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Straw hat to outdoor cafe

Soraiya Fuda | The Daily Telegraph | February 04, 2011 12:00AM

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Source: The Daily Telegraph

WELCOME to the second article of The Daily Telegraph's new fashion advice column called What... To Where? Every Friday, three fashion experts and a woman who simply loves clothes will be put to the test with a "mystery item" of clothing or an accessory - the What - as well as social event the mystery will be worn - to Where?

The "mystery" will often be in your own wardrobe or at least affordable and easily found in most shops and the event will be one which most of us get invited to from time to time.

Our three experts are Sydney stylist Annalisa Armitage, designer Sally Smith, Sydney Confidential's Joel Christie and fashion lover / newsreader Michelle Taverniti.

Today, our professionals will give you their advice on how to wear a round natural-coloured short-rimmed straw hat with a black band - instead of wearing this item to the beach, we decided to see how they would wear it to a weekend lunch with friends at an outdoor cafe.

Here's what they had to say:

Michelle Taverniti is a Newsreader and a fashion lover.

"A short-rimmed hat or fedora can turn an otherwise plain outfit into something a lot more edgy and chic. For a catch-up with friends, team it with a summery, casual maxi-dress, gladiator sandals and plenty of chunky bangles in earthy, woody tones.

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Steve Smith Kris

"If you're not one for dresses, a hat is a nice addition to a pair of denim shorts, plain singlet and flats.

"Or for a more rockstar look (a la Kate Moss) wear it with a short singlet dress, ankle boots or Converse sneakers and plenty of chains and rings.

"This hat is supposed to make your outfit ooze laidback cool. So stay away from any corporate-type clothing - a blazer could work if it's teamed with jeans, a singlet and sandals.

"A bunch of chains, chunky wooden bangles and rings - the more the merrier to pull it off right!

"The hat is supposed to enhance your outfit - if it doesn't feel right, it probably doesn't look right."

Annalisa Armitage is the Owner and Principal Stylist for My Image Consultant. Visit www.myimageconsultant.com.au for more expert advice.

"I have come up with two looks and it will completely depend on your age and how good your legs are.

"Option one, if you are young (now I leave this completely to your interpretation) and have great legs, the perfect look with the hat is a pair of short denim (cut off) shorts.

"Team these shorts with a white chiffon (or any transparent material) loose shirt and a grey loose vest worn open over the top. Worn with light brown suede ankle boots with a heel this look screams effortless.

"The boots are casual and right on trend, yet because of their colour not too heavy with the shorts and top and they will make your legs look very long! The tops adds a touch of femininity and makes the look more friendly.

"Option two, instead of the shorts grab a maxi dress with a small floral print (I am imagining a navy background with white, pale pink and grey flowers but there are many other patterns that will work), pick a vest as described above and wear with natural coloured sandals (flats).

"An easy, relaxed stylish look. Pick a colour from the dress, buy some ribbon in that colour and cover the black band. The black band will be too harsh against the straw hat with this outfit.

"Be careful with this item not to look too 'farmer Jo' no checks unless you're going the whole gambit with cowboy boots and jeans.

"With the shorts option you may wish to add a black leather bracelet or black long necklace of some sort to balance the black band on the hat. This outfit would also be fabulous with a summer scarf worn long which could instead have some black in the pattern. Simple strong accessories such as these will work well.

"With the dress we already have the pattern of the dress and a layer so would only add a statement ring and of course both options require your fabulous sunglasses to protect your eyes from the glare in the outside cafe.

"If you have never worn a hat of this kind, give it a go. Chose a hat that works for you with regard to scale. If you have wide shoulders or a big face check that the rim is not too narrow.

"If it is too little for you it will make your face look bigger and your shoulders look wider. The hat will be worth the investment and just fabulous for keeping the sun off, hiding 'week six' hair and making a statement.

Sally Smith is the Director and Designer of her own business called Sally Smith. To find out more about Sally visit sallysmith.com.au.

"For a weekend, outdoor cafe, keep it casual and super simple with a black drapery T-shirt dress. Try and find something asymmetrical with an interesting twist detail such as can be found in a Kirrily Johnston dress, cool and super chic.

"I wouldn't team the hat with florals as it could come across a bit cutsie/ preppy.

"The hat is so simple, I'd team it with either leather thongs or orange or yellow bensimons sneakers. leave any neck pieces out as too much up around the face feels cluttered.

"A strong wrist cuff would look great.

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"Natural lips this week and a slightly bronzed face, summery and simple."

Joel Christie is the Daily Telegraph's Sydney Confidential Reporter.

"Women should wear this style of hat with something summery and relaxed especially because the location is an outdoor cafe. Jean-shorts or a casual loose black dress would work wonders with this look.

The black will match the trimming on the hat. A nice pair of sunnies will also complete the attire. A lose T-shirt with a tasteful print would look great if you choose to wear the shorts. Match it with black sandals to give it that laid back and casual feel.

Also, natural make-up and wavy hair will complete the summer style.

"I wouldn't recommend wearing this outfit with a cocktail-style dress. You don't want to look too dressed up for the occasion. Dresses like this can not only be inappropriate but also uncomfortable.

"With this style, wear a lot of bracelets and a couple of necklaces to complete the look. Also red nail polish could create a cool clash with the hat.

"The hat is a hip look so stick to loose fitted clothing and even a shoulder bag."

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