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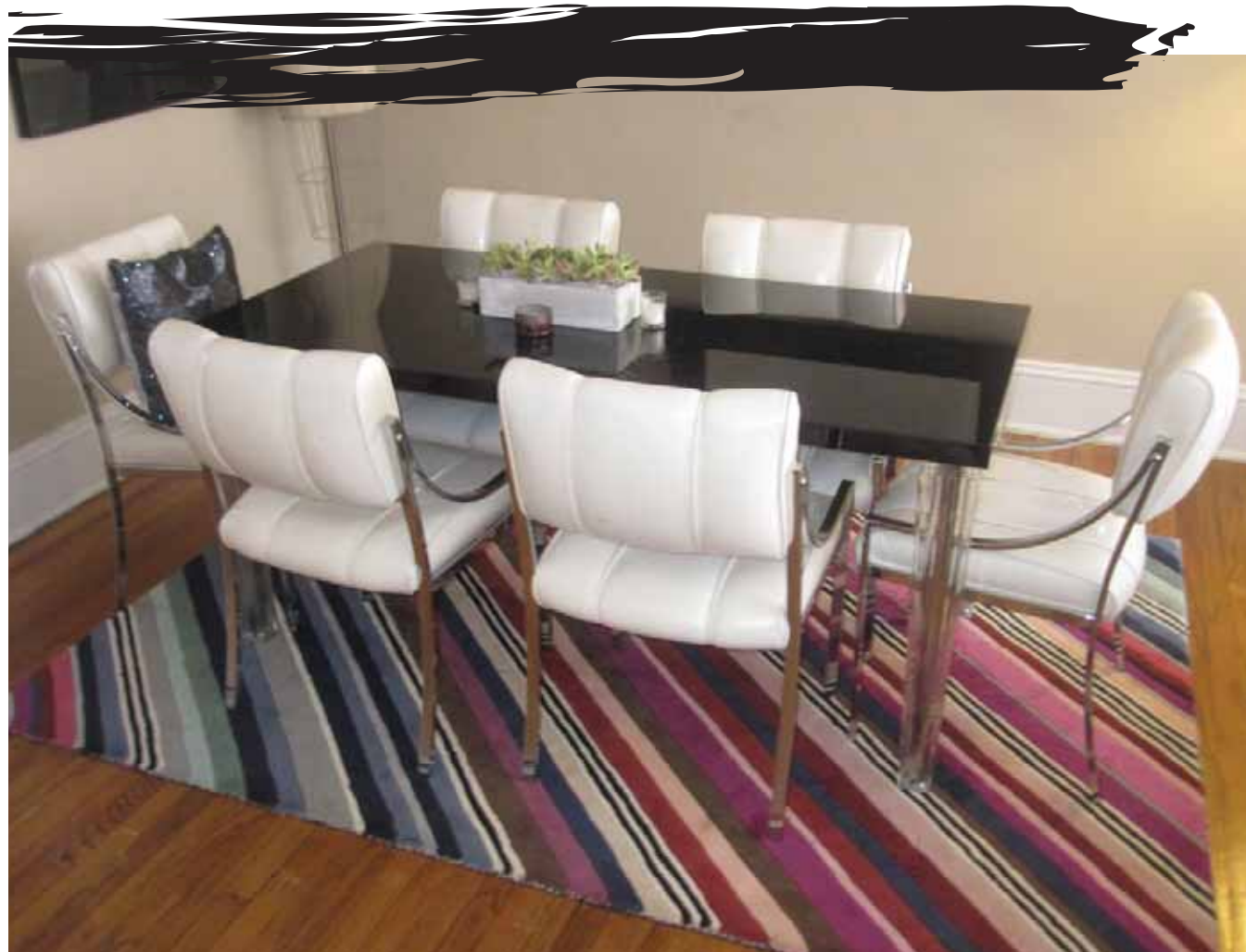
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is lacking (windows, closets, a corner of wall that is not peeling . . .). Instead, focus on the positives (It's cute and cozy! The fridge and oven work! There's a pizza joint that delivers 24/7 down the block!). Like I said, my first place was no palace. I knew there was a ton to be done. But the idea of transforming something is exciting. You're doing your own Extreme Home Makeover!

You have to feel comfortable; you have to feel inspired, relaxed, rejuvenated.

At first, I bought things based on aesthetics. But then I quickly realized that although that's fun, and it's very easy to get carried away if something catches your eye, function and form really count.



You should be able to collapse on your couch and put your

feet up at the end of the day without worrying about ruining anything. So by all means, buy pieces that “speak” to you—but just make sure they’re usable as well.

