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LINE FEMME



Timeless elegance from Dior... from the spring/summer 2011 collection.

What defines the French look? Ruby Boukabou meets with stylist, model and French cabaret star, Juliette Dragon, to get some inside tips.

French women have long held the reputation for being the most classy and sensual dressers in the world. But there's more to the look than a pencil skirt and dainty scarf, says Paris-based style diva, Juliette Dragon. The one-time Gaultier model is also artistic director of Cabaret Filles de Joie, among others, and is sought-after as a coach in deportment and stage arts. Here, she reveals her tips for dressing like a French woman.

Which celebrities and designers have a definitive French style? Women such as Catherine Deneuve and Inès de la Fressange have a perfect French elegance, along with designers including Chantal Thomass, Sonia Rykiel, Christian Dior and the all-time French fashion symbol, Coco Chanel.

How could one add a timeless French touch? A silk Hermès scarf or a Chanel suit. They are expensive, but will last a lifetime in terms of style and quality.

What would you consider typically French makeup? An impeccable foundation, and a trace of carbon-black eyeliner for an oeil de biche (doe-eyed) effect. Don't use too many colours. For the lips, choose bright red lipstick or a light gloss for a natural look.

How does one create a French look beyond the attire? The French style is very much about attitude: being playful, mischievous and rebellious. The smile is assertive and the pout is a delicious balance of sulkiness and charm.

Juliette Dragon's top 10 tips for dressing like a French woman...

- 1. Be elegant** – Look for quality, and only wear colours and styles that suit you
- 2. Never neglect the details** – Yes, everyone will notice your minimal cuff, jacket lining, or dress straps, so seek the best
- 3. Match the handbag and the shoes** – Not just colour, but also style: match edgy with edgy, or natural with natural
- 4. Don't wear more than three colours together** – Simple!
- 5. Add a touch of daring** – A studded belt, outrageous scarf or crimson-coloured handbag will turn 'classic' into 'memorable'
- 6. Get a manicure** – Rough hands and chipped nails simply won't do in the style stakes
- 7. Perfect your makeup** – Play up your best features
- 8. Style your hair** – A proper blow-dry or a simple ponytail is fine; just don't leave home with wet hair
- 9. Wear something haute couture** – Be it a belt, scarf or jacket, haute couture always completes an outfit
- 10. Walk like a woman** – Shoulders back, hips forward, head high, and calves straightened after each step you take