

Animals Instincts

Written by Fashion Granny
Tuesday, 26 April 2011 12:01



Dear FASHIONGRANNY,

May I still invest in Animal Prints or are they passé?

Signed,

Boo Boo Kitty

Dear Boo Boo,

May I call you Boo Boo or do you prefer Miss Kitty? What a great name!

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Animal prints just will not die and there is a good reason for it. Wearing the skins of animals has been a mainstay ever since we were kicked out of the Garden of Eden!

That is where this fashion began, and as long as people continue to inhabit the earth, we will wear the skins of animals or a facsimile of animal skins on our person. It is in our DNA!

Many of us who have given or thrown away our Mother's leopard pillbox hat or cheetah coat are still lamenting the day we did! Very few of us imagined this jungle trend was here to stay and would resurface every other fashion season.

Now however, designers have at least one animal print in their collection, some true to the animal and some made up. You have seen the "invented" ones. The patterns on fabric remotely resemble an animal, but you can't quite figure out which one. Is it a giraffe or a leopard? Is it a tiger or a lynx? Again, these pseudo- designers have chosen and purchased murky, unidentifiable prints that just fool our eye enough to make us believe we see "animal" when what we are really looking at is akin to a Mr. Snuffleupagus' skin inside out. (Sorry, Mr.Snuffleupagus!) It must be cheaper for them than purchasing the real deal or maybe they think it's artsy. No people, it is ugly!

The bottom line for FASHIONGRANNY if you wear animal print anything is:

Make sure you can identify the animal and are able to name it upon request.

Don't wear animal print top, bottoms, shoes and purse at the same time.

Keep the print to the proportions of your height and weight.

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No cow or any barnyard animal prints.

In following these short tips, your accent of “animal“ is sure to please the eye and add not only a bit of pizzazz to your outfit, but it also keep your place in the food chain!

Dear FASHIONGRANNY,

In the summertime, instead of a tuxedo, on rare occasions my brother wears a 40-year-old white dinner jacket. Is that appropriate or does he look like he is left over from the Raj?

Signed,

Mary P.

Dear Mary P.,

Oh! How FASHIONGRANNY loves a white dinner jacket on a man! To clarify, I do not like white dinner jackets on women.

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There is something about a black butterfly bow tie against a white starched winged collar tuxedo shirt, topped off with an elegant, well-cut white dinner jacket! Just envisioning this look tends to make me swoon!

Of course, being the old school fashionista that I am, I absolutely love it when I have a social opportunity to dress in my finery and the occasion calls for a white dinner jacket for my date!

There are a few rules however, and even though your brother is right on time with the proper men's fashion, if he is wearing the same jacket he has had for forty years he doesn't need a tailor he needs a therapist! My God, that is like wearing your first communion suit at 60 years old! It can't possibly fit correctly nor look creamy white anymore!

When you ask if "he looks like something left over from the Raj," the only way he would is if his dinner jacket is that old.

For those of you who are wondering what the "Raj" is, the Raj or the British Raj was a name given to the period of British Colonial rule in South Asia, known as India, between 1858 and 1942. Of course, that is the very short history lesson, but the point is that because of British rule and the monarchy of Queen Victoria, it was de rigueur to dress appropriately and formally as each occasion warranted. You've seen the movies. In fact, you don't have to go back that far in history to appreciate a well-dressed man in a white dinner jacket. Think Sean Connery as James Bond or Humphrey Bogart in my favorite, *Casablanca*. Yeah Baby!

When to wear a white dinner jacket? This fab look is reserved for the warmer weather. GQ magazine suggests, "You are meant to look cool in hot weather."

The only rules are: Not before May and not after September. Makes sense.

There are also guidelines regarding the cut of the jacket and the style of the shirt:

Shawl collar jacket = Standard collar shirt

Peaked Lapel jacket = Wing collar shirt

I like a formal black tie, but yes, times have changed, and it seems you can take liberties with this accessory. For more do's and don'ts regarding accessories, etc., go to the Internet or Library, as all the info is available.

Mary P, tell your brother in my book he is indeed a well-dressed man! He is bold, refreshing, and willing to stand out in a crowd in proper attire for a gentleman. I do wish more men would indulge in the joy of dressing well and dressing up, not down. My only advice is that he invests in a new jacket, puleeze!

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