Think about everything you want your home to embody. What are the words you want to use to describe your dream dwelling? Cozy and comfy? Chic and sleek? Functional? Funky? Keep those words in mind as you shop. And remember, patience is a virtue. Rome wasn't built in a day; likewise, your first apartment. It takes some time (maybe even an eternity) to fully decorate your space. And just when you think you're totally done . . . you change your mind and redo everything to create a new vibe, or you move out! Go ahead—have fun furnishing. That's the best part of having your own home: no one is going to tell you that chintz and plaid clash or



that old 45s are not artwork. And if you don't have a lot of money to decorate, no problem. Most of my favorite furnishings cost me less to nothing. You know that feeling when you find a stunning pair of shoes on the sale rack in your size? That's how I felt filling my home with inexpensive, unique, and exciting accents I got for a steal. *Score!*



YOUR CLOSET IS THE SIZE OF A SHOEBOX

I admit I am not the most organized person on the planet—probably because I spend a lot of time traveling and living out of suitcases (Excuses! Excuses!). But I do use every inch—and I mean every inch—of my space.

I like to put space dividers in my drawers so I can separate out my undies, socks, tights, and bras. I also create categories in my closet: pants

are hung together; likewise jackets, shirts, dresses, and skirts. And each category gets a different color hanger—so I can grab for red and know that the mini skirt I need is right there. And I do have one golden rule: put things away. That means no tossing stuff any which way into drawers (resulting in a future game of hide-and-seek), no piling clothes to the ceiling or leaving them on the floor. My mom always told me it takes just as little time to hang some-

thing up as it does to throw it on the floor. So true! And I'm much happier when my bedroom doesn't look like a tornado hit it.

There are many affordable and easy ways to store your stuff. Places like The

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Container Store, Target, Walmart, Bed Bath and Beyond, and so on, have amazingly cheap products that will help you maximize and compartmentalize.

- **Risers for your bed are a great** option because they create a whole new storage space. You can store your winter clothes in summer and vice versa. Invest in some under-the-bed stor-

age boxes or bags. The ones that vacuum-seal your sweaters *flat* are especially great for tight spaces.


- **Get the skinniest hangers you can;** the skinnier the hangers, the more of them you can have! If you're superpressed for space, use multitiered hangers to group skirts and pants together, or a rod that hangs from an existing one to create double the rack room.
- **Rotate seasonal clothes front** and center at eye level. For example, in the spring/summer, winter clothes should be placed out of ready-reach so your pretty sundresses are easy to find. Have

sweaters and coats laundered or dry-cleaned (be sure to empty all pockets) and consider storing them so you have more room.

- **Clip-on shelf dividers are a** great way to keep sweaters, hats, purses, shoes, and gloves separated and accessible. Or putting some inexpensive wicker baskets on shelves or on the floor of your closet is great for storing accessories. A small towel rack hung on the inside of your closet door is perfect for keeping scarves tidy; a hangar with multiple three-ring-binder-type metal rings will hold belts and keep them in line.
- **Be creative with how you store** your jewelry. I have a small

bowl next to my bed and I drop all the little things—like stud earrings and rings that I wear all the time—into it. I also





Part of becoming your own person is developing and owning your personal style. I like to think of it as getting into your fashion groove: what looks good; what feels good; what colors and styles are superflattering to your body and skin tone. It's all about *you*. If everyone wore the same style, we'd all look like those cookie-cutter chicks in the Robert Palmer videos. No two people are exactly alike, and your style should be as unique as you are.

But fashion can be intimidating: all those crazy couture looks on the runway, all the new trends and fads being touted in the fashion magazines. How do you know which ones will work for you—and which

will make you look like Lady Gaga? How do you know what to buy? And what you can even afford? When you're this confused and overwhelmed, it's much easier to just pull on the same pair of jeans and sneakers and call it a day. Like most subjects, style requires some study. Yes, you're out of college, but you still have some homework ahead of you.

Start with a stack of fashion magazines, like *Vogue*, *Elle*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Glamour*, or *InStyle*. As you look at photos or ads, what colors catch your eye? What styles can you see yourself wearing with confidence? Don't get hung up the fact that the people wearing these clothes may be thinner/taller/more endowed than you are. Trust me; few people in real life look like they regularly strut the catwalks. If

you love something, there is *always* a way to wear it. I draw inspiration from style.com, where I can watch all the runway

be anything from, "I'm sophisticated and elegant" to "I'm funky and fun-loving."

And don't think that you have to stick with

this style if you suddenly

feel inspired to change it. I

am a bit of a fashion schizo-

phrenic; I don't ever become

married to one look for too

long. It's more fun that way!

If you love something, there is *always* a way to wear it.

shows and how each look is styled. It's a

great way to gauge what's

"in fashion" and also figure

out how everything works

together. Another great site

that sparks my creativity is

whowhatwear.com.

