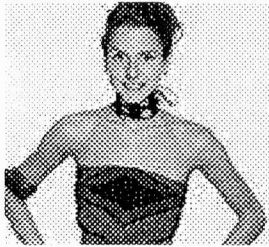


Stylish or sleazy? What to wear on summer dates

By Rosalind Cummings-Yeates



For many women, summer means relaxing and letting it all hang out — with skimpy shorts, halters, minis and cropped tops. Although all of these style choices point to fun in the sun and cool relief during rising temperatures, what kind of impression do these clothes leave on a date? Unless you're trying to attract customers by showing off your wares, not a good one. So if you're a style hottie but you're not trying to compete with Britney or Christina, here are a few hot weather date fashion tips:

Bare is okay, as long as it's not everything

Showing off pretty shoulders in a halter top or letting a glimpse of cleavage show with a camisole can be very alluring; just don't pair them with a micro mini or shorts. If one part of your body is showing, make sure you balance the look by covering the other part. "It's about looking stylish, not slutty," says Alison Deyette, fashion expert for stylebakery.com. "With Internet dating, you want to leave the best impression." This means wearing brief tops like halters and camisoles with pants or not-so-low-slung jeans. Pull together a mini skirt or shorts with a full coverage top.

Avoid anything that reveals too much

You might have a fabulous pair of legs, but a micro mini that hovers just below your rear is showing a little too much fabulousness. Think about what you'll be doing on the date — sitting, walking, bending over? You don't want to have to obsess about what's peeking out. Clothes that ride up — tube tops, minis, teeny scarf tops, for example, or down — low-rise jeans, spandex shorts, strapless tops — might just show more than you want to reveal.

Don't take fashion cues from TV and music stars

If you can compete with Pamela Anderson in the chest department, don't delude yourself by thinking you can wear itchy-bitsy halter tops and get away with it. Good taste and common sense are not the hallmarks of celebrities, but you need to use it when it comes to dressing for a date. Sarah Jessica may run around Manhattan in five-inch stilettos and a ballerina tutu, but that doesn't mean it looks good on you. Don't try to dress like a star — avoid towering heels and flesh-exposing get-ups. You want to look like a real person, albeit one with great style.

Don't wear clothes that look too much like lingerie

Yes, see-through mesh tops and camisoles are all the rage, but that doesn't mean you need to wear them on a date. "You don't want to look like you're beckoning him to the bedroom," says Deyette. "Skip sheer, skip mesh, and we don't want to see your underthings on the first date." For a tasteful but flimsy top, Deyette suggests bright colors and layers so that there are no peek-a-boo moments.

Summer dresses are best

When it comes to comfort, style and sex appeal, nothing beats a sassy summer dress. As long as it's not too low-cut, short or clingy, it's hard to go wrong with a flirty, warm weather frock. According to Deyette, a quality summer dress is the answer to all of your summer style dilemmas. "A summer dress is ideal. You just pull it on, add accessories, and you're done. For a first date, a dress is perfect."

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