



Bags of appeal from top to toe

The continued trend for leather bags, accessories and footwear around the world has been highlighted once again through improved attendance and larger collections at recent exhibitions showcasing finished goods for the autumn winter 2006/2007 season. This fashion seems here to stay, and this has led to a plethora of designs ranging from classic to 'off-the-wall'.

There were bags in every shape and size on show at I.L.M Winter Styles held in Offenbach, Germany, with ranges to appeal to every taste and lifestyle.

The Nordic Winter theme encompassed a range of sporty bags in fur, leather, knitwear, and stitched material including oversized pouches and flap bags. Clear oblong formats or trapezoid shoppers set the tone in soft velours, leather, washed and crinkled leather with shearling trimmings and carrying belts, and fur and felt in combination.

Reflecting a theme that can be seen in apparel, Mixed Chic focused on contrasting effects incorporating uniform styles with feminine aspects.



Olimpo

It included flap bags and shoulder bags with broad and long straps, with practical front pockets, clasps, and metal adornments such as rivets, loops and hinges. Shoppers

and nostalgic clutch bags are decorated with passaments, tassels, laces, and cords. Medals and emblems are also popular as

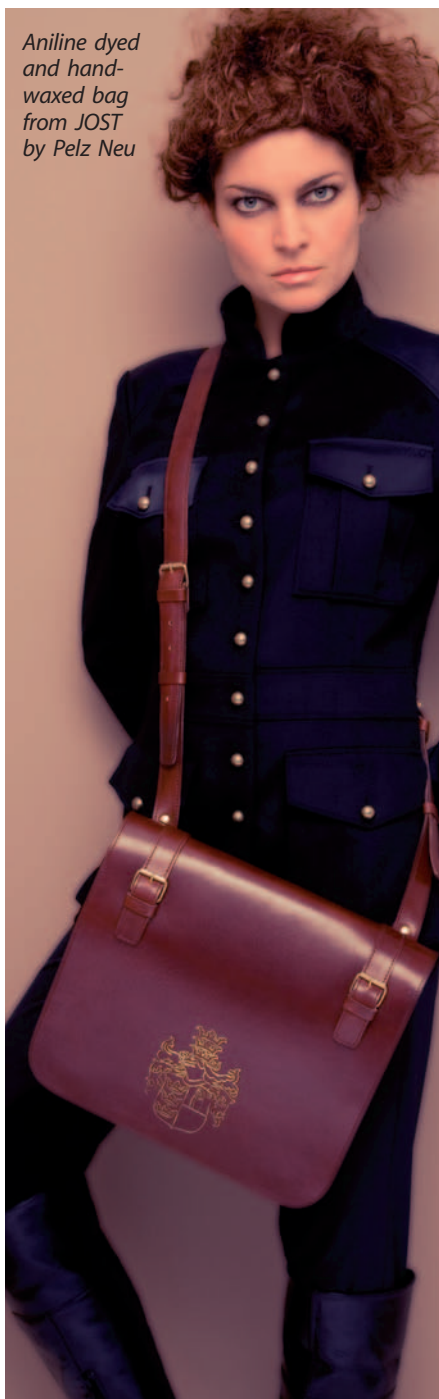
are natural, untreated leathers.

Taking inspiration from Haute Couture of past decades Classic Avantgarde merged

*Tweed with
cowskin trimming
by Longchamp*



Aniline dyed
and hand-
waxed bag
from JOST
by Pelz Neu



Eject



Kelme

old and new. Bags are business-like but not in a masculine way, reflecting a new trend towards conservatism. They have a traditional shape and are medium-sized to large. Kelly-bag variations, nostalgic clutch bags, bowling types, flap bags, hunting bags, and weekender bags abound with small rounded-off shapes with supple gatherings and drapery that add femininity. The leather often has a brilliant lacquer or metallic lustre and crocodile, snake, and lizard embossings remain popular.

Balalaika Melody took inspiration from carpets and church windows.

Bags are not superficially decorated, but designed in an imaginative way. Shining leather in gem colours, pretty leather embossings, embroideries, ribbons and borders, tendrils and blossoms can be seen with folklore Jacquard patterns and Paisleys.



Minibel

Spanish flair

The theme of combining different leathers with other fabrics was also apparent in the trends at Iberpiel and Modacalzado in Madrid in March.

The main themes in leathergoods focused on contrasts such as 'Biba meets British' which offered a palette of multi-coloured

goods designed to confuse the eyes. Blocks of colours were intermixed with buckles, leather reinforcements, pieces of fur and thickened suede. Contrasts in colours and materials were also an important theme in footwear with designers combining materials such as suede, oiled glacé lamb and coconut.

The equestrian look continues to be popular in bags and this was also apparent in the footwear at Modacalzado with classic riding boots taking centre stage in many collections.

Geometric shapes and lines inspired by military uniforms were also favoured in many bag collections, with very simple and well-proportioned shapes that maintain a feminine feel through embossed, thickened and semi-matt varieties of leather.

There was also an historic element in many ranges. In leathergoods, styles inspired by the 18th century were given a new lease of life with innovative touches and decorative elements such as varnished leather, pleats, gathered effects, flowers and feathers. Many shoe collections reflected a 17th century Baroque style, with novel accessories used to achieve a highly sophisticated and daring style.

The ongoing trend for goods inspired by nature also remains strong and colours cover the entire range of browns with greens and blues adding colour.

The increasing popularity of cowboy boots was highlighted in many collections with rounded shapes presented in aged leathers, gaucho shanks and metallic appliqué. Ballerina flats also remain a favourite. Round-toes were prevalent in many collections reflecting the general trend of elegance, comfort and function. 