maroons and magentas, with an ample mix of metal and creams that offers something for both the bold and the bashful.

“We saw a lot of dark colors in this season’s fashion,” says Genco. “At first glance these colors can look like black, but as you get closer they’re really deep blues and purples. But from a cosmetic standpoint, the palette consists of a lot of reds and rich plums. There’s a real richness that comes from the depth of the colors. And the metallics that are involved are not bright, but rather subdued, such as golden, and bronzed.”

“This fall we’re looking at plenty of rich texture, big patterns and lots of leather,” says Suzi Weiss-Fischmann, OPI Products, North Hollywood, California. “Color is very much what’s carrying the beauty industry in terms of nail and hair care. This fall we’ll be seeing a rich palette of browns, charcoals, reds and spicy cinnamon. Painted nails are a must.”



***Polished nails add an opulent edge to fall styles.***

Nails take their dutiful position as the jeweled accent of fashion, and no fashionista would consider her outfit complete without a proper, polished manicure.

“Nails can really determine how sexy a look is, how dangerous it is or how androgynous it is,” says Jan Arnold, Creative Nail Design, Vista, California. “Fall is all about luxury and opulence, and the fabrics say it all: tapestries, cashmeres, crushed velvets, brocades. This was one of our inspirations when we mixed our colors; we stuffed as much pigment and metal into them as we could to make them very medieval. We see nails mid- to longer in length in a pointed almond.”

The richness of this fall’s fashion has a lot to offer in terms of color and style. Making sure clients step out your door in style will ensure they return with confidence. “There seems to be a lot going on this season in terms of fashion,” says Genco. “Basically, however, what ties it all together is that there’s a richness and softness to everything.” ❁

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