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## **Manhattan Vintage Clothing Show**

Celebrities everywhere have gotten in the vintage clothing trend that is sweeping both Hollywood and fashion capitals around the world. Celebrities from Nicole Richie to Barbara Streisand have been seen out and about in one of a kind vintage finds.

The Author's favorite vintage score from the treasure troves at [Shrimpton Couture](#) But unlike other celebrity endorsed fashion finds, vintage clothing is a much more personal realm in which anyone can find unique treasures that will make them stand out as much as any celebrity. But without stylists like Rachel Zoe to guide us how can mere mortals take advantage of the vintage trend? Well, if you happen to live in New York you are in luck October 12-13th the [Manhattan Vintage Clothing Show](#) is taking place at Metropolitan Pavillion, 125 West 18th Street. With over 80 dealers and exhibitions it is well worth the \$20 admission.

We asked vintage expert Cherie at [Shrimpton Couture](#) for five tips to help any vintage shopper find the perfect outfit.

1. Look for seaming – take a minute and check out the construction and how the piece is put together. There are a lot of little tricks to tell a garments age but if you are fairly new at it – the way it is put together is important. So you want well put together seams and a well constructed piece. Fabric is also important – good fabric has a nice weighty feel to it. Take a bit to feel out what you like fabric-wise.
2. Go over the garment with a fine tooth comb, even if you love it – you need to check for holes and rips. Moth holes are not going to go away and older silks can get pretty frail – make sure the piece is sound. Things like a loose seam is Ok – you can sew those up but a big hole or rip that is just off a seam – trust me it will go in the back of your closet and disappear into the abyss. So go over it – don't be afraid to turn in inside out (carefully) and look it over. For prints you can hold it up to the light to check for pinholes. Having said that I have fallen in love with imperfect pieces and bought them anyway. But its knowing that this is what you are choosing and not going home and finding out there is a big unexpected

hole in your back end :-)

3. At a show like Manhattan Vintage you will not get a lot of items that are smelly or dirty (hopefully), but do check for stains and smells. Moth ball smells – especially on a synthetic fiber is just not going to come out. That nasty moldy smell – maybe - but probably not. That musty, I have been packed for 40 years – that will come out. Stains are tough – there are a lot that patience and soaking will take out and there are a lot that will never budge (sadly) so if you are not a stain master like moi – ask yourself – will I wear this as is if I can't get the stain out? If the answer is no – pass

4. Try it on! Vintage fits very, very different then modern clothes and the sizing is completely different – never mind that most 1950's pieces and older have no sizing (labels where not required by law then). So try it on. And if you are new to vintage use a show to find out your style. Usually what happens is that you will find that one decade seems to suit you perfectly! The irony of vintage is that as you learn more and more about it and find your style “decade” you start to realize how much so-called modern designs are blatant copies of so many vintage pieces! But they are much better made!

5. Know your labels, but remember a label is not everything. Labels can dramatically increase the value of your piece. However, there is a lot of damn good vintage out there that is not labeled. Remember - pre-1960 the majority of pieces (the good stuff at least) were all done by hand. So labeled or no you are getting the equivalent to a bespoke or couture piece of clothing today. That counts for something. The irony of a label is that the label will set the value to it's market price – in other words a good collector can look at a labeled piece and price it almost by sight. An unlabelled piece does not have that restraint. It never hurts though to do a little research and figure out who the main designers are and more importantly how their work, works on you. With vintage its all about what you fall in love with – its sort of like art. Buy because you love it, not because of who made it.

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