Once you've done a

little homework, start by

pulling a few pieces out

of your closet and put-

ting them together in a

way that jells with your

new "vision." Maybe it's

pairing a bold-colored

accessory—like a belt,

a hat, a bag, or shoes—

with a neutral classic.

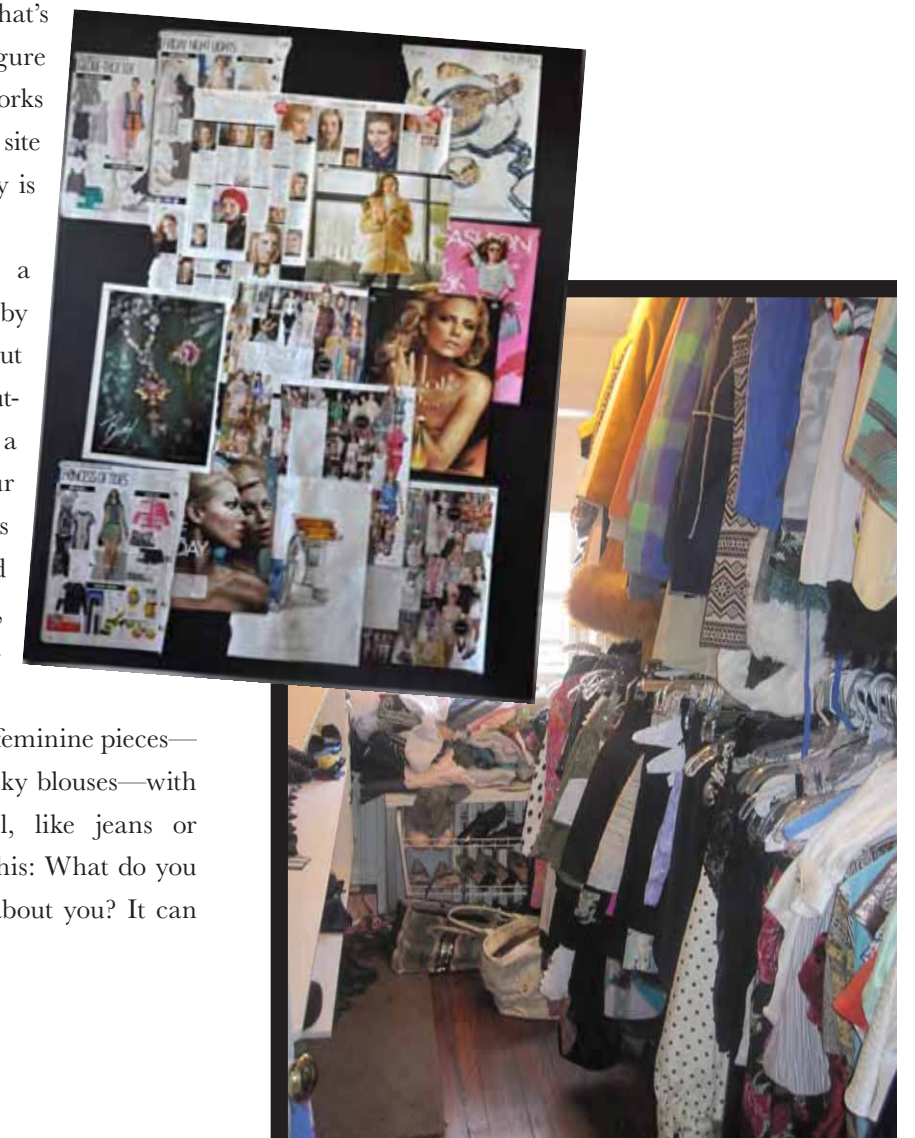
Maybe it's mixing superfeminine pieces—

like lacy camisoles or silky blouses—with

something more casual, like jeans or

even leather. Consider this: What do you

want your style to say about you? It can



MY FASHION EVOLUTION

Although I love Valentino and Zac Posen, I think my favorite fashion designer is my grandma, Bucka. When I was little, she would design intricate clothes for my Corolle baby doll (I didn't want my baby to be a girl, so I named her Michael!). Well, thanks to Bucka, Michael had stunning ensembles: matching tops and bottoms with pretty buttons and fancy ribbons; chic matching hats. My baby was always the best dressed on the block.

