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THE NEWS & OBSERVER

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STYLE & FASHION FASHION NEWS, STYLE MAVENS AND BEAUTY TRENDS, EVERY MONDAY.



The regal hue suits almost everyone, and it's everywhere this fall

By SAMANTHA THOMPSON SMITH
STAFF WRITER



inally, a fashion trend all women can enjoy.

No matter our age, the color of our skin or how much money we have to spend, the color purple — on anything from headbands to dresses — is shaping up to be the most universal of fall's must-haves looks.

"Purple is definitely one of the colors to add to your wardrobe this season," says Eliza Stoecker, one of the owners of Fleur, which has stores in Cameron Village and Meadowmont. "It's the perfect amount of pop to add to fall's otherwise gray palette."

It's a color that can span the decades. Actress Katherine Heigl is wearing it on the cover of this month's InStyle magazine. And both Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Helen Mirren wore rich purple gowns to the Emmys last month.

And it's available in a range of prices. Target has a selection of purple sweaters. Kohl's new Simply Vera collection by Vera Wang has purple as the dominant color. And many of the local boutiques are using shades of purple in window displays, trumping the season's other pops of color, including cobalt blue, red and hot pink.

Amid all the charcoal, dove gray and black this season, you'll find plenty of it — flashes of magenta, violet, amethyst and eggplant. And it's showing up in a variety of ways — as a solid or part of a print, pale or dark, warm or cool, vivid or muted.

Purple has a long history in fashion. It's a powerful, dignified color that sends a mixture of messages: It can be royal and majestic or mysterious and exotic. In many cultures, especially in Europe, purple is often associated with royalty because of the purple robes often worn in ceremonies. Cleopatra was said to have loved the color. Widows in Thailand wear purple to mourn.

Like many colors, it's all about finding the right hue for your fall wardrobe.

"Everyone can wear purple," says Kate Leser, owner of A Distinctive Image, an image and wardrobe consulting company in Raleigh. "It's just some look better in a clearer purple or violet, where others look better in a more muted purple such as lavender, mauve."

As a rule, warmer skin tones typically do better with warmer tones of purple, such as the red

purples, says Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute and the author of the book "More Alive with Color." Cooler skin tones typically look better in the blue purples.

According to her book, someone with honey brown skin and caramel brown hair might look best in magenta or orchid. Those with olive skin and silver gray hair should try violet or grape. And the fair-skinned blond or redhead might want a dusty lavender or red violet.

"Purple takes the best of both worlds," Eiseman says. "It has the combination of the excitement of red and the tranquility of blue."

This season, you can wear it as an accessory with Hue's purple plaid tights or Nine West's purple flats, boots or handbags. Or try it in full

SEE PURPLE, PAGE 3C

STYLIN' SAMANTHA THOMPSON SMITH KEEPS UP WITH THE TRIANGLE'S EVOLVING FASHION AND TRENDS, EVERY MONDAY.

They do shopping for you

Too busy to shop? There's another new personal shopping duo in the area to help out.

Two Raleigh moms — Paige Crowther and Lisa Marie Ferrell — have teamed up to be Polished, a personal shopping and wardrobe consulting company that will do anything from helping to clean out your closet and consigning the unwanted goods to planning a couple's special night out on the town.

The two started kicking around the business idea this summer after they both realized they shared a passion for clothes and, more important, how to style them.

Their target customer is an easy find these days. They say they want to help not just those who are too busy to shop, but also those who have too much going on to keep up with trends but still want a fresh, updated look. "Whatever it is, we'll shop for you, we'll shop with you," Crowther says.

Their services list covers plenty of ground. They'll shop for you, delivering items from boutiques, department stores or discounters to your home or office to try on. They'll also "pre-shop," going to a store and picking out anything you might like and putting it in a dressing room for you to try once you arrive. They'll go shopping with you, helping guide you to the pieces that meet your budget and your personal style. They'll also help you evaluate your current wardrobe, eliminating the bad and helping you replenish it with styles that fit better.

They've also got a few atypical services tacked on, such as a handbag rental program. They're in the process of stocking their inventory with designer handbags to offer to customers for as little as \$10 a night.

They'll also help you show off your latest look by planning everything for a

SEE STYLIN', PAGE 2C



TELEVISION THE NEW SEASON



NEW
Aliens in America
8:30 p.m., The CW

What it is: A Muslim exchange student from Pakistan comes to the United States to live with a batty family that includes a teen boy who just happens to be the least popular kid in his high school. Well, least popular until now, that is. It's a funny, sweet and sometimes heartbreaking comedy (echoes of "Scrubs" here) that drops a few people-are-people lessons along the way.

Stars: Dan Byrd, Adhir Kalyan
Rating: Not rated



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Nine West metallic flats, \$79, Nine West; Sonia Rykiel sweater dress with bow, \$435, Vermillion; Style & Co. heart bracelet, \$24, Macy's; Goldenbleu patent leather bag, \$650, Uniquities; Simply Vera Vera Wang pencil skirt, \$64, Kohl's.

STAFF PHOTOS BY PAUL MAGANN