

WGSN forecasts bright, hybrid menswear for spring/summer 2019

By Maroefah Smith

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WGSN's trend forecast for menswear spring/summer 2019 sees a focus on hybrid styling, mixing and matching, and bolder, brighter colours. WGSN's director of retail and buying Sara Maggioni presented a buyers briefing based on a trend forecast for menswear spring/summer 2019 at Source Africa 2018, which was held at the Cape Town International Convention Centre from 20-21 June 2018.



BTS mixing and matching at the BBMAs in Gucci. Image credit: [Vogue](#)

While, there is a renewed, re-energised interest in vintage clothing, S/S 2019 is expected to rejig nostalgia with a 'faux vintage' aesthetic featuring vintage pieces with a modern twist. The retro trends will continue on but will forge a mix and match attitude. "The younger generations are getting their fashion education from the internet predominantly, particularly vintage. We are seeing these ideas of nostalgia, if you think about the success of retro sportswear, 90s sportswear in the past few seasons, that's not going away anytime soon," says Maggioni, WGSN's director of retail and buying.

Local brands will gain visibility as more international, big brands will look to collab with local designers as a shift to global style gets traction. "Collaborations have been so huge, it almost saturated the market a little bit. We are now seeing global brands looking at different sources, so rather than collaborating, it's the idea of looking at other arenas, other people and artists," says Maggioni.

In a move away from streetwear, menswear will refocus its energy on the emergence of a new formal. "There has been a return to formal looks, the past seasons have largely been shaped by streetwear because there's been a casualisation of menswear for many reasons. We are seeing tailoring coming back in quite a big way especially amongst younger men, younger influencers like at Vetements and Balenciaga," indicates Maggioni.

While there is a shift away from streetwear, it is only expected to grow in S/S 2019. Maggioni stresses that “Generation Z is very much defined by the whole ‘drop’ culture and this is an integral part of how they shop. What can we learn from that? We have brands like Palace, which sees queues of kids around the block. It continues to offer that freshness and that’s really important.

We are already seeing luxury brands really tapping into it. Céline and Hedi Slimane, [its new creative director](#), are going to change the business model and are going to do more ‘drops’ or limited collections. So, it’s even happening at luxury level.”



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Get some colour in there

As men have become more confident with colour, there has been an embrace of brighter, non-traditional shades. Purple is expected to make a come-up, particularly in streetwear as millennial pink grows a little tired. However, millennial pink is not going away anytime soon and will move toward softer and more brick tones. Gen Z yellow's optimistic, upbeat tone is relevant for menswear but in an ochre shade, which Maggioni believes is a little more commercial and easily applied across the board. More in the brightness department includes bolder reds, unusual greens, and lighter blues.

Innovative neutrals are moving into a fashion territory because it has a retro undertone but slightly edgier. Mocha is one of the standout colours emerging from the neutral camp and ties in with the idea of elevating a formerly mundane colour to fashion status.

Combo, graphic prints

The mix-and-match, combination aesthetic will trickle through to prints and patterns. With the return to vintage and retro looks, the resort shirt will come back with archaic prints usually reserved for a resort shirt done in a slightly modern way. In line with the embrace of 'smasual' – the merger of smart and casual wear – designers will mix traditional sartorial checks with streetwear silhouettes.

In a similar vein, fine stripes will present a toned down, more refined look and is influenced by the shift towards smarter looks. The hybrid model is seen in the development of tie-dye camo and the combination of the two results in a subtle look and will mostly be applied through large-scale placement and muted colours.

As indicated in the creative manifesto macro trend, there is a shift towards hyper-real graphics like layered photo montages, which gives rise to a disruptive attitude. There will also be an embrace of expressive prints from really loud graphics to more demure architectural drawings; hand-rendered, hand-painted illustrations which is also another driver of creative collaboration; slogans will forge on as a vehicle for sparking connection and capturing the zeitgeist, however, the newest interpretation of slogans will see it applied to the item vertically and on the back of items. Typeface is updated to a gradient effect in a technicolour ombre as an effective way of updating font and branding.



Graphic prints at Kenzo . Image credit: Kenzo

Relaxed suiting and louder sportswear

The jackets of the season will gravitate towards to the bomber and the coach jacket style, which may be used for experimental colours but done with a lightweight fabric so that it may still form part of a layered, buildable ensemble. Baseball shorts and slouch drawstring shorts remain ideal for the young and the contemporary market, but is constructed in a relaxed way and applied in longer silhouettes and oversized proportions.

The return to tailoring and the increase in vintage is seen in upscaled shirts with classic patterns like stripes, pinstripes checks but done in the skate-wear style with details like an oversized drop shoulder. Minimalist shirts rebalance the season's offering of elevated basics and the psychedelic resort shirt takes it up a level with neon colours, trippy swerves, and surreal motifs.

Local sport t-shirts present an ironic marriage between long sleeve printed tees and authentic long sleeve sportswear jerseys but emphasise hyper localised sports. Tracksuits are presented as separate pieces and colour blocking and pattern splicing presenting opportunities for updating. The taped seam pant in different fits from slim to tailored and fuller looks remains a key fashion item for the contemporary market.

The advent of dad jeans is in line with the emerging trend of retired millennials or cool millennials and hypebeasts dressing like their dad. The smart pleated pant continues in a more tapered, slimmer silhouette with a higher waistline.

Suits remain but in a more relaxed silhouette which makes it more accessible and commercial. The cargo or utility pant continues through as a new casual option in slimmer fits and is made with technical fabrics that blend the modern aesthetic.

Striping and blocking

With an increasing number of brands looking to be sustainably aware, a re-energising of dead stock will encourage ways of upcycling old pieces. This can be seen in sport blocking, which also points to the influence of the 70s, 80s and 90s.



Colour blocking and striping at Louis Vuitton S/S 2019. Image credit: Louis Vuitton

This will see denim presented in a cut-and-paste style with more designers approaching the fabric from a vintage, relaxed, lovelorn, lived-in angle. Additionally, textual relief offers a way to revive best-seller knits, shirting, tailoring items; designers will focus on adding dimension to amplify staple items.

In S/S 2019, stripes will be predominant in a manner of different ways from tipping stripes, which takes the sartorial classic checks and mixes it with tipping to bright coloured stripes and even rainbow stripes which reflects the Gen Z yellow optimism. Crafted patterns with an artisanal feel continue widespread across menswear, which in a commercial setting could be applied to hoodies and print.



Checks, checks and checks. Image credit: [WGSN](#)

Finally, sheen, although considered a bit directional, forms part of the recent rise in the use of technical fabrics in collections. Technical lightweight nylons are key for jackets, in particular, as well as printed silk shirts offered as an

alternative to the resort shirt.

ABOUT MAROEFAH SMITH

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