

Little black list of holiday essentials

by Sharon Mosley

Every chic woman (and lots of men, too) have a little black list of fashionable must-haves in their wardrobes that they always depend on to brighten up their days and, especially, their nights. Holiday nights are when black really shines.

So it's no wonder that every year fashion designers reinvent our favorite classics.

Here are some new items to put on your holiday fashion black list:

THE LIST - Every chic woman has a little black list of fashionable must-haves in their wardrobes they always depend on to brighten up their days and especially their nights. CNS Photo courtesy of Ellen Tracy. The little black dress -- It's always a holiday staple. You can't go wrong with this one. This year, there are so many dresses to choose from: empire waist chiffon styles, velvet sheaths, ruffled silks and tiered tulle.

The black cropped jacket -- In velvet, it's a stunner, especially with a ruffled front; in a military style, it's officially casual.

The wide black belt -- This is an accessory that will automatically update any outfit; do it in patent leather for the holidays.

The black skinny jeans -- Slim pants are a great way to give your holiday jackets and tops a new twist on the latest proportion: volume on top, narrow on the bottom.

The black leggings -- Another trendy option for the bottom half -- in velvet or velour, they're slinky with boots and can be dressed up or down.

The black knit tunic -- Whether it's a turtleneck or cowlneck, V-neck or scoop-neck, these sweaters have morphed into longer lengths with wider sleeves. A perfect complement to slim pants and leggings.

The black cardigan -- For casual evening soirees, a lightweight cashmere cardigan can really add the finishing touch -- the longer, the better.

The black shrug -- Another new way to add a little cover-up to your holiday outfit is this abbreviated jacket,

which is more casual in a sweatersy crochet knit or more elegant in a ruffled velvet or shaggy fur.

The embellished black boot -- An evening boot is a great way to update skirts and pants. A little bit of embroidery or beading really adds a holiday touch.

The jeweled black evening shoe -- Platform pumps or slip-on sandals, go with the ones that sparkle.

A little black evening clutch -- Scour the vintage stores for a real touch of offbeat glamour.

The long black gloves -- One of the most elegant touches of the season, especially when worn with a jacket with elbow-length sleeves. For evening, go with velvet.

No little black jewelry -- If you can't see it, don't wear it. Jewelry is big and bold this year. Concentrate on one statement necklace, cuff bracelet or long earrings. And leave the little stuff at home. Sharon Mosley is a former fashion editor of the Arkansas Gazette in Little Rock and executive director of the Fashion Editors and Reporters Association. © Copley News Service

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