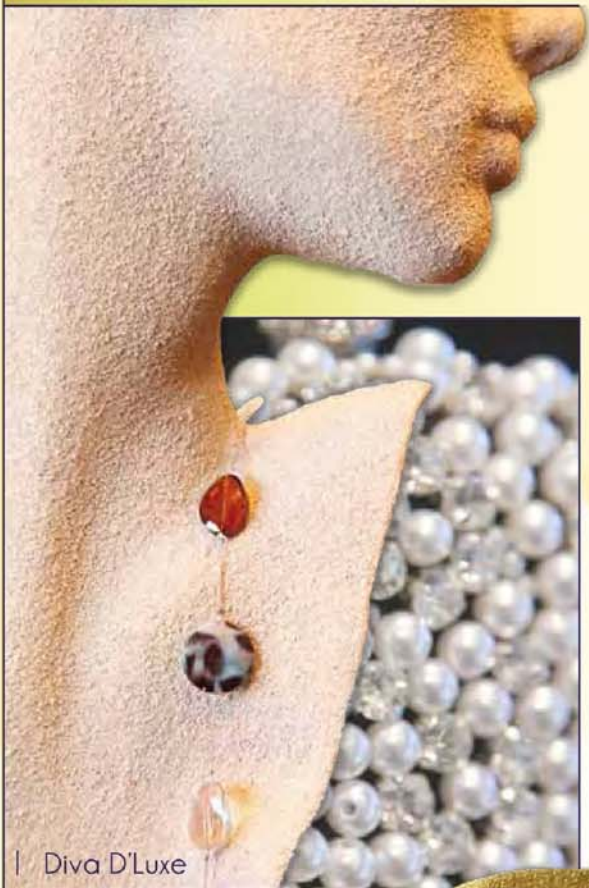


Big City

Stylin'

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photos by GAELAN CASEY

Sequins and bell bottoms—do we hear disco, baby? Fashion experts in both Albuquerque and Santa Fe tipped these two trends, but glam looks, updated with 21st century polish, are especially suited to the Duke City's urban vibe. In color, there's a new purple reign, and gray is still the cool neutral. Trend lovers with more dash than cash can find plenty of budget-stretching ways to spark up the wardrobe. For starters, get an immediate style injection with a pinch of pattern and texture. "Whether you're conservative or a fashionista-out-there girl, there's a level you can mix these patterns and textures that you're comfortable with," says Mariah Littauer from Gee Loretta! "For me, fashion is about stretching ourselves outside the box."



| Diva D'Luxe



| Diva D'Luxe



| Gee Loretta!



| Gee Loretta!

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Gee Loretta!

An unstructured sweater gives the best bang for your buck this winter, says buyer Mariah Littauer. "It looks great just casual on the weekend, or put it over a slim pencil skirt or fitted black dress." Choose cashmere for luxe, or a material with a lower price point if you just want to wear the sweater this season and move on. "Black and gray are two colors that are trending, but designers are mixing it up," she says. "There are tons of textures and pattern within that neutral palette." Stripes are important in every direction, "but you might mix stripes with a polka dot scarf, or a cable knit sweater over something that has an animal print." Sequins and embellished tops are fun—and not just for New Year's Eve. Littauer suggests wearing a sparkle tank top with a tuxedo jacket for parties, or as a vest with a white blouse or fitted turtleneck beneath, or thrown over jeans for Saturday morning coffee. "It's not a uniform you can only wear one way; give it new life." With fashion's



passion for purple, Joseph Ribkoff's saturated purple coatdress is "a beautiful purple for any skin tone." David Kahn denim offers a mid-rise jean that still has a fresher, younger look without being low-rise. Denim trends focus on the flare—"that '70s influence, a full-on bell or even a little exaggerated boot cut—great on almost all body shapes," elaborates Littauer. "A dark denim is always your safest bet, because it can be casual but you can make it dressy." 10655 Montgomery Blvd. NE, Albuquerque. 505.292.6652. www.geeloretta.com.



