

B.E. REVIEWS

Amazing Savings

Secrets to scoring great deals on just about everything

JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE KEEPING A CLOSE EYE ON YOUR finances doesn't mean you have to dress like a pauper. You still can rock the creations of your favorite designers without spending a fortune. All it takes is learning to be a smart shopper. "It's not about depriving yourself of shopping but making it work for your lifestyle," says style expert and TV personality Daisy Lewellyn, who believes consumers are afraid of the "b" word (budget) because they associate it with items that are lacking in quality or style. "Your budget is your friend because it guarantees you'll be able to get what you want even if it means you won't get it at the time you want."

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In Lewellyn's new book, *Never Pay Retail Again: Shop Smart, Spend Less, and Look Your Best Ever* (Gallery Books; \$15), the 30-year-old shares wardrobe expansion tips and fashion industry tricks of the trade along with where and how to discover great deals, whether at high-end boutiques or garage sales. The book is an instruction guide to saving while shopping.

Lewellyn, who worked in the fashion departments at *InStyle*, *Glamour*, and *Essence*, advises shoppers to save time and money by "shopping your closet." That means taking note of items you already own before you hit the stores. Savvy shoppers also need to know what they're looking for and what they can spend. Lewellyn suggests creating a seasonal shopping sheet. She also recommends developing a budget and sticking to it.

"A lot of people go shopping without a mental inventory or knowledge of what they have in their closet. So sometimes they buy the same things," she says. Lewellyn, a fourth-generation seamstress who comes from a family of fashionistas, also warns shoppers to steer clear of dropping large sums of cash on fashion fads (MC Hammer harem pants, anyone?). Instead, invest in key pieces that have longevity.

Although Lewellyn's book is aimed at aspiring "bargain babes," it also offers valuable and timeless strategies for men. While she does encourage budgeting and getting deals, there is one item that Lewellyn says men and women definitely should spend money on:

shoes. "You can have a simple black dress that you got years ago and if you have a fantastic pair of shoes that you spent money on, you will look like a superstar."

Traditionally, the end of the season has been the best time to shop for discounts but Lewellyn says amazing sales and deals are available every day. Online shopping sites such as Bluefly.com and Gilt.com offer discounted apparel. Another option is the lower-priced lines that high-end designers sell at retailers such as H&M, Target, and Kohl's, which may be hundreds or even thousands of dollars less.

Never Pay Retail Again also features a style glossary with the names and correct pronunciation of high-end designers like Balenciaga and Christian Louboutin as well as an appendix listing major shopping outlets, vintage stores, and discount retailers nationwide. Experts such as designer Tracy Reese and eBay's style director Constance White also share their fashion wisdom in the book.

"It's no longer the rule that you can only look great if you are wealthy," says Lewellyn, who also blogs about fashion at <http://daisylewellyn.com/blog>. "Everyone has the right and the access to look great because there is great clothing available on every level."

—Aisha I. Jefferson



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