



Stepping out

As any fashion-conscious person will tell you, it all depends on the shoes. Footwear can enhance or completely destroy any outfit, and for those who really want to impress, being on-trend is a must. Which is why GDS, the international shoe and accessories event in Düsseldorf, gave us a peek into the trends we'll see in this autumn-winter season. So what can we expect? Well, this year it's all about reinvention. Footwear designers have been re-interpreting and re-styling forms that are already established, in conjunction with creative and technological innovation. The silhouette is a key feature, with

Warm tones of brown, khaki, camel and deep red are all key colours for the autumn-winter 2011 women's footwear season. We can also expect to see some interesting contrasts, says expert Claudia Schulz.

sleek, sophisticated lines and elegant form the look to aspire to. There is also a focus on high-quality materials and production methods, as the economic and environmental problems facing the world have led consumers to seek more enduring, high-quality solutions rather than a quick and easy fashion fix.

GDS has defined three trend themes for the autumn-winter women's season,

namely "calmness", "wilderness" and "charm". "Calmness" includes shoes in darker shades of blue, grey and black; the urban chic look but with a sense of control and tranquillity. "Wilderness" encapsulates all that is inspired by the great outdoors. Warm tones of brown, khaki green and dirty grey, together with insulating furs, suedes and leathers create a look influenced by the

'Wilderness' is a key theme for the autumn-winter 2011 season, as seen at the Easy to Go Wellness Show with styles from Arche, Vialis, Arche and at GDS, in March. CREDIT: MESSE DÜSSELDORF



(Left) Thick furs will dominate women's footwear this winter.

(Right) The silhouette is all-important for the autumn-winter season, with elegant lines and classic dark colours enhancing the look.

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outdoors. "Charm", the third theme, is all about femininity. Reds, mauves and maroons, placed with contrasting camel and beige shades, make for a sophisticated and 'charming' look.

High to low

In the women's shoe fashion stakes, the high boots and over-the-knee boots which prevailed in recent years are to diminish in height, making way for more silhouette-enhancing ankle boots. "For a long time, high boots and over knees were dominant," says GDS's trend expert Claudia Schulz. "I think it is due to the new recent trend for the silhouette that the fashion is moving towards ankle boots above all, to over-ankle models and middle-height versions."

According to Ms Schulz, last winter's 'wild' theme featuring furs and rugged leathers is set to continue, only this time it's going to be bigger and bolder. "On boots, not only on the lining, we will see a lot of lambskin, a lot of fox and goat skin, so everything fluffy and cuddly will be used on and in boots as well as ankle boots," she says. Such boots will easily fit into the 'wilderness' theme, whereas lace boots, another big theme for the season, will fall into the 'charm' and 'calmness' categories.

High heels prevail

High heels will remain high fashion, but instead of the popular block and wedge heels seen in the 2010 autumn-winter season, 2011 will bring stiletto heels back to the forefront of fashion. These will be seen across all three of the trend themes and will add a playful and feminine touch to shoes.

In short, the autumn-winter 2011 season will be all about contrasts: killer heels combined with ribbon bow-ties; thick, fur-lined ankle boots with thin stiletto heels and bold, dark red leathers with delicate finishing details. ©

Brown leather combined with stiletto-style heels will be a theme throughout autumn-winter 2011.

