

A hand with a tattoo of a pink and yellow flower reaches towards blue hydrangeas. The background is a dense field of blue hydrangea flowers.

the
simple
things

September

Taking time to live well

TOUCH

A picnic under the apple trees • Early birds & night owls • Pub camping
End-of-summer lasagne & doughnut popcorn • Wriggle room for worms
How to replace a hug • Why we love an attic • Vintage style queens



M O D E R N
ECCENTRICS
VINTAGE STYLE QUEENS

Photography and words: ZOEY GOTO

IN A WORLD THAT CAN FEEL INCREASINGLY **UNIFORM**, WE'RE **CELEBRATING** THOSE HAPPILY DOING THINGS *a bit differently*. Meet the PEOPLE WHO ARE *seriously PASSIONATE* about their pastimes. PERHAPS THEY'LL **PERSUADE YOU** TO TRY *something NEW*?



THE UP-CYCLING QUEEN:

Meihui Liu

East London designer Meihui (Instagram @meihuiliu8) was one of the early pioneers of upcycled fashion. Armed with a secondhand sewing machine and some salvaged textiles, she started up her Victim fashion label in the late 90s. More recently, she's opened Victim Fashion Street – a gallery space adorned with antique furnishings and clothing, where people are invited to come and play dress-up, while enjoying a very English tea party.

Good style never goes out of fashion. These four women live this saying, choosing to reject contemporary fashion and to immerse themselves in the looks of the past. Together, they are a testament to the creativity and individuality of vintage styles, the variety evident from Rachel's Hollywood apartment, to Meihui's dress-up and play approach to Victoriana. The stories behind each vintage enthusiast are as diverse as the wearers themselves, but common threads weave their way through their stories, such as an appreciation for a low-consumption lifestyle, a feeling of being outside the mainstream, or an early interest sparked by a wonderful bygone movie or musician.

While these examples may be at the more extreme end of vintage fashion, it's a surprisingly accessible world to dip your toes into. A flick of winged eyeliner, a rockabilly bandana or just an hour on a Sunday evening spent looking through second-hand bargains on eBay are good starting points, open to all.

Wearing vintage has plenty of perks; saving money, expressing individuality, or just knowing that each garment comes with its own history. Let these vintage style queens inspire your own journey of fun in the way that you dress.

A love of upcycling and salvaging, and a desire to help people enjoy vintage clothes and find their own style inspired Meihui to launch her own fashion label and, more recently, gallery

Do you dress this way every day?

Yes, I do. I used to dress up to go to nightclubs or parties, but I don't do that anymore so now I just dress like this in the day to meet friends for tea.

When did you become interested in vintage style?

When I moved to London in 1994. Before that, I was obsessed with designer brands. One day, I decided to sell all my designer clothing and begin again, this time just wearing vintage and upcycled clothing.

Where do you get your style inspiration?

I grew up in Taiwan and loved listening to English music from the 80s. I was into the New Romantic style. I've lived in Italy, Paris and London, and travelling has helped me create my own vision and style.

Tell us about your gallery space.

It's a sustainable fashion gallery; an installation space where people come to dress up in the clothing and have a traditional English tea party. They can enjoy dressing up without feeling like they need to own the clothing, and it means that I can share my wardrobe and vision, rather than my clothing being hidden away.

Any tips for breathing life into vintage clothing?

I've always said that you shouldn't give up on your used clothing – fix it, upcycle it and bring it alive again! Every item can be precious and can one day become vintage, so buy clothing that you really like and wear it over and over again. »



THE MID-CENTURY MODERN ACE:

Lindsay Jarvis

The mid-century aesthetic permeates Lindsay's life, from her modernist house in Palm Springs – a mecca for lovers of mid-century design in the United States – to her vintage interiors, wardrobe and her job at a modernist design magazine (Instagram @lindsayjarvisland).

Is Palm Springs linked to your personal style?

I was drawn to Palm Springs because of the mid-century vibe. I've had to adapt my style to the hot desert summers though! 1940s beach-style is one of my favourites, a look that I think pairs with Palm Springs.

How would you describe the way you dress?

Everyday elegance. Casual, comfortable and functional vintage. I love styles from the 1920s to the 1960s, but the pieces that work best for my lifestyle are usually from the late 1930s to the early 1960s. While I love the extravagant gowns of those eras, I gravitate towards wearable styles that are functional.

Do you dress this way every day?

I do! Some days certainly end up looking more 'vintage' than others, but this is the way I dress all the time.

Are environmental concerns a factor?

Absolutely! Not just for clothing, but also for home décor. It helps to cut back on materials/sourcing for new products and also on all of the extraneous packaging and plastic used to transport larger items like home goods. If you can re-use an item, why not?

