

## CAROLINA HERRERA'S FASHIONABLE MIND?

AN INTERVIEW BY JYOTI PESWANI

**S**traightforward sophistication is Carolina Herrera's niche. No wonder, considering she's got a little blue blood flowing in her veins (she descends from a long line of Venezuelan landowners and statesmen). Her tryst with fashion began unknowingly, when Cristobal Balenciaga (his was the first couture show she attended) left an indelible impression on her 13-year-old mind. Fast forward to Herrera at age 42. With a little boost from her friend, fashion priestess and Vogue editor Diana Vreeland, Herrera created a 'test' collection. She hasn't looked back since.

### LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR FALL COLLECTION...

For fall, I am very excited that the glamour evoked in the 1940s and '50s for both men and women is back. It was a time when movie stars had a sense of effortless glamour. I like that look right now - polka dots and florals for women, and distinguished tailored jackets, as well as the classic trench, look great on a man today. I love the fall collection; the colors and fabrics are fantastic.

### AS OF NOW, WHAT'S SIZZLING WITH THE MOST COVETED LETTERS IN THE INDUSTRY: CH CAROLINA HERRERA?

We are opening two more CH Carolina Herrera stores in the US this year, one in South Coast Plaza, California and another in the Northpark Center, Dallas. It is very exciting! I love the stores. They are so beautiful.

### WHAT DID YOU THINK OF MIAMI'S FALL FLAVOR? IS IT DIFFERENT FROM OTHER CITIES? IS THE MIAMI LINE DIFFERENT FROM YOUR OTHER LINES?

All the CH Carolina Herrera boutiques are designed to feel the same way; they have the same clothes and a very striking architectural similarity. It's the way a person wears the clothes that makes them different. In Miami, the men and women do not need to be so constricted with coats, scarves, gloves, and all that. They are more free because of the weather. But in Miami, many people travel, so they need clothes to keep them warm wherever they go.

### I HEAR THAT THIS FALL, RED IS THE NEW BLACK AND PLAID IS BACK IN BUSINESS. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE COLOR THIS SEASON?

I think in fall a man looks quite distinguished in a glen plaid blazer. For

evening, I love red; it makes such an impact. But I cannot choose a favorite color. I have too many of them!

### THE STAPLE WHITE SHIRT IN YOUR WARDROBE IS A SYMBOL OF MINIMALISM. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE PULSE OF TODAY'S WOMAN?

I like to wear a crisp white shirt because it simply looks good. In the winter, when everyone is wearing black, it is refreshing to see a white shirt. In the summer, it looks good with many things - skirts or pants or whatever. Even out at night it looks new, and besides, it is nice to play with the masculine and feminine - a man's shirt and an evening skirt.

### WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE DESIGNER?

I have many. I love Valentino, Balenciaga, and Karl Lagerfeld - I think he is a genius.

### YOU DRESSED JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONASSIS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE LATTER YEARS OF HER LIFE. TODAY, IS THERE ANY PARTICULAR CELEBRITY YOU WOULD LOVE TO DRESS?

I would love to see these young beautiful girls in Hollywood wearing CH Carolina Herrera. Keira Knightly, Kate Bosworth... they would all look wonderful in the clothes.

### FINALLY, A WORD OF ADVICE FOR MIAMI'S TRENDSETTING MEN AND WOMEN?

Wear what makes you feel beautiful. Fit is the most important element of a well-dressed woman. Clothes that fit well can create different silhouettes and moods.

