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photo by Chris Fritchie

Shoes, Shoes & More Shoes

By Karen Long

DURING THE RUSH of the Christmas holidays, decorating homes takes up the majority of my time. By February and March, like most of you, I am ready for the sunshine and warmer temperatures. This brings me to topic of this month's column...shoes! This spring's selection of colors, styles and choices are for everyone. Accessories are the most important part of putting your outfit together. They don't need to be elaborate, just enough to finish your look. Whether I am shopping in high-end or bargain stores, the fun colors and patterns are everywhere. No matter what your lifestyle is or what you prefer, you will not be disappointed with what

you see. The colors in clothing, jewelry and handbags are so refreshing after a winter of more subtle colors and cold temperatures. Get out there and have some fun with your wardrobe! Shoes are a big part of the total look.

Some of the shoe styles today remind me of my own high school days and are back for a second time. What a shame I didn't keep mine. Espadrilles and the wedge heels come in many shapes and textures. It's fun to see my girls wearing a lot of the same styles I once wore at their age. Speaking of comebacks, Keds has adorable patterns and prints, ties and slip-ons and a tennis shoe that is exactly like the tennis shoes worn in the

1920s. These comfy shoes are great for casual spring days and can be worn with sundresses and shorts.

Some of the hot new styles for spring include heels, high heels. I probably would break my neck if I tried to wear some of them. But for you young things or brave women, they are awesome and very sexy. When I say "high heels," I mean six to eight inches, which look great if you need the additional height.

Now is the best time to shop for summer selections. Ladies, remember we can never have too many pairs of shoes. Before we know it, the fall and winter styles will start showing up (usually by the end of July) in the stores.

I mentioned the wedge heel, which is really comfortable at a reasonable height. I have seen these in wood, cork, burlap and leather heels. The top of these shoes come in simple solids, patent leathers, nautical prints, whimsical prints and on an on.

Another word in the shoe lingo this season is "peep toe." These have just a small cut out at the front to reveal a little toe. These can be found in tall



photo by Chris Fritchie

heels, moderate wedges and adorable flats. One shoe I really loved was a “peep toe flat” in patent leather with an ankle strap. They are very stylish and great with capris or a summer dress.

Delicate flat sandals are also a must for your wardrobe. I saw several pairs that were embellished with rhinestones and other gems. Some of them had flowers at the strap while others were plain. Very feminine!

Many of the shoes I have described come in patent leather. Red, navy, white, Kelly green, yellow and black are just a few of the colors out there.

Ballet flats are a fun alternative for those who want to look stylish and spare the pain high heels can bring. Many fashion magazines and designers are pairing these with skinny jeans, tunics and capris.

If you are crazy about navy and white or simply want a nautical look, pick up a pair of navy patent flats or red patent leather wedges. Some are embellished with a gold chain or silver buckle. I

love that look. It’s always refreshing for spring.

Where to go to find these shoes girls? Nordstrom at the Galleria has, by far, the best shoe selection available in Dallas. The prices range from moderate to very expensive. Dillard’s at North Park or the Shops at Willow Bend also have extensive shoe departments. They usually have in-season markdowns and specials that are always an added perk!

For strictly designer shoes displayed beautifully, Neimans and Saks have it going on. These shoes are for those who do not have a budget or those who are looking to splurge. The pricing varies and starts in the \$200s. I love just looking at the latest designer shoes for the season.

If you are looking for a trendy shoe for this season, shop at Aldo or DSW. You won’t feel guilty next season if it is not what’s in. Their pricing is more moderate. Target and Payless also have quite a few styles and choices. I was browsing through the shoe department at Target and had to do a double take at some

of the shoes. Many of them looked like some of the shoes I had seen at some of the more expensive department stores. They were a great deal and seemed to be made well.

The best deal of the season is Old Navy flip flops for men, women, boys and girls. The women’s come in many different colors and at \$2.50 a pair, you can’t go wrong.

After all of your shopping is complete, I want you to get all of those shoes organized and neat. Storing your shoes in clear-view shoeboxes makes getting ready in the morning much easier. I also recommend labeling each box with a short description of each pair. The shoeboxes can be purchased at the Container Store, Walmart, Target or Linens ‘n Things.

Men’s dress shoes are classic from year to year. Spending a fair amount on a single pair is important, especially if your guy is wearing them all day everyday. However, today’s guys have more choices than ever, especially for laid back weekends and



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casual evenings out. Boat shoes made by Sperry are classic and comfy. They look great with jeans, khakis and shorts.

Pumas are another trendy tennis shoe that have been around the block. The color choices are brighter and more diverse than ever before. Nike, certainly well known by all, has come out with athletic shoes of all colors and patterns.

My son's choice for spring and summer shoes is the classic flip flop. He likes leather best. Tommy Bahama makes some really nice ones. Havaianas and Rainbows are probably the most popular classic flip flop for guys. They are priced anywhere from \$20 to \$40 a pair.

I hope this has been informative and gives you some ideas about what shoes to wear and where to buy all of the latest spring selections for 2007. Enjoy this spring and summer and take time to relax. Until next time!

Karen Long is a guest writer specializing in the art of shopping.

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