Where do you source your clothing?

Lately, I've been buying directly from other vintage enthusiasts on Instagram. Sewing and knitting are two of my favourite hobbies, so I make some of my own clothing using vintage patterns. I also have some

reproduction pieces, especially shoes: Remix Vintage is a fantastic reproduction company.

Beyond dress, which other aspects of your life are influenced by vintage?

I love the aesthetics of the mid-century, but not the values. Vintage fashion, not vintage values!

Bringing Californian glamour to the utilitarianism of mid-century modern, Lindsay is living her modernist dream and enjoying leading a more sustainable lifestyle, too





THE MODERN-DAY PIN-UP:

Lady Eccentrik

The style of Lady Eccentrik (Instagram @ladyeccentrikb) combines the glamour of the classic pin-up looks of the 40s and 50s with her Jamaican heritage and desire to always look dapper. Her background in the performing arts (she's CEO of a company that promotes musicians) is evident in the pure theatre of her image.

What vintage era are you interested in and why?

The 40s and 50s, due to the way the clothing shapes the body. Dressed this way, I walk head held high.

How do you bring your heritage to your style?

Jamaican people take a lot of pride in how they dress and are always well coordinated. It's part of Jamaican culture that you could never look at us and determine our financial or social status from our dress.

Is there a vintage scene in Jamaica?

Absolutely not! In Jamaica, vintage would be called "old bruk" and people just don't want to be seen in secondhand clothing.

When did you start dressing this way?

About four years ago, but I've always wanted to be different to my peers. When I came to the UK from Jamaica aged 11, I discovered Grace Jones and started mixing 70s and 80s clothing into my wardrobe.

Where do you get your inspiration?

Pinterest! I also like researching vintage clothing patterns and watching old

movies. I love the costume designer Edith Head and watch films she worked on just to see the costumes.

How long does it take you to put your look together?

I get dressed in my mind the night before, so it's quite quick. My make-up takes 45 minutes and my hair doesn't take long as it's a wig. I'm proud of my natural hair and have recently been doing vintage-inspired natural hair videos, as I've been getting messages from Black girls interested in vintage style but who don't want to damage their hair with straighteners. But, for my own personal look, I like to wear a wig.

Why do you choose to dress this way?

Although I am quite introverted, I want to stand out and express myself with my clothing. When I'm dressed this way, people want to come over and interact. I like to make the world a bit more colourful! »



Lady Eccentrik's unique style is a mix of her Jamaican heritage, where fashion is all, irrespective of class, and the classic 'pin-up' looks of the 1940s and 1950s.



FINDING LOST ANGELES:

Rachel Kafka

Rachel, a recruiter for the entertainment industry, and her partner Nate Hennagin, a lawyer, live in an Art Deco building in Los Angeles. Walking into their apartment, a modern TV is the only clue that we're in the 21st century. The entire space is a carefully curated homage to Rachel and Nate's passion – The Golden Era of Hollywood. Their blog, *Finding Lost Angeles* (findinglostangeles.com), is dedicated to preserving the city's storied past.

Describe your style.

Styles from the 1940s and 50s that are classic and feminine. I've always loved old music and antiques. When I was a little girl, I'd watch old Hollywood movies with my grandmother. The clothing side was gradual, and I started collecting about ten years ago.

Do you dress this way every day?

No, but I wish I did! I work in a corporate office, so my look still has a 40s flavour but is much more subdued.

How long does it take to get ready?

An hour on average. I sleep in curlers the night before, so it's just the make-up, which takes 20 minutes, then brushing out my hair.

Where do you get your style inspiration?

I love Rita Hayworth's style and poise, plus Marlene Dietrich, Betty Grable, Marilyn Monroe. I'm also active on Instagram where there is a big vintage community that I draw inspiration from.

Rachel and Nate's apartment in an Art Deco building is a shrine to the Golden Era of Hollywood, with pieces picked up over nearly a decade from thrift stores, flea markets and Craigslist



Where do you buy your clothing and furniture?

It's years of collecting. Nate and I have pieced things together from flea markets, thrift shops, Craigslist and antiques stores. For clothing, I sometimes shop on Etsy.

Why do you not dress in a contemporary style?

I've always been someone who likes to dress up and be noticed. There's something special and a bit sentimental about earlier eras, especially living in a city like LA where it's all around you.

Would you like to have lived in the era?

I would love to time-travel for a few days, but I am actually very happy living in the 21st century! I do think it's easy to oversimplify or romanticise many of the hardships that people went through – with the War and Civil Rights struggles. 📌

Adapted from *Vintage Style: Inside the Dapper World of Retro Enthusiasts* by Zoey Goto, published by Redshank Books



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