2 Time Couture

At first glance you wouldn't guess that 2 Time Couture is a consignment boutique, and that's the owner Mildred Ramthun's intention. "Our guideline is: current, in style right now, plus basic," she says. How do you stay high fashion when buying gently used? "Always mix your classic pieces with the trend. Take the trend that you like for

the season and invest in that piece, and mix with what you have in the closet. You don't have to spend that much money any more to upgrade from season to season." Ramthun reckons the bootie trend will remain in vogue for a while. "Wear them with a dress and look funky and different. They are to mid-calf or ankle, you can do any heels. A wedge, the chunky heel, is really big right now—and comfortable too." Prints make an outfit pop. "A mix of prints is so interesting. Stripes with polka dots—that would be really cool. Just keep the colors the same." Party it up with sequins and tights, "so you can have your normal cocktail dress and tights and mix up with a leather jacket, your little booties." In demin, Ramthun's new favorite is J Brand, for the great fit. "Everybody went crazy for the skinny jeans. Now it's more about the straight leg, but the 'in' item is the wide leg. Bell bottoms are coming back." High-waisted styles are more dressy, although these aren't the high waists of the '70s, says Ramthun, "just a bit higher than the low waists where you can barely sit down."

600 Central Ave SE, Albuquerque. 505.242.3600. www.shop2time.com.



Diva D'Luxe

To women convinced they can't wear this winter's on-trend gray, owner Denise Cordero-Lapetina says you just have to find the right tone, and choices range from pale heather to dark charcoal. Black knee-length pencil skirts are re-emerging, and Cordero-Lapetina likes the edginess of a Joseph Ribkoff pencil with faux leather piping down the side. She's also loving the boot tight—a tight with a sock built in. ("Why didn't we think of it before?") Burn-out velvet dresses in vibrant colors from celeb fave Hale Bob are versatile and can be pushed up with heels and accessories or teamed with boots and a little jean jacket for running around town. A lightweight trench coat works for all ages. Younger trendies cinch it at the waist over skin-tight leggings and ultra high heels. For a more conservative look tie the trench in the back to fall open nicely over pants or a pencil skirt. Diva D'Luxe trenches come in neutrals, green, purple, and silver metallic, with ruffles or other details. "Most women as they get older tend to think they need to get more conservative. I think that's an idea women need to let go of. Get a bit edgy, a bit hip, because

that's what keeps them from looking matronly." Even the legging can be made age-appropriate: "Find the right one and the right way to wear it, with a tunic, duster, a great sweater, or under a shorter dress with a pair of boots." Metallic gold packs a punch in accessories and embellishments. "Gold is a great way to stand out in New Mexico, because we all wear so much silver."

7610 Menaul Blvd,
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505.888.2667. www.yourdivastyle.com.



Toad Road

The Nob Hill store sells both men's and women's

fashion, and co-owner Ryan Holler's pick for men is a button-up Stone Rose shirt. The details are cool: perhaps a touch of plaid inside the collar, a paisley stripe down the back, or a fancy black button on one cuff and a regular button on the other. Lilac shirts are popular and can be worn with black or brown. "It's hard to accessorize for men," says Holler, "so work on the hat. Every man should have a good hat. A fedora can do a lot for a lot of different kinds of people." The must-have for women? A pea coat. "It never goes out of style, and you can wear it with everything," Holler cites a BB Dakota charcoal pea coat. Dresses in a Jackie O-style hit the right note this season, with a high collar but an open back. ("If you're conservative in the front, you've got to be a little more risqué in the back.") BB Dakota and MM Couture also catch the mood. "We have a lot of the cowl neck. It's playful, and you don't have to wear a necklace or accessorize as much as with a tube top or spaghetti strap. It works with different body types. On the bustier girl, it's not too chesty, and if you're not so busty, it won't make you look like a stick." Black is forever, and navy is also trending. So is stark white. "It's no longer a no-no to wear white after Labor Day." A beautiful white dress pairs well with silver or looks extra elegant with gold.

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