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Summer finally seems to be just around the corner. Though winter/spring fashion has its merits, you have to admit that lacing up those boots, piling on the layers and hunting for that pesky pair of gloves does get old after a while. Itâ€™s time to welcome back the easy, playfulness of summertime apparel and check out what looks particularly fresh this season.

Last autumnâ€™s catwalks, as well as recent music festivals like Coachella and South by Southwest, have provided a glimpse into what you can expect for Summer 2012. Skimpy crop-tops and high-waisted skirts have been a reoccurring trend as well as bright colour-block ensembles featuring stunning turquoises, purples, oranges and pinks.

If the weather where you are isnâ€™t quite warm enough for skirts and sleeveless tops, maxi dresses or full-length jumpsuits with bright bold prints are a more full-coverage option. Contrast the bright patterns with a cropped denim jacket for further protection from those chilly summer evenings.

Perhaps the most iconic garment of summertime is the cutoff jean short. Choose a short length that flatters your figure and donâ€™t feel the need to go super short. A pair of cycling-shorts style cutoffs that land half-way down your thigh are often much more chic and flattering than skimpy â€˜Daisy Dukesâ€™. Wear these classic shorts with a simple tank top or try a slightly cropped tee if youâ€™re feeling a bit bolder.

Shorts, dresses and skirts arenâ€™t the only options for summer, however. Every woman still needs a pair of chic trousers for those breezy British summer evenings. As always, some of the biggest trends this summer will be vintage-inspired pieces with a modern twist. Channel some 70s-era flower power with a pair of exaggerated flares or go preppy with 50s-inspired cigarette jeans in pretty pastels or classic blue denim. Pair these throwback jeans with a simple tee and embody the effortless beauty of summertime. To dress them up a bit, throw on a fitted blazer and your favourite platform pumps.

Speaking of footwear, there is a range of options for your feet this summer. Flip-flops are always ideal for the beach and will be back in this seasonâ€™s soft pastel colour palate. For a bit more height, wedge sandals and thick-heeled open-toe pumps are your best bet.

Thus, as summer approaches and those thick knitted jumpers return to hibernation, it doesnâ€™t take much to embrace the cool casualness of summer fashion. Unlike the thick fabrics and structured tailoring of wintertime, summer is all about letting your hair down and lightening up your wardrobe with seasonal shades.

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Sean Burke - About Author:

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