

In Fashion: Short stories

by Sharon_Mosley

Nothing says summer quite like a comfortable pair of shorts. When the weather turns hot and it's time to toss the jeans to the back of the closet, the shorts and skirts take over. But, of course, just how short you go depends on your own age and comfort level with your bottom half.

WILMA JUMPER - The Wilma jumper from Just Johnson is the perfect shorts outfit for summer. The one-piece button down shorts ensemble is great with a shirt underneath for the cooler nights or worn alone on hot summer days. CNS Photo courtesy of Just Johnson. "Shorts are a great way to keep cool in the summer and show off a really great asset ... legs!" says Kristen Johnson, designer of Just Johnson, a Los Angeles-based label popular with A-listers including Kate Moss, Jessica Simpson, Mischa Barton, Lindsay Lohan, Cameron Diaz and others who have been seen wearing Just Johnson's trendy short shorts.

Johnson does have some advice for the rest of us who might not exactly have "celebrity" legs - yes, some of us can remember wearing "hot pants" at one time in our life; however, that doesn't mean we're anxious to repeat fashion history - but we still might feel like strutting out in the short stuff this summer.

On Short Length:

Short shorts should have about a 2.5-inch inseam and hit right underneath the biggest part of the thigh.

"That way it's still sexy but not slutty," Johnson says, "and it hides the cellulite we would like to believe we don't have."

Mid-length shorts land about mid-thigh; long shorts should hit at mid-knee because if it is above the knee it is less flattering. These new "city" shorts are great alternatives to cropped pants.

Short shorts look cute with a chunky heel for daytime. The espadrilles and cork wedges are in this summer and complement the shorts well.

"Sandals and flats are great too but anything too strappy looks less classy," adds Johnson.

Don't go too sexy on top, she cautions.

"It's all about proportion."

Johnson suggests balancing shorts this summer with loose-fitting, floaty tops, or fitted tanks and T-shirts.

Short doesn't necessarily mean wearing "shorts" either, according to Johnson. She offers a variety of shorter one-piece, button-down jumpers, rompers and skirts that are great options for summer's casual dress-it-up or dress-it-down occasions. Pair with sandals for the beach, and dress up with stilettos for a night on the town.

And remember, says the designer, shorts are not just for summer anymore.

"You can easily transition into fall by adding a nice cashmere turtleneck. Then add tights, leggings or boots. They're all popular accessories and really can extend the life of your shorts."

Just Johnson is sold in finer department stores and specialty boutiques nationwide including Barneys, Neiman Marcus, Intermix, Madison and Fred Segal. Or online at www.shopbop.com, www.activeendeavors.com and www.revolveclothing.com.

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