

THE NIP & THE SNIP!

It is that time of the year when one feels a nip in the air and the visible drop in temperatures has everyone rummaging through their closets for winter wear. **Bindu Gopal Rao** explores the innovations and new trends in winter wear clothing.



@Ted Baker



@Lecoanet Hemant



@Lecoanet Hemant



@Blumerq

Winter wear in India has transformed due to the core need for protection from the cold, especially in the northern and eastern parts of the country, and over the years, it has evolved into a fashion statement. "In the 1990s, feminine silhouettes included double-breasted long jackets, finely knitted cardigans, padded shoulder jackets, khaki jackets, woolen tunics, classic camel blazers and boots. Fashion has not gone too far yet, we still revolve around faux fur coats, long jackets, blazers, cardigans, capes and boots. **It's quite clear that fashion has taken its inspiration from the past, though the styles, patterns, prints and fabrics might have undergone a modish revolution," says Nakul Bajaj, CEO, Darveys.com.**



@Lecoanet Hemant



@Lecoanet Hemant



@Moschino

IT'S DIFFERENT!

Indian winter wear is quite different from western winter gear, primarily due to the different weather conditions. Global warming and environmental changes have considerably transformed the weather. Climatic changes continue over a longer period and are significant in influencing winter wear. Winter dressing has come a long way in India, from hand-knit bulky pullovers to lightweight machine washable sweaters. "There have been innumerable blends and innovations in compositions so far, which have further lent warmth, elegance and weightlessness to a range of winter wear and outer wear. The fabrics, like cotton and linen, which were once restricted for only summers, have been nicely blended and knitted to style up winter wardrobes," says Rajkumar Ningtamba, Design Head, ColorPlus.

Again, some materials are better suited for a particular type of winter wear. "Worsted wool is typically used for suits, skirts, blazers and jackets as it's a hardy, smooth and long-wearing manufactured yarn. Flannel is perfect for warm, comfortable pajamas, or a shirt, as it is soft, warm and fuzzy. Corduroy, with its raised and ribbed texture, is ideal for casual pants, long-sleeved shirts and jackets. Leather, suede and sheepskin are great for jackets, outdoor coats and hats and velvet, velour and velveteen are soft, silky fabrics that are light but warm and are perfect for casual indoor lounging around. Wool is suitable for trousers, suits, blazers, sweaters, skirts, coats, socks and scarves," says Designer Rocky S. Winter wear in India majorly comprises of cardigans, puffer coats, jackets, scarves, shawls and knit wear.

THE INNOVATIONS

Winter wear, especially sweaters and jackets, has completely undergone a transformation and brands are promoting them as options for dressing up and not only as seasonal protective clothing. There are many new exciting silhouettes trending this Fall/Winter. The latest introduction in winter fabrics includes silk, metallic furs, leatherette, suede and printed laces. "This season, it's all about renewing classic denims through the use of hand dyed yarns, crossed in typical white and blue, in twill weave. The wrinkle fabrics use special finishing, enabling wrinkle reduction by 60 per cent, blend linen and elastomeric; in yarn, in weft-and-warp blend, mono-stretch," says Bajaj. Fabrics like silk, satin, jacquards, lace, cashmere, velvet and twill are the

WINTER WEAR, ESPECIALLY SWEATERS AND JACKETS HAVE COMPLETELY UNDERGONE A TRANSFORMATION AND BRANDS ARE PROMOTING THEM AS OPTIONS FOR DRESSING UP AND NOT ONLY AS SEASONAL, PROTECTIVE CLOTHING.

key textures for this stunning winter collection. "The choice of fabrics is an important component in the development of new gear. Warm fabrics in linen blends or with brushed and mellow finishes and combinations with wind proof, lined and breathable layers are in. Wind proof panels are substituted in strategic spots for breathable panels. The result is warm, windproof, breathable gear," says Rocky S.



@Lecoanet Hemant

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Woodland's latest 'Techno-Jacket' series is inspired by the in-depth understanding of varying weather conditions in various pockets of the country. The limited-edition line of these jackets have varying technologies like 'Infralite,' 'Heat Lock' and 'Storm Breaker' to suit different cold conditions. Usually, the winter fabrics are thicker to block the cool air and maintain the skin, creating a warm temperature and these include wool, leather, tweed and different types of knits that beat the wind. However, today, apparel manufacturers are experimenting with different fabrics which not only look trendy but are light weight in nature as well. "For Infralite, Woodland

has used a thin loft insulation made up of micro fibres with excellent compatibility and softness. The lightweight insulation is provided by core fibers that are engineered to add appropriate levels of comfort without adding weight and are best suited for wet winters. For the cold and dry winter, the lightweight 'Heat Lock Jacket' is highly durable. The Heat Lock technology has two variations, one is the 'Foil' and other is the 'Fleece.'

