

Four runway trends for A/W 17

By [Hannari Slabbert](#)

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Leading global trend forecasting agency [WGSN](#), rounds up the most important directions from the catwalks in New York, London, Milan and Paris, for Autumn/Winter 17 women's apparel in their Key Trend report. This summer's focus on femininity continues into winter, but is counterbalanced by a menswear influence and a more casual, nonchalant approach to dressing.

Classic pieces such as polo necks, tailored coats, sweater dresses and stonewashed jeans move into fashion territory, while feminine items such as lace skirts and slip dresses are styled within a more casual context, offering fresh hanger appeal. Familiar items including culottes, the pinafore dress and the cropped flare carry through for another season with subtle updates offering newness: A sign that new silhouettes are sticking around for longer with focus moving to details.



Items are becoming less seasonal, with transitional pieces being favoured over heavy winter items and layering continuing as a crucial direction.

With the move from cocooning, quiet minimalism to materials with a harder edge, we see a decided shift in colour. Highly pigmented tones of emerald and crimson pop will be important for mid-winter, while an array of mid-century brights amps up autumn assortments. Blue and rose pink lend a soft touch, complemented by dove grey and butterscotch. Monochrome statements look especially fresh when incorporating accessories into the styling fold – offering a perfect opportunity for linked selling of sweaters and scarves, as well as coordinating outerwear and bags.



1. Urban Street

Urban Street is a rigorous and youthful story, melding streetwear and active influences. High-end fashion is infused with the style and comfort synonymous with street style, with a blend of easy separates. Louche trousers, long-knit tunics and the perennial puffer jacket create a relaxed and youthful silhouette.



A palette of rich hues is key for embodying the spirit of the Urban Street trend. Both streetwear and sports influences inspire Urban Street's print and pattern story. Bold slogans, branding placements, colour-blocking and graffiti-inspired applications all make a statement, and create a wealth of opportunities for commercial application.





2. The Romantic Explorer

The key directions for this trend is Historical Romanticism and Global Traveller.

Rich jewel tones in deep, saturated hues are added to sumptuous fabrics, in keeping with the season's Historical Romanticism and Global Traveller themes. Deep amethyst works well in plush velvet materials, providing a sense of luxury, while garnet and sapphire are the perfect canvas for fluid silks, emphasising this trend's air of opulence.

a. Historical Romanticism

A delicate look evolves for the Historical Romanticism trend, inspired by past references and details. Light, ethereal shapes are cut in wisps of sheer silk or embellished with glittering beads. Sheer ruffles cascade around shoulders and flowing hemlines, while Renaissance-inspired dresses and coats are embellished with lavish embroideries.





b. Global Traveller

A return to eclecticism and a need for individuality emerges in the Global Traveller trend, reminiscent of loved pieces, collecting and woven into offbeat pairings. Traditional craftsmanship is reworked, creating unexpected contrasts of opulent textures, while gold brocades, sartorial clothes and collectable jewellery appear in extravagant silhouettes.

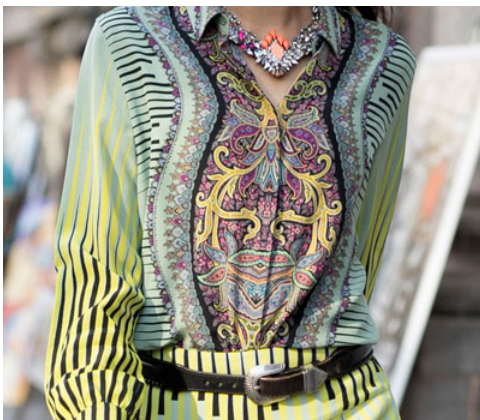




3. Shake It Up

The Shake It Up! trend can also be split into two sub-trends, Mix & Mix and Studio 54.

A more-is-more mindset evolves from the maximalist theme of the past season, with designers creatively mixing up fabrics, prints and colours in an irreverent potpourri of styles. A carnival of colour and a vibrant play of print-clashing styles shakes up silhouettes for A/W 16/17.



With a fascination for the 1980s still running through collections, combined with a renewed reverence for the influence of David Bowie, disco references are strong this season. Designers combine elements of Studio 54, and a shake-it-up sensibility, resulting in a sexy, irreverent mix of materials, prints and silhouettes.

Eye-popping brights in arresting hues of primary yellow and cobalt, as well as purple and kelly green, punctuate modern collections. These colours are either worn head-to-toe, used in colour-clashing prints, or pieced together in blocks, giving looks for the season a strong and vibrant mood.





4. The Purist

A modern, minimalist look evolves in this elegant and effortless trend. Luxurious materials skim the body, with soft silk crepes and jersey knits used for perfectly proportioned layering pieces. Gentle colours are used in these simple constructions, highlighting the pure artistry of this trend.



A beautiful serene palette evolves for The Purist trend, and is key for a new, modern and minimalist look. From winter white hues to dusted shades of pink, golden olive and warm amber, these elegant hues are worn head-to-toe, and give silhouettes a sophisticated yet zen-like look.

The Purist theme sees an array of understated yet sophisticated print and pattern applications. Soft, low-contrast colour-blocking, slim pinstripes, and metallic surface textures create a modern, refined aesthetic.





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ABOUT HANNARI SLABBERT

Hannari Slabbert is a seasoned, senior director in the fashion industry, currently leading the strategic expansion for WGSN across Africa. For the past 5 years, she has managed the commercial development for WGSN across the United Kingdom, Scandinavia and Central Eastern Europe and has re-located with her family to Cape Town in 2016 to drive the global trend authority's operations across the continent .

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