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Life | Fashion

'Tis the season for dressing up

Don your frocks and shake out the sequins – holiday parties are calling for glam

By **HEATHER TOSKAN**, SPECIAL TO QMI AGENCY

Last Updated: December 5, 2010 8:45am

Story

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Christmas is fast approaching and Hanukkah is already well underway. The invitations to social and family gatherings are flying in faster than snowflakes.

"This holiday season is all about gold and glitz! Soft fabrics like chiffon covered with sequins are important, as are short dresses with plenty of volume," says Montreal-based fashion designer Stacey Zhang.

It's a banner season for those who enjoy wearing dresses, with many designers exploring new silhouettes and styles.

"Dresses are short, structured and sexy, a la Lady Gaga and Rihanna, this holiday season," says Naana Tennachie Yankey, the Montreal-based designer of Coccolly.

Pull out all the stops in above-the-knee skirts and hourglass-shaped dresses in luxurious fabrics such as satin, lace and velvet. Full skirts with tulle trimmed underskirts are a fun movement for the trend.

As always, the little black dress reigns supreme, with red, fuchsia, emerald green, violet, ivory and metallic gold among the other top seasonal colours.

Skirts are often paired with coordinating bustier style, strapless and sweetheart neckline tops.

All of the above are also defining details on the season's many curve-flattering dresses, some of which also feature 3/4 length sleeves, ruffle trimmed necklines and asymmetrical hemlines.

One-shouldered and corset style tops also jazz up basic bottoms, such as pencil skirts, slim fitting and flowing pants.

"You can never go wrong with a pencil skirt and a rich jewel toned blouse," says Toronto-based designer Rachel Sin. "A button down silk blouse paired with skinny trousers accessorized with a belt makes for another easy go-to look."

To keep things casual, dress up skinny jeans and leggings with sequined tanks, tunics and blazers.

"Invest in a great quality pair of leggings made of opaque fabric, whether shiny or textured and be sure to wear them with longer tops or mini dresses to keep the look classy for the holidays," says Tennachie. "Don't try too hard, just have fun, be yourself, and count your blessings; after all you've made it through the year," says Tennachie.

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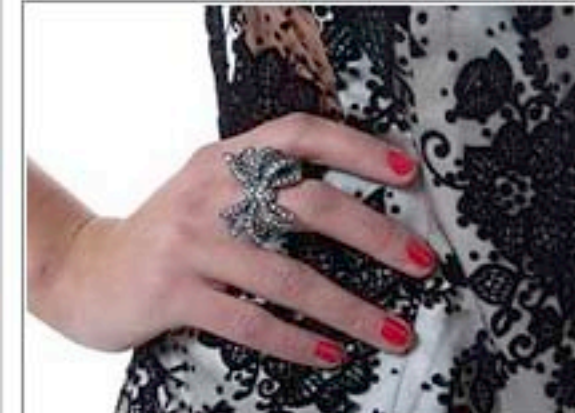
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A black velvet and white satin dress with puffed sleeves (\$400, Coccolly, coccolly.com) pairs beautifully with a sparkling bowed rhinestone ring (\$12, Smart Set, smartset.com). (Sue Reeve/QMI Agency)

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