Heat Lock Foil is made up of a silver-dot coated fabric. These silver dots not only regulate the body temperature but also boost the retained body heat by 20 per cent and dissipate excess body heat generated. 'Heat Lock Fleece' is made up of micro fibers forming air chambers. These air chambers act as air pockets that trap air and prevent loss of body heat. It provides excellent heat insulation without weight. This fabric doesn't form unpleasant fibre nodules. The Storm Breaker multi functions as being wind proof, water resistant, breathable and cold resistant and provides protection against severe dry winter conditions. Made up of highly concentrated woven fabric, this multilayered jacket consists of a top layer made of water based PU and the middle layer consists of a membrane with a continuous micro porous structure.

WOODLAND'S LATEST 'TECHNO-JACKET' SERIES IS INSPIRED BY THE IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF VARYING WEATHER CONDITIONS IN VARIOUS POCKETS OF THE COUNTRY.





@Lecoanet Hemant

@Lecoanet Hemant

@Wrap Studio

@Wrap Studio

THERE ARE A FEW MAJOR INFLUENCES COMING UP THIS SEASON. CONSUMERS ARE PREFERRING SWEATERS THAT ARE LIGHTWEIGHT, WITH DEEP COLOURS AND HAVE GREAT STYLING.

It provides breathable wind protection while keeping the chilly wind away from entering whereas the inner lining comprises of fleece that provides excellent heat insulation,” explains Harkirat Singh, MD, Woodland. The technological advancement of materials is another key factor, this season. Water repellant, wax-treated winter wear will be in vogue.

IN VOGUE!

“The latest innovations in the winter fabrics include the bamboo fabric, fabrics made of hemp, and even polyester materials are being used in winter wear which are not only light, warm but stylish too. Of course, cashmere remains a big favourite, especially for elegant and light winter wear and brands such as Marc Jacobs and Iceberg have an impressive collection for this season,” says Vatsal Poddar, owner of Crisp and Fervour stores, Bengaluru. The latest innovation includes Indo-western long coats, double breasted jackets and modified versions of the cape. There are a lot of Navajo prints and weaves in the upcoming season and some ethnic weaves with a lot of texture with pompoms.

NEW VISTAS

There are a few major influencers coming up this season. Consumers prefer sweaters that are lightweight (using superfine yarns), with deep bright colours which add to their personality and have great style (elegant wear) and which are not street fashion. “Raymond Ready-To-Wear is focusing on this segment and offers not only high quality products (made from superfine Merino Wool) but elegant styling and international designs for the evolved consumers. Raymond is focusing on cashmere, wool and wool blends and continuously innovates with new blends and styling. Apart from sweaters, another emerging category is winter jackets and there too, Raymond is bringing in newer concepts and high quality products made from Raymond Tweed fabrics and woollen jackets to complete the look,” says a spokesperson from the brand. This year, there was growth in the pre-winter category with the category gaining market share with light weight jackets, sweat shirts and cotton pullovers. “In fact, the jackets proved to be in high demand as compared to the previously popular sweaters. Another trend that has been noticed

is that winter wear jackets are becoming more of style statements than utility based products. However, irrespective of the upcoming trends that are being spotted, there is still a good demand of heavy jackets and winter wear in markets like J&K and the Northeast. Also, there is good demand and creativity in the pre-winter category which resulted in innovation in new blends like cotton nylon, nylon viscose, 100 per cent acrylic, 100 per cent cotton, cotton wool, wool silk, etc. The other area which is showing innovations is styling, which is demonstrating some unique designs with respect to zippers, half zippers, cardigans and new silhouettes,” opines a spokesperson from Van Heusen.



@Woodland

@Woodland



@Lecoanet Hemant



@Lecoanet Hemant

@Lecoanet Hemant

Gummy coatings and a supple tactility in outerwear fabrics is one of the key fabrics in outerwear, this winter. A lot of texturised and raised relief patterns creating dark 3-D effects are in fashion, achieved by quilting different patterns. Also, embossed print designs on tops and bottoms. Fur trimmings on jackets and sweaters are preferred. Subtle, tonal patterns and a lot of grindle knits (double shaded yarn) sweaters and tops are in fashion. Parkas and bomber jackets are back in fashion and are continuing to remain so,” says Dhanya, Head Design, Blumerq. Opine Lecoanet Hemant, Designers, Lecoanet Hemant, “Each season, we try to find new techniques for the weaving of the collection. Winter fabrics have evolved from woolens to something more experimental - handmade embroidered lace, woven leather and silk clique, materials are unique to us, designed and fashioned at our atelier (workshop). A fabric’s appearance and properties can be affected by the way it is constructed. These innovations in winter fabrics create luxury and elegance, which add a rich texture and sophisticated flair to the look.” ■