In Fashion: The frame game - summer sunglasses

by Sharon_Mosley

What is the one accessory you can't live without in the summer? Sunglasses, of course, and they've got to look so cool you could chill a margarita with them. And it does help if you can see out of them too.

SUNGLASSES - What is the one accessory you can't live without in the summer? Sunglasses. CNS Photo courtesy of Embry Rucker for Angel Eyewear. "The demand for fashionable eyewear is enormous," says Rene Soltis, optician and spokesperson for the Vision Council of America. "Sunglasses have always been a popular accessory, but today's consumers are more dialed into the fashion benefits of prescription eyewear and are making it a priority that their glasses express their personal style."

So whether you're chilling on the beach this summer or blocking the sun at a tennis match, finding a pair of sunglasses that is both fashionable and functional is a high priority. Here are some of the hottest trends this summer at sunglass and eyewear retailers:

- Cool and Creamy - For summer, white is a top color choice for sunglasses - whether white metal on an aviator or large white plastic frames a la Jessica Simpson. Natural shades of pearl, cream and sand are also white hot. Pearlized or luminescence is key for summer accessories. (www.angel-eyewear.com)

- Red Hot - Check out the red hot shades popular among celebrities like Christina Aguilera, Jessica Biel and Mary J. Blige. (www.solsticestores.com)

- Mod Squad - The black and white frames in eyewear and sunwear hark back to the spirit of the '60s and the '70s with strong graphic designs and geometric shapes combining the two classic colors. (Ellen Tracy, Amadeus, Aoyama)

- Heavy Metal - Bronze shines as another color of choice, from shimmering metallic to tawny, matte hues.

Burnished finishes create woodlike treatments in harvest colors. Other metals to choose from: chrome, gold or gunmetal. (www.angel-eyewear.com)

- The Naturals - Raffia, wicker, leather and wood accent plastic and metal frames to give them a unique look. Animal skin prints and crocodile patterns also show up on frames this summer. (Ferragamo, Coach, Christian Roth)

- Go Retro - Time to trade in those aviators for the classic Wayfarer frames made famous by celebrity legends like Audrey Hepburn and Tom Cruise. Great choices for both men and women. (www.ray-ban.com)

- Designer Logos - If you're into playing the name game, then you'll love the shades with the signatures - Valentino, Giorgio Armani, Juicy Couture and Marc Jacobs, just to name a few.

- Arts and Crafts - Artistically designed frames add a new edge to sunglasses this summer with sculpted shapes, laser cutouts and abstract details. Leave the big bling behind. Etched temples, lace and intricate patterns in an array of textures like raised dots, rope and twisted metal give fashionable frames more of a subtle artisan's touch. (Ellen Tracy, Fendi, Koali)

- Big is Still big - Oversized frames still reign in bold retro styles that have a hint of '60s feel with round and square shapes - a favorite of the star crowd who love to avoid the camera flashes after a late night. (Look for Gucci, YSL, Kate Spade at www.solsticestores.com)

- Sporty Chic - Wraparound sunglasses take on a sports-inspired look in both metals and plastic frames. Athletic styles are becoming more and more popular in optical stores with streamlined frames boasting state-of-the-art technologies. (Calvin Klein, Dior, Tony Stewart)

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