

Suiting up for summer: Prints, pocket squares colour men's formal wear

BY LAUREN LA ROSE, THE CANADIAN PRESS JULY 17, 2012 1:02 PM



A model sports a Stonehouse, Wool, side vent, two-button suit with flat front pant in taupe pin stripe jacket, dress shirt in oversize gingham pattern in tan and white. THE CANADIAN PRESS/HO, Andy Regendanz

TORONTO - While heavy sportcoats and wool pullovers have been tucked away amid sweltering temperatures, men don't have to shelve good style as the thermostat climbs — particularly as they head out to formal events.

Men unsure of what to wear to a summer wedding should take their cues from the groom, noted Walter Dimini, divisional merchandise manager for dresswear at Tip Top Tailors.

"If the groom is wearing shorts, obviously, it's OK to wear shorts. It could be short sleeves, it doesn't have to be a long sleeve. It really depends on the flavour of the wedding or the tone being set by the bride and groom."

For a stylish but more casual option, Dimini said men could opt for a great pair of chinos in a polished cotton.

"Let's say you do a natural or khaki colour, wear a white shirt. And if it's looking like it's a little bit more formal than you anticipated, if it's a long-sleeved shirt you can just wear it long-sleeved. If it's a little less formal, then you just roll up the sleeves and go a bit more casual."

"If it's going to be in August, and especially during the day, and it's going to be on the beach, I don't think people are expecting anybody to be wearing a jacket," he added.

Dimini said men should also swap out their dress shirt — which is meant to be mostly worn with suits — and seek a more fun alternative.

"It should be just kind of a cool shirt. It could be linen, it could have an interesting pattern on it, it could be a great colour, like a great royal blue," he said.

Dimini noted that pink is also re-emerging as a go-to hue in the men's wardrobe. Gingham, checks and houndstooth are among the hot choices in patterns — and it extends beyond shirts and ties.

Dimini said a notable trend to dress up suits without wearing a tie is a pocket square, allowing for a small sliver of colour to be visible in the breast pocket.

"If you have a houndstooth shirt, then if you could find a houndstooth-patterned pocket square it would be great — but it would have to be a tiny, tiny pattern," Dimini said. "If you've got a solid shirt, you could play with any pattern on the pocket puff, provided it doesn't clash with the suit."

Men seeking to invest in a suit will want to get some versatility out of the look. Dimini said those who want an option suitable for businesswear should consider going for a lightweight wool suit. But for men looking to lengthen the wear of their new buy beyond summer, he cautions them to be mindful of their colour choice.

"If it's a pearl grey, it's really not great for during the winter. It stands out. So if this is THE suit you're going to buy, then I would steer away from a really pale, pale grey. I would go with the mid-tone."

Online:

Tip Top Tailors: www.tiptoptailors.ca