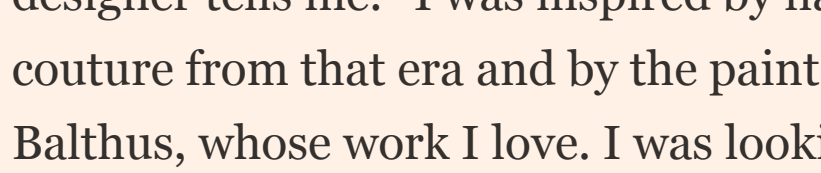


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## Fashion insiders reveal the hottest ‘pre’ collection buys

Pre-fall may just be what your wardrobe is looking for



David Hayes JUNE 13 2014

Erdem Moralioglu is talking about inspiration. “I spent a lot of time in the Victoria and Albert Museum’s archives at Blythe House, looking at amazing pieces from the 1960s,” the Canadian-born designer tells me. “I was inspired by haute couture from that era and by the painter Balthus, whose work I love. I was looking at the inside workings of the garments as much as the outside, examining the contrast between evening and day pieces.”

The meticulous research, the attention to detail – you could be forgiven for thinking that this creative process was aimed towards one of Erdem’s high-profile London Fashion Week shows. But no, this was the backstory to a collection of 35 outfits that went no further than a lookbook and a few rails of garments, placed in front of the world’s top fashion buyers.

This is pre-fall. Once the bread-and-butter commercial collections, filling the gaps between the drama of the main catwalk shows each year, the “pre” collections (that’s pre-fall, which lands in stores early summer, and pre-spring – sometimes called resort or cruise – which hits rails towards the end of the year) are now something of a creative high point for designers.

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“I really enjoy designing pre collections,”

says Erdem – as he is known. “It’s where I get an opportunity to explore who my woman is, for day or night. I use it as a place to experiment with ideas before my main show, but it’s also a very separate collection with its own narrative and story.”



From left: Christian Dior, Valentino, Marni (all pre-fall 2014)

It is also a very good a place to build a growing business. Erdem showed his first pre-spring collection in 2009, and now the twice-yearly pre collections make up more than half of his yearly sales and are, in his words, “an important part of what I do”.

Creative, but with a commercial spin, pre-fall may just be what your wardrobe is looking for – but if so, where should you start? We asked the fashion directors of some of the world’s leading style retailers for their highlights of the pre-fall collections.

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### Anita Barr, Harvey Nichols

“The reality is that many of the “it” items are now coming from the pre collections; the Row’s Anasta jacket already has a waiting list, as do Isabel Marant’s tennis trainers (from £270) and Proenza Schouler’s PS1 backpacks (£1,370). It is a strong season for outerwear too; coats have dominated. We have backed the oversized parka – Valentino’s Butterfly-motif lightweight version (£1,540) has just hit the shop floor.”

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### Tomoko Ogura, Barney’s NY



Suede-fringed PS1 pouch by Proenza Schouler

“Fringing and shearling are strong statements. Our favourites include Aquazzura’s fringed cut-out shoe-boots and Alexander Wang’s fringed-back tops, as well as Chloé’s shearling cape-coats and Giuseppe Zanotti’s blue shearling-lined motorcycle boots. We also liked Proenza Schouler’s suede-fringed PS1 pouch. There have been so many beautiful coats, such as Céline’s crombies, which come in an array of luxurious fabrics, and blanket coats from Chloé and Stella McCartney that will see you through winter. My personal choice? A Sacai Luck camel pinstripe coat with a green contrast collar.”

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### Laura Larbalestier, Browns



Coat by Chloé

“The key trends we have invested in for pre-fall are: checks (from Carven, No 21 and Christian Dior); graphic prints (by JW Anderson, Roksanda Ilincic and Marni) and capes (from Barrie and Burberry Prorsum). The investment pieces include Carven’s check coats, Saint Laurent bomber jackets and Christian Dior’s convertible coat (£4,050), which is one of the season’s must-haves. Knits are really big too; the animal-print sweater (£760) from Céline is my favourite. It is also the perfect time to invest in shoes, as you have the best choice in pre-fall – I’d suggest a midi heel from Dries Van Noten (£445).”

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### Sarah Rutson, Lane Crawford

“For us, pre-fall is about a longer skirt and a cosy knit; we call it the ‘softly, softly’ approach – every brand does it. In particular I love all the soft mid-calf plissé skirts from Céline, and the long fluid skirts from Preen and Sacai. Outerwear plays an important role too, from the tailored coat to shearling, which has become the new fur of the season. Animals are a fun element – from butterflies at Valentino to birds at Preen and poodles in 3.1 Phillip Lim. The bucket bag is the must-have shape, and the shoe is all about comfort – from very flat to a tiny kitten heel or sneakers.”

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### Paula Reed, Mytheresa.com

“A lot of our investments for pre are early indicators of the main catwalk buy. Capes at Valentino and Chloé – and strong geometric print themes at Chloé, Fendi, Givenchy and Proenza Schouler – recur both in pre and main collections. Patent leather accessories are also strong. The fringed trims at Stella McCartney and Saint Laurent are key buys for us, and we think the butterfly and flower prints at Valentino, Erdem and Dolce & Gabbana are likely to be snapped up as soon as they arrive.”

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Crisp Packet clutch by Anya Hindmarch

### Bridget Cosgrave, Boutique1.com

“Key pre trends for us are plaids from Preen and Tibi; capes from Issa, Isabel Marant and Temperley; the midi-skirt from Adam Lippes and Jonathan Simkhai and crop pants from ALC and Acne. Bags with personality are also really strong right now, such as Anya Hindmarch’s quirky Crisp Packet Clutch (around £995) to Proenza Schouler’s fringed bags, and rucksacks from the Row.”

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