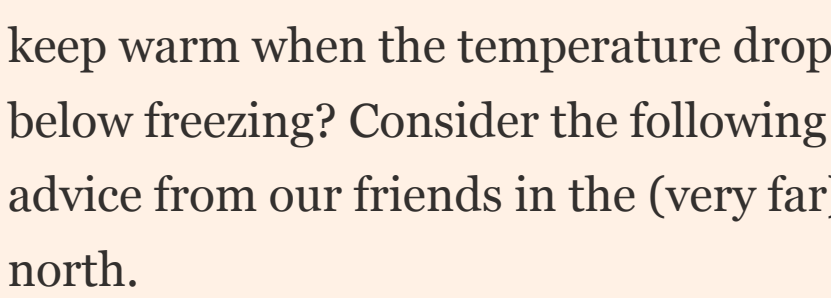


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Warmer winters

Is it possible to look cool and keep warm when the temperature drops below freezing?



David Hayes DECEMBER 14 2012

When the wind blows in from Siberia it's easy to throw style out the window and bundle yourself up like some latter-day babushka. But is it possible to look cool and keep warm when the temperature drops below freezing? Consider the following advice from our friends in the (very far) north.



Designer Ulyana Sergeenko says: 'Only in Russia can you see women casually strolling on the ice-covered streets wearing a pair of stiletto heels'

"Only in Russia can you see women casually strolling on the ice-covered streets wearing a pair of stiletto heels," says Moscow-based designer Ulyana Sergeenko. "Even on the coldest days women here strive to look beautiful and glamorous. I love that Russian women always want to look their best. I believe a woman should look beautiful and graceful, no matter what."

Sergeenko's hard-line approach to sub-zero style is something she applies to her own winter wardrobe. "It's not only about fur. There's a whole range of amazing and beautiful things you can only wear in winter – muffs, angora shawls, funny woollen mittens and gaiters, beautifully embroidered coats, heavy capes, bright puffer jackets and valenki – really warm, comfortable boots made from dense felted wool. It's a very traditional Russian thing. When it's freezing cold for months and keeping yourself warm is your highest priority, you really have to be creative to avoid being stuck with the same combination of clothes every day."

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You can match Sergeenko's eclectic cold weather style with Brora's embroidered shawls (£109) and folk-patterned cashmere gloves (£45); bright puffer jackets (£59.90) from Uniqlo and wool cape-coats (£299) by Somerset by Alice Temperley at John Lewis.

Olga Dunina, fashion director at Vogue Russia, has a more forgiving approach. "This winter I'm wearing a Chanel parka and Marc Jacobs lace-up combat boots with chunky knit socks. Or alternatively an Acne oversized sheepskin biker jacket with chunky knits from Stella McCartney and wool ribbed tights. It's all about layering, most often with a chunky scarf I can use like a hood, and cashmere underwear from my favourite Russian cashmere designer, Tegin."

As for men, Igor Garanin, fashion director of GQ Russia, says: "It's all about layers and enormous scarves. Looking smart is the best way to keep warm with cashmere shirts and ties. This winter I really love the thick cashmere cardigans from Ballantyne, double-breasted coats by Dries Van Noten and scarves from Faliero Sarti."

Danish-born designer Peter Jensen, who swapped the freezing winters of his homeland for a different kind of cool in London's East End, says: "I always start wearing two pairs of socks from the end of October – a normal pair and a pair of thick knitted ones. My mother still knits them for me. It is the only thing she can be bothered to knit now."

And when he goes home? "I really like Sunspel's thermal underwear and their cashmere scarves and gloves. I also have a great Junya Watanabe for Gloverall duffel coat with a zip-in padded lining. I wear my own label hats in lambswool. But my favourite cold weather essential is a heart-shaped hand-warmer. You just click it and it heats up. It makes you feel like you can go Christmas shopping for hours."

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