

In Fashion: What not to buy dad for Father's Day

by Sharon_Mosley

Before you buy another polo shirt, another pair of khaki shorts or another predictable tie, stop and rethink your dad's (and your) sense of style. It may be time for dad to get a makeover, and you may be the one to bring him into the modern world of fashion.

JUST FOR DAD - Choose classic fashion gifts for dad in updated prints and fabrics like Tommy Bahama's stylish blue linen shirt and shorts. CNS Photo courtesy of Tommy Bahama. "Ask any woman and she'll agree - a man looks his sexiest and most handsome in simple, classic clothes," says Sherrie Mathieson, one of America's leading style consultants and author of "Forever Cool" (Thompson Peak Publishing, \$23), a helpful guidebook that provides amazing makeovers for fashion-challenged men and women over 50.

As 75 million baby boomers start aging, what was once considered "hip" to wear, may now seem foolish, according to Mathieson, who has set out to change the look of middle age. "Unfortunately, 90 percent of baby boomer men (and their fathers) think that flowered or splashy print shirts are high style," she says, maintaining that only "vintage Hawaiian shirts" have merit anymore. "This predictable, fussy - not to mention boring - look has virtually become a national uniform!"

Mathieson also disses the T-shirt and jacket combo made popular by Don Johnson in the '80s hit television show, "Miami Vice."

"Men (as well as women) often cling to formula dressing that should have been retired long ago," she says, noting that since men's fashion trends don't change as often as women's, many men hold onto their clothes forever.

How many of us know men who think they still have a 34-inch waist and it's more like approaching closer to 38 or 40 inches?

"It's not about being a 'fashion plate,'" adds Mathieson, "it's about simplicity in both color and style."

The style guru urges men to reassess their wardrobes at least once a year and reevaluate their choices, "always striving for a classically-based modern look."

So before you shop for a Father's Day gift for the significant men in your life, be "Forever Cool" and take note of these tips from Mathieson on what NOT to buy:

- Steer clear of the underage looks like T-shirts with juvenile emblems and logos.

- Avoid front-pleated denim pants that are neither jean nor trouser.

- Tapered jeans shorten legs and belong to another era.

- The '80s leather bomber jacket is a has-been.

- Never wear shorts that are too tight or too short.

- Don't pair dark shirts with light ties.

- Out with the garish, flashy ties.

- Ditto socks with sandals.

- Skip the oversized "Mr.Magoo" glasses.

- Flashy jewelry is out: too-gold chains, diamond rings and earrings, and gold watches with diamonds.

Instead, buy Dad these casual classics:

- A medium blue, classic-cut shirt will flatter any man's complexion.

- A flat-knit sweater that zips up the front is a great alternative to a jacket.

- The designer, leather bowling shoe in black is trendy but simple enough not to look over-styled.

- The Cubano-style shirt combines classic and ethnic into a great casual jacket for warmer weather.

- Linen shirts paired with cargo shorts create a fresh look.

- Brown, leather flip-flops offer a comfortable alternative to the heavy look of sneakers.

- And if your Dad does have a few of those flower-powered shirts in his closet, ease him into a great new style with a retro design.

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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