

From Fashionistas to Recessionistas at L.A. Private Schools

Description



This is by Dolce and Gabbana. Price:
\$895.

Our recent post about [fashion](#) begged the question: hasn't the recession impacted private school moms' shopping habits? Of course it has. Sort of.

We are still knee-deep in a recession and its impact on some families at private schools in L.A. is still being felt. Hard. An article on CNN Money, ["Making \\$300K and Getting Aid For A First Grader"](#) was a national piece, but is relevant to schools in our city.

So what's happening on the style front given this lagging economy that seems to show modest gains only to be followed by the release of new job numbers that indicate more bad news for workers?

At one posh Westside school, a friend told me she's seen Prada-wearing moms showing up in Tory Burch, a definite downgrade in price. The "Hamptons-Chic" vibe is still the school uniform for these moms, but the recession has forced a designer swap.

This chic J. Crew satchel works for a busy mom. The price is right: \$275

A school on Mulholland known for its rich hippy, rock n' roll vibe has seen moms spending more on inexpensive tee shirts and holding off on the pricy Rick Owens or Balenciaga leather jackets until "next season." Or the season after that.

"I still shop at Barney's," said one of my friends at The Willows School. "But, now I'm only going to buy something if it's on sale."

Another Willows friend said she thinks moms at our school are cutting back in ways that won't noticeably impact their status. "I think private school moms who need to cut back are shopping at less expensive grocery stores rather than dressing differently," she told me.

My friend [Pauline](#) told me her daughter's private elementary school in the Valley is one of the least fashion conscious places she knows. Both fashionista and recessionista, she's cutting back on items that pre-recession she never thought she'd have to compromise on.

Says Pauline, "I just bought a t-shirt and sunglasses at Heavenly Couture on Larchmont, where everything is \$15 and under. I think the fact that a store like this even exists on Larchmont Blvd. is evidence of a recession! I am a total brand snob and I'd never dreamed I'd go off-brand since I normally shop at Anthropologie or Polka Dots and Moonbeams. My t-shirt, kind of a Michael Stars rip-off, was \$3.99 and my sunglasses were \$6.99! After I lost my \$100 Ralph Lauren glasses, I had to find a cheap replacement."

Some private school moms are skipping trunk shows and designer events to avoid dropping \$10,000 for a pile of stuff they don't really need. But, will they fire their personal shoppers? Are they secretly heading to H&M for cool-girl fashion that won't break the bank?

Luckily, The Gap has made a comeback after a few horrid years of dowdiness and Tween-inspired crap that would barely cover one of my arms. The Gap got its groove back just in time for moms like me who love their easy-to-wear, affordable items.

I'm not a fan of Forever 21 for adults over the age of, well, 21. I know moms who wear it, but it seems a bit too young, at least for me. That said, I bought these gorgeous earrings there for my

daughter, but they were too big for her. I get more compliments on these \$5 baubles than you can imagine.



Forever 21

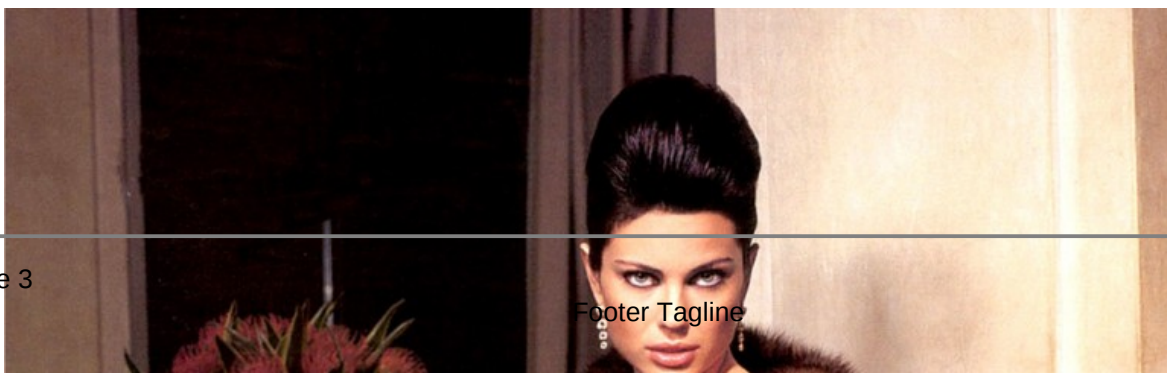
Target is smart. Every time it introduces a high-end designer creating an affordable line for its stores, whether its Marni or Missoni, these low lines sell out immediately. Now Target will be making an entrance into Neiman Marcus. A reversal of fortune?

For moms at very traditional and parochial schools where skinny jeans, blow-outs and super-high heels get whispers and long, hard stares, the Ann Taylor mommy-shoppers simply shift to Ann Taylor Loft. Same style, just polyester instead of silk.

Those uber-popular white jeans seen all over the Westside schools? Will anybody really know if they are J Brand or J Crew? For everyone's sake, lets hope not or the fur will fly.

Speaking of fur, which I detest with all my being, its never been a must-have item in L.A., although I know moms at a few schools who flaunt it. I would never wish hard financial times on anyone, unless it means they can no longer afford real fur.

Let's hear it for faux fur, priced right and ethically right!



Dressed to Kill? No! Killed to Dress!

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