

## In Fashion: Dancing into spring

by Sharon\_Mosley

This spring it's time to tiptoe through the tulips and dance into some of the season's best style trends all inspired by the elegance and simplicity of the ballerina's world. From pointe shoes to filmy skirts to soft wrap sweaters, fashion designers are adapting the graceful dancer's chic wardrobe of must haves and giving it their own spin.

**BALLET FASHION** - Dance into spring with soft ballet-inspired fashion, such as this stretch jersey v-neck dress in seafoam green over Capri leggings from Newport News. CNS Photo courtesy of Alessandro D'Andrea for Newport News.

The ballet shoe is one of spring's most popular trends taken from the dance studio. Women everywhere, young and old, are embracing the new flats and thankfully giving their stilettos a rest for a while. There are plenty of pointe-inspired shoes from woven, leather, metallic ones to peep-toe, printed ones. In square toes or rounded versions, this footwear phenomenon is bound to give tired feet a real lift this year.

Another way to jazz up a spring wardrobe with some dance-inspired accessories is the slouchy handbag. Long, a staple of the ballet student's repertoire, the oversized carryall has been updated for fashionistas with hobo-like charm in leather or crocheted versions.

The headband is another one of the dancer's traditional accessories that has been translated into spring's everyday wardrobe. In wide, stretchy, black versions it's a classic; in colorful prints and patterns it's a novelty way to add a fashion statement.

But one of the best ways to give the dancer's delicate touch to your spring closet is with the softest of easy-wearing separates. Try a knit, surplice tee with ties at the shoulder. Or a ballet-neck, jersey knit top with sheer, billowy sleeves. The blouson tunic is another great look for spring and looks great with skinny pants or leggings - another dancer's inspiration.

The catsuit or a dancer's unitard is one way to build on the latest look in layering. But camisoles and tanks also make great partners when teamed up with tunic-length hoodies and drawstring pants or dolman-sleeve shrugs and jackets. Keep the original layer lean and leggy, then pile on the volume with swingy bias-cut skirts, wrap tops or tunics.

And don't forget the dress. This spring, the dance-inspired dress is a great alternative to tailored shirtdresses and suits. The best style? A knit dress with a surplice-wrap neck, sash belt and full skirt a la Diane Von Furstenburg. It's a great packable piece and perfect for so many different occasions - whether you're going to the ballet or dancing to the tune of the tulips.

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