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Advice Sisters Guide to Life, Success and Happiness Blog

Alison Blackman Dunham is a popular advice, beauty & lifestyles expert, offering advice, views, reviews and reports of topics of interest to adults, everywhere. The focus is on beauty, fashion, travel events, lifestyle, relationships, and general topics. Bookmark this blog--it is worth visiting regularly!

Monday, February 08, 2010

I Get a Chance to See What A Fashion Stylist, Does

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I have always wondered what a fashion stylist really does. I see them at fashion week, and of course, celebrities use stylists to help them create an image and look their best. But could you, *should* you use a stylist, yourself? Maybe. Especially if you want to update yor image and you are lucky enough to find a great stylist who will work with you.

When I was talking to stylist Patricia Ann Parenti about her glove line, **TenderGlovingCare**, she offered to help me spiff up my image and put together some outfits for Fashion Week. At first, I was unsure about whether or not I wanted someone I didn't know well, foraging through all the ugly stuff in my closet. But Patricia didn't make comments or judgements. Normally, a stylist might go out shopping for a client, but Patricia said she's "make do" with what I already had. I was dubious, but amazed, when she went right to work, pulling out things that caught her eye.

"*Your look isn't modern,*" she said gently. "*Your clothes are too tailored, too prim....and you wear way too much black*" she added. After assessing my goal to look more memorable, but not too "out-there, she said: "*I see you more in a boho look, with more color,and more prints.*"

Most stylists just go out and procure clothing that they think their clients will like. Like image consultant, however, the idea of a stylist is to help find that special, signature look. I'll admit to wearing a lot of black (who doesn't?) and perhaps gravitating a bit too much towards classic but boring, clothes, but my idea of who I am and what I should look like has been stuck in a rut the past few years (ok, maybe the past decade or so!).

Amazingly, Patricia managed to find a few tops in my closet that fit the look she thought I'd like. She suggested leggings instead of my usual, tailored black pants.

About Me



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Alison Blackman Dunham, aka. "Advice Sister Alison, " is a beauty, lifestyles and advice expert. "The Advice Sisters®" are credited with bringing the advice genre online more than 16 years ago. The Advice Sisters online publications include a web site, a blog, bulletin boards, and a by-subscription newsletter. Please visit the Advice Sisters Web Site as well as this blog, and check out our latest features!

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Then she went through my shoes. I have foot problems and where I was once the queen of the four inch heel, now I can really only wear flats. That makes anything I wear look casual, or worse, dowdy. "get some ankle boots" for pants, and knee length boots for skirts. "She didn't like my collection of flat, black, "mary jane" type shoes, but approved a pair of pewter flats with crystals.

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Patricia continued to swarm around my room, foraging in my various jewelry boxes, quickly finding earrings, necklaces and earrings to go with the outfits she suggested. She even made suggestions about my hair (*"don't pull it back, pull it forward towards your face, that's prettier,"* she said).

The entire, head-to-toe process really only took about 45 minutes, but when she left, I had some ready-made outfits for this upcoming Fashion Week. What a relief! No more quandries about what to wear!

And that isn't the only thing Patricia left me with. She empowered me with ideas that will help me move forward and update my image by myself. Based on what I observed, I purchased some black leggings and some black, skinny jeans that I might have normally passed by. I purchased an animal print top in a sparkling fabric, and two print tops. I am looking for those elusive boots. While these items may not completely change my look (after all, I didn't get the \$5,000 that participants on "What Not To Wear" get when they get a make-over) they are a step in the right direction. Now I know why a great stylist is beloved by celebrities and those who really want to make a great impression!

*note: Patricia did NOT style these photos...I just took them for reference instead of writing things down, and then thought they might be an interesting addition to this blog post (Alison)





Above are a few of the looks Patricia put together for me for Fashion Week. So if you see me in the Bryant Park tents in these outfits, you'll know who styled them! You can learn more about Patricia Parenti on her [Web Site](#).

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