



THE LOOK *of* LEATHER



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The resurgence that fur has enjoyed in fashion over the past few seasons seems set to stay if the designs on show at the Semana Internacional de la Moda de Madrid (SIMM), held in the Spanish capital in late February, are anything to go by. In spite of the negative impact on the industry due to the mild winter experienced across Europe, and the world, in 2006, Spain's fur sector still posted a turnover of €298.4 million. Furthermore, an upswing in consumption is expected in the leather and fur sectors over the next few months.

The high profile that fur has regained in the fashion world was highlighted at the Pasarela Cibeles fashion show during SIMM,

which reflected the true diversity of the current fashion scene in Spain. Presenting collections from some of the country's leading designers and the upcoming names in cutting edge design, a double fashion show, organised by the Spanish Fur Fashion Business Organisation (OEEP), was given the coveted final spot to end the event on a high. Olga Ríos exhibited her latest collection before Miguel Marinero, a prestigious fur designer who last took part in the event in February 1986, brought the show to a close.

The fur trends presented at SIMM, and particularly at Iberpiel Peletería, for the autumn/winter 2007/08 season once again

took inspiration from classical, masculine lines, which in fact emphasise the female form and ooze elegance and femininity. However, although they may be based on classical lines, the garments on show were far from staid in design. Youthful styles create practical and comfortable items with a modern twist, achieved through contrasts such as varied volume, structures, oversized collars and short sleeves. Mink is set to lead the way in terms of materials for coats and jackets, which were seen in a multitude of lengths, whilst fox remains a firm favourite for trimming collars and cuffs. Suede, glacé lamb, nubuck, and lambskin also featured prominently in the collections. ►

Fur stands out at SIMM



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Black is back

Having endured seasons of being told that brown, grey, or even yellow, is the new black, fashion has once again gone full circle and it appears that the new black for the next autumn/winter season is... black. However, this most traditional of colours has been updated and although it has made a strong comeback and stood out and on the catwalks and on the stands at the show, black by no means stands for boring or monochrome. A better term would be 'black and bold' as it is combined with new adventurous cuts, textures, coloured trimmings and appliqués which add vivacity to the collections. Longer coats remain more classical although with a modern twist, whilst designers have really gone to town with short jackets adding bright colours and adornments.

Solider has created two modern garments for Corty Bennet where fox, mink and lamb are embroidered and mixed with bright fabrics to achieve a sophisticated touch, without losing their practicality. The long garments are for all tastes, the short jackets, in bright colours such as gold and red with touches of black, combine well with any type of trousers, whilst the knee-length frock coats, in the same shades, are perfect for skirts and dresses.

Frock coats also dominated at José Luis Aznárez, whose collection was very much

based on black, but with movement and life added through feminine cuts with figure-hugging waists and voluminous skirts. The addition of collars and belts with eye-catching appliqués of flowers and glass inlays combined with boots and sandals created a feminine, energetic feel.

Focusing on Spanish lambskin, J&M Peleteros created movement through the use of contrasts created in black and white, true to the general trend seen across the fashion spectrum. Colour was added through buttons made of precious stones that reflect the light and from the collars made from silver fox fur to create a collection based on fantasy, comfort and lightness. Benetfurs developed contrasts in its collection between the warmth of mink and the coldness of the shades used, with long coats made from de-haired mink and the collars and cuffs in sable. Short jackets were given a 'funkier' edge through the addition of collars and cuffs in dyed fox skin.

Cutting it short

Short jackets were also a highlight at Charo Carrillo which were modern and avant-garde and produced in every conceivable shape and texture with burled, skived or fur mink dominating. Black was again the main colour, but natural colours such as linen and greys were also included. Other designers also softened black garments with natural colours. Makari's collection oozed luxury, profusion, sensitivity and sensuality, using chinchilla in its natural state and shades such as white, grey and black, as well as tans and loden greens to produce short jackets that are comfortable and so versatile that they can be worn with jeans or a cocktail dress.

As with every season, there are always some designers who buck the trend and Araujo Piel's collection was certainly individual. Called 'His majesty, the astrakhan', it was inspired by pure and classical lines, but has been adapted to the 21st century through clean, functional cuts to create a casual look. The materials used range from glacé lambskin in reptile finishes in browns, to astrakhan in greeny-grey mole, combined with subtle gauzes in pinky-beige and a warm orange. However, whilst the



colours may vary enormously, the cut remains uniform in double-breasted jackets with large lapels, high waists and fasteners using buckles on the sides on trousers and lacing combined with patterns on shirts.

Black may be the colour of the season, but that does not mean there is no choice for consumers. With classic long-length coats, through bright short jackets in a wide range of colours, to frock coats with modern new cuts, there is something to suit everyone in leather and fur and, fortunately for the industry and consumers alike, it appears that it is not just black, but also fur that is back. 🐾