

ERICA PANAGOPOULOS ON SHOES



By Bianca Kasawdish

Photo by Arising Images

Every fashionista knows that shoes can make or break an outfit. The perfect pair allows you to lead with confidence and can make all the difference when completing a look.

Meet footwear connoisseur Erica Panagopoulos, who serves as the buyer and general manager of Capricious in Grosse Pointe Farms. Born and raised in Grosse Pointe, Panagopoulos was inspired by her aunt Joan, who worked her way up in the fashion industry. It all began when her mother would take her and her sister to visit their aunt in New York. “We would go into the department stores and gaze into the windows at the couture fashion displays in front of us. It was then that I knew I wanted to be a part of that world,” she says.

Following her calling, she went on to study fashion merchandising at Western Michigan University. Taking advantage of her opportunities, she studied abroad, and interned for renowned companies, such as Jenny Dyer London and Pringle of Scotland.

Prior to working at Capricious, she managed boutiques for luxury brands Kate Spade, Michael Kors and Tory Burch. When she heard a new upscale shoe store was opening in Grosse Pointe, family and friends encouraged her to go after the job.

With a discerning eye for accent pieces sure to spruce up any outfit, Panagopoulos shares her views with StyleLine on essential footwear, choosing the right pair for an outfit and fall shoe trends.

Quality Investments Panagopoulos says when it comes to quality, construction and fit of the shoe are important. Do not invest in a shoe that doesn’t fit. And always remember, high quality items must be treated with care for a long-lasting relationship.

According to Panagopoulos, every woman should own the following staple shoes: a classic black pump, ballet flats, a great boot and a nude heel, like the **Stuart Weitzman** Platswoon pump (**A**), \$340, Capricious, 313.458.8719. These essentials can take a woman from day to night.

Express Yourself “Every woman is different, and it is important to have shoes and accessories that make you feel beautiful,” she says. Women should not be afraid to try on different styles. Doing so, and finding the right fit, will add confidence – the ultimate accessory – to your step.

When choosing the right shoe, think balance. The weight and texture of a shoe and garment should coordinate and complement each other. For casual wear, play up your outfit with statement jewelry or even a bit of sparkle in your sneakers or flats, such as the **Kate Spade** Catcher flat (**B**), \$150, Capricious, 313.458.8719.

Keep it modest and simple at work with a classic pump, like this **Kate Spade** Jayden pump (**C**), \$328, Capricious, 313.458.8719, or ballet flat, such as this **Repetto** ballet flat (**D**), \$285, Capricious, 313.458.8719.

Formal occasions are a chance for you to really release your fashion sense. Frost suggests standing out with a bold color or daring prints like leopard, trying textures such as calf hair, and making a statement with embellished patent leather footwear, like this **Kate Spade** Happy pump (**E**), \$398, Capricious, 313.458.8719.



On What's Next As for the trends of the season, you will see a lot of punk rock-inspired footwear, featuring plaids, buckles, studs and leather.

Boots for the fall season are here to stay, with different variations of over-the-knee boots, such as the **Stuart Weitzman** 5050 boot (**F**), \$598, Capricious, 313.458.8719, pointed-toe boots, ever-classic flat riding boot, and booties, like the **Ralph Lauren** Diana bootie (**G**), \$850, Capricious, 313.458.8719.

Panagopoulos believes in the statement by noted footwear designer Christian Louboutin: "Shoes transform your body language and attitude. They lift you physically and emotionally." □

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