

Top trends for a whimsical winter

Beyond the Dress has just released the top trends for a whimsical winter with its panel of experts offering a fresh twist on an otherwise sombre season. BTD takes a look at the hottest trends, combined with advice on how to avoid the winter blues, keep sniffles at bay, de-clutter your life and make this chilly season the hottest yet.



"Shift focus from mourning the end of summer to celebrating the possibilities the crisp weather brings," said Lori Milner, director of Beyond the Dress, an initiative born to acknowledge and celebrate the ever-changing role, lifestyle and challenges of the modern woman and her multiple roles. "Instead of viewing winter as the season for hibernation see it as the season for regeneration. Leadership expert Robin Sharma calls 5am to 7am 'golden hours of key uninterrupted time'. Waking up earlier gives you extra time to spend on the things that are important to you, whether it's going to the gym, running around the block, or doing an hour of yoga in your lounge. When you catch yourself hitting the snooze button, rather get up and motivate yourself to energise your body. Starting the day being active is a powerful strategy for self-renewal and personal effectiveness."

Stepping out into the world looking gorgeous is just as important for one's self-renewal. When it comes to fashion trends, image consultant and personal branding expert, Janine Starkey puts an emphasis on colour, layering and body type to radiate a modern look without sacrificing comfortable and warmth. "Adding a pop of colour is a great way to make a drab winter outfit come to life and an effective technique to 'break the colour' when wearing a monotone outfit," said Starkey.

Change your hairstyle

"The secret is wearing the right 'colour' close to your face, as this enhances your natural beauty. Steer away from blacks and whites as they can be draining on one's complexion and choose navy, caramel and splashes of cherry red instead. Layering is not only great to keep away the winter chills, but elongates the torso, making you look slimmer. Layer a camisole or fitted cotton T-shirt with a lighter cardigan, followed by a heavier jacket or blazer. When wearing loose-fitting clothing, synch in the waist with a belt. Colour and patterns are great tools of illusion when dressing the shape of your body. Light colours and horizontal lines make one appear larger, while dark colours, vertical lines and smaller prints create a slimming effect. Complete the look with fashionable accessories like faux fur earmuffs, cable-knit pom-pom scarves, animal print mittens, snoods, ski resort knit beanies, floral lace tights, bow floppy hats and woolly thigh-highs. Winter is the perfect season to update your look by changing your hair. Dare to go short, add some layers, rock a fringe or change your hue. Complete the look with gemstone-inspired make-up and don't forget a swig of mascara to brighten your eyes."

Being polished on the inside is just as important as being polished on the outside, said nutrition expert Andrea du Plessis. Keep bugs at bay this winter by taking 1000mg of vitamin C per day, or 1500mg if you lead a very active lifestyle. "Vitamin C is one of the safest and most effective nutrients, and while it may not be the cure for the common cold it gives protection against immune system deficiencies, cardiovascular disease, pre-natal health problems, eye disease, and even skin wrinkling," explained Du Plessis.

"Vitamin C tablets should be taken after breakfast, as the presence of food slows down the digestion and allows your more time to absorb the vitamin C from your supplement optimally, and reduces the risk of digestive system irritation. Take your vitamin C supplement with cold or room temperature water. The heat from hot beverages will destroy some of the valuable vitamin C and the tannins and caffeine found in coffee and tea can bind some nutrients, making them less available for absorption. Take advantage of the delicious seasonal fruit: apples, avocados, dates, grapefruit, lemons, limes, melon, naartjies, oranges, pawpaws, pears and pineapples. Increase your intake of veggies by making homemade soup using fresh ingredients like asparagus, broad beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, fennel, Jerusalem artichokes, kale spinach, parsnips, pumpkin, radishes, turnips, and watercress."

Take a cue from author and clutter expert Kate Emmerson and not only use this season to boost your health, but simplify your life, mind and body. "Winter is a fabulous time to do bigger clearing jobs as the weather is cooler. Tackle the garage, basement or storeroom with a vengeance so when spring comes around, you'll be ready for action," advised Emmerson. "Use your time indoors to sort through old photos and discard ones that do not lift your energy. Go through old books and donate those you no longer want to a library or local hospice or church. De-clutter your mind by spending 10 minutes alone every day in meditation, or just sitting quietly focusing on your breathing. Become aware of where you are spiritually, mentally and physically at this stage in your life. Starting a journal can help put one's goals and feelings into perspective."

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