A fine balance

Whether you lean towards classic nautical stripes or sweet floral dresses, it's essential you choose the perfect ensemble.

Expand your wardrobe this summer so you're ready for anything, be it a breezy boat cruise, a sunny picnic or a relaxed stroll through a market. "It's all about suiting the moment you're in," says designer Kit Willow-Podgornik. "If I'm hunting for vintage pieces, I'll dress differently than if I'm off to a meeting where I throw on a fabulous dress." The warmer months are also a great chance to embrace vivid colour. "Colour can convey optimism and also a general feeling of positivity. There's nothing like a pop of colour to brighten your mood," points out Net-A-Porter buying director Holli Rogers. Just remember, whatever the event, comfort is key. Before you start shopping, take the advice of Coco Chanel with you: "Luxury must be comfortable, otherwise it is not luxury."

WHAT TO WEAR TO...

Beachside brunch

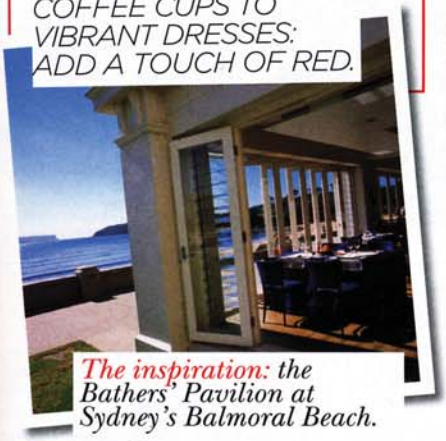
Eclettica linen sundress, $299.

Pantone coffee cups, $80 for set of six, from Chee Soon & Fitzgerald.

The Bathers' Pavilion by Serge Dansereau (HarperCollins, $65).

Azzedine Alaïa shell sandals, $2,500, from Cosmopolitan Shoes.

The look
FROM SUN-KISSED COFFEE CUPS TO VIBRANT DRESSES: ADD A TOUCH OF RED.



The inspiration: the Bathers' Pavilion at Sydney's Balmoral Beach.

Eclettica sandals, $399.

Anna Sui dress, $745, from Christensen Copenhagen.

WHAT TO WEAR TO...

Market day

French market bag, $48, from Vicino.

The look
A MORNING SPENT SCOURING THE MARKETS CALLS FOR AN ARTFUL DRESS AND ROOMY STRAW BASKET.

The inspiration: a Provençal garden.

Ray-Ban sunglasses, $250.

Wooden skittles, from www.jaquesloondon.com.

WHAT TO WEAR TO A...

Lawn party

Louis Vuitton bangles, $425 each.

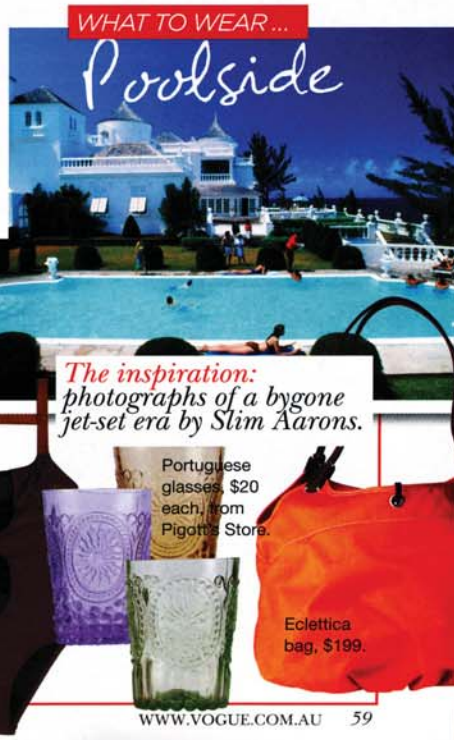
Country Road sunhat, $50.

Eclettica linen sundress, $345, with Lisa Ho belt, $359.

The look
UPDATE A WHITE DRESS WITH A CHIC STRAW HAT AND RETRO SHADES.

WHAT TO WEAR...

Poolside



The inspiration: photographs of a bygone jet-set era by Slim Aarons.

The look
CAPTURE THE ATTENTION OF THE POOL BOY BY SWAPPING YOUR BIKINI FOR A GLAMOROUS ONE-PIECE.

Luci in the Sky swimsuit, $220, from Harlequin Market.

SunnyLife towel, $70.

Portuguese glasses, $20 each, from Pigott's Store.

Eclettica bag, $199.