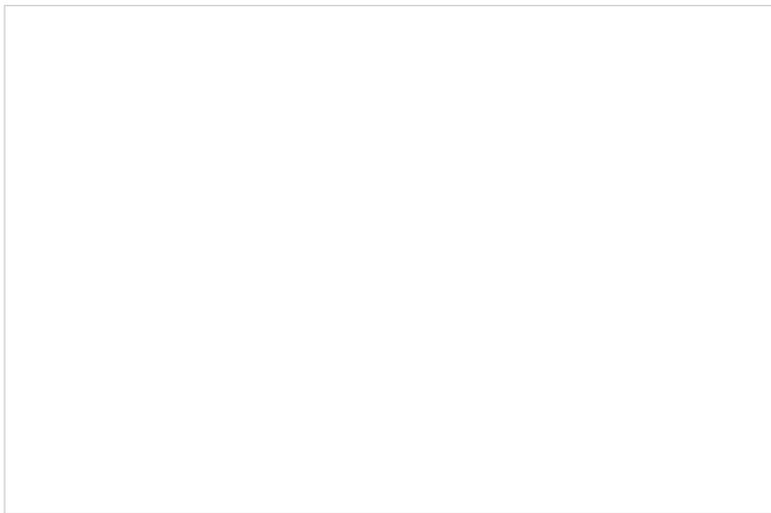


Women's Intuition: Hot Summer Buys from Female-Owned Companies

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Discover ways to brighten up

your wardrobe and your social life

By Darrah Le Montre, staff writer

Los Angeles, CA ([RPRN](#)) 5/28/2009 -- With summer upon us and the economy still looking drab, women everywhere are finding ways to stretch their shopping dollars -- seeking items and experiences that are just as luxurious as when [Paris Hilton](#) reigned supreme. Luckily, there are some fabulous female-owned businesses out there that promise to help us do, just that.

For those in coupledness, [Lavish Lifestyles](#) is a personal concierge service that enables busy twosomes to indulge in dates that are scrupulously pre-planned by founder Cynika Drake.

“Our members want to go beyond dinner and a movie. Sometimes they have

a plan and just need someone to make sure it's flawlessly executed. Other times, they're relieved when we come up with an out-of-the-ordinary itinerary," explains Drake.

Having worked in the service industry for 10 years, this New York ex-pat has luxury on a budget down pat.

Drake reveals, "Itineraries range from the extravagant, i.e. a private [Learjet](#) whisking you and a guest to San Francisco for a night of opera, to the more simply romantic, like dinner and a jazz ensemble in your own home. The hands-down favorite so far is 'The 'Fairytale Itinerary.' We surprise the couple with a whole romantic evening. Neither one of them knows the plan, so they really experience something together."

Lavish Lifestyles has relationships with vendors and offers discounts on services as part of a two-tier annual membership.

Some professional and personal benefits include:

- Personally arranged domestic and international travel
- Recommendations on various places of interest
- Concierge secured tickets for major music, sporting and theatrical events
- Savings on everything from hotels to spa treatments
- Hands-on decorating in your home, hotel, or specified location

Drake says, "just because we are experiencing tough economic times doesn't mean you have to stop dining at your favorite restaurant, start skipping your monthly spa treatments, or even pass on a romantic weekend getaway." Amen.

For those fashionistas looking for vibrant threads to rock their closet that won't be found on every other concert-goer this Saturday night, check out [Mami Afrika](#), African-inspired women's wear.

After traveling to Kenya and collecting a multitude of fabric, lead designer Wawi Amasha returned to California and began creating a single dress. From that dress, her alternative spin on native African clothing emerged into a full-blown clothing company.

Amasha said, “My goal is to change the way people think about African fashion. I use fabric found from all over Africa. I mostly use ‘[The Khanga](#),’ a cloth also known as Lesu, which is a simple piece of often brightly colored rectangular cloth, which is wrapped around the body. I offer designs that represent our African tradition but with a modern twist. These designs are fun, funky, and fabulous. They are to be enjoyed by women from all walks of life, especially those not afraid of color.”

Aside from [Angelina Jolie](#), many other females are flying the luminous skies, and thus a niche item has popped up that is quite engaging. [Abingdon Watches](#) is the only female pilot watch currently available. Ranging from \$250-\$400, these feminine versions of typically male designs are inspired by prominent female pilots. Two models are available including the minimalist, “Amelia” and high-glam “Jackie.”

Pilot and founder of Abingdon Watches, Chelsea “Juice” Welch struggled with a bulky men’s watch before emerging as an innovative designer.

She says, “More women are flying today than ever before and the aviation watches available today just aren’t styled for a lady’s wrist. We want to give women the opportunity to have a watch that is more feminine looking but functions as well as any other aviation watch – if not better.”

Abingdon Watches are available on their site and ship to the US, Great Britain, Scandinavia, European Union and Australia. Chelsea recently received a special letter from someone deployed in Afghanistan who had a watch sent to an aspiring female pilot in the states.

About the author:

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