In Fashion: Cool summer dressing

by Sharon_Mosley

Pour it on. The dress that is. It's one of summer's coolest fashion trends, and hot weather is the perfect excuse to wear one when just the thought of putting on a suit makes you break out into a sweat.

SUMMER DRESS - Be cool this summer with a spaghetti strap empire dress, such as this one from designer Kathryn Conover. CNS Photo. And don't worry. Even if you're a die-hard fan of separates, there's a summer dress out there for you. From shirtdresses to halters to wraps, in colorful prints and comfortable fabrics, the good news is there are lots of dress styles to choose from - no coordination needed. And yes, the "mini" is making a big statement, but there are lots of knee-lengths and even ankle-lengths around too.

"Nothing looks as good as a dress right now," says designer Kathryn Conover. "If you want to be flawless, go get a dress."

And if you want to be cool, here are some of the best dresses to reach for this summer:

The shirtdress - A classic, this belted look is perfect for most working girls and it's a great way to look professional during the summer months. The button-front basic is cool in cotton or linen.

The empire - The baby doll top has morphed into a longer length for the season's current dress parade and is a silhouette that can be worn by many shapes and sizes of women. In soft jersey, this dress looks great on its own or layered over pants or capris.

The chemise - Another big trend on the loose this summer, it happens to be one of my favorites harking back to the '80s when graphic color blocking hit the fashion charts in a big way.

The A-line shift - Audrey Hepburn loved these and most women love the way these dresses fit, gently gliding over trouble spots and looking cool at the same time. Toss on a cardigan sweater and you've got instant style for an indoor office or an outdoor dinner.

The wrap dress - The surplice-wrap dress is probably one of the most popular dress silhouettes around this summer. In knits, it has a fluid shape that flatters most women. In halter styles, it's even more appealing in hot weather.

The sundress - A summer staple, this season's sundresses can be found in cotton, casual floral prints for daytime, or strapless, silk cocktail styles for evening. In longer lengths, it's a trendy hit.

The vintage slip dress - Definitely a nod to the retro era of wispy, chiffon floral slips a la Daisy and her friends in "The Great Gatsby." These romantic dresses are long on sophistication and as charming as a picnic in the park.

The bubble dress - A little on the pouffy side, this dress is only for the young and the adventurous. This summer, however, you'll find that the big bubble has burst and these dresses are not quite as voluminous as before, but still just as frothy.

Sharon Mosley is a former fashion editor of the Arkansas Gazette in Little Rock and executive director of the Fashion Editors and Reporters Association.

Â© Copley News Service

In Fashion: Cool summer dressing by Sharon_Mosley