Family has always been a huge influence on my fashion taste. My mom is an art teacher, so her love of color definitely rubbed off on me. In fact, in my yearbook, it says "Whitney Port: Most Likely to . . . invent her own highlighter color." But the rest of my style, that's all my own. I have never been one to conform. From the time I was old enough to dress myself, I liked to



push the envelope in a tasteful, fun way. My fashion staples when I was a teen were lived-in Hard Tail sweats, UGG boots, checkered Vans, jean jackets, and anything rhinestoned. Then I got turned on to lingerie—but I couldn't keep it covered up! When I was thirteen, I was invited to bar and bat mitzvahs where most girls loved to step out in elegant evening

dresses. What I wore to the parties were pieces of lingerie from Only Hearts. I wasn't channeling Madonna; I just had no chest, so the silky slips fit well and were comfy and looked ultrafeminine. I'd sometimes even pick up a lacy tank and silk pj bottoms and wear them as an outfit. I remember wearing a velvet snakeskin skirt and top with

Family has always been a huge influence on my fashion taste.

lace edging to my best friend's bat mitzvah. I can't believe my parents let me walk out the door like that! When girls wore fancy dresses to the high school semiformal, I wore a turquoise lace crop top with butterflies and rhinestones. Yes, you could say I liked to make an entrance.



“I have a blind date . . .”

It all depends on what you are doing and where you’re going. In general, you want to avoid anything too revealing or over the top. Better to get to know him a little first before you bare your soul or any other private parts. For casual dates—like a movie—I would go for a skinny pant or jean, maybe a cute comfy sweater, and boots or flats. For something a little more formal—like dinner at a nice restaurant—you can’t go wrong with a nice pencil skirt, sophisticated blouse, bomber jacket, and some comfortable heels. Most important, wear something that’s “you” that makes you feel confident and at ease.

I recently went on a dinner date myself and wore a deep purple velvet, long-sleeved V-neck Jill Stuart minidress with La Perla black tights and snakeskin heels. I added dangly chandelier earrings and wore deep red lipstick and did my retro chic wavy hair for drama. I felt alluring . . . but not overexposed.



“I am meeting my ex for drinks . . .”

Hot-hot-hot is the only way to go! Show him what he is missing! I met up with my ex, Jay, for drinks a few weeks after we broke up and I wanted to show him how together I was after we split. So I wore a slinky heather gray Jen Kao minidress—it had long sleeves but was skintight—with high heels and a little clutch, and I wore my hair down stick straight! You want your look to say, “You know you want me . . . and you blew it, dude.”

“To the company holiday party . . .”

Remember who you’re partying with: the people you work with. You don’t want to be the water cooler conversation Monday morning. You should loosen up a little from your day look and dress festive—but keep cleavage in check. I’d suggest a V-neck sheath dress, a bright colored blouse and skirt, or a wide-leg pant with an embellished top. Dazzling

accessories are totally acceptable: a great oversize or embellished clutch or chunky jewelry accents with fun hues.

“On a weekend getaway when I don’t want to look like a slob . . .”

A few changes are all you really need. Stick to fabulous, versatile pieces that you can mix and match. My must-have for a short getaway is a maxidress. It works for most body types, packs easily, and can be worn with any type of sandals or flats for day and heels for evening. I take one in a soft, pretty pattern. I also never travel without a big, neutral-colored scarf. It can be used as a blanket while en route, a wrap to the beach or pool, or anytime you need a little extra warmth. Pack a comfy pair of shoes as well—a cute pair of comfy ballerina flats or a pair of Converse, Keds, or Vans work. And you can’t go wrong with a comfy, baggy pair of jeans; a simple skirt with an elastic waist or a little ruffling; and a few cute tops.



WHITNEY 101: HOW TO THROW A GREAT PARTY

Start with a fabulous idea

By this, I mean, figure out what the “theme” is. Are you throwing a Super Bowl Beer and Wings bash? An elegant sit-down dinner? A tea party for just the girls? Once you know the concept, you can plan out the decorations, the guest list, and your menu—even if you only intend to order in.

Pick the perfect time

A good party requires a good turnout. You may not want a huge party, but you still want people to come. Obviously, Friday or Saturday nights are the most popular times; you don’t have to go to work the next morning. But sometimes a Sunday brunch can be just as fun! Just double-check that your party doesn’t conflict with other popular events—like the World Series, Super Bowl, and so on—unless you are counting on that as part of your theme.

Invite your guests

I know e-vites are all the rage because they’re so easy (not to mention free!), but I still think handwritten invitations are the way to go. It makes it so much more personal. Obviously if your party is happening at the last minute, you can call or e-mail. But it’s a lot of fun to get creative. Your invite should obviously echo your theme. A friend of mine in New York threw a “Lobster Fest” on her rooftop and printed the who, what, where, and when in colored Sharpies on white disposable bibs. Very clever (and inexpensive!). When I was a kid, my mom always made our invitations by hand. It’s so easy to hit a craft or paper store (like Michael’s, Kate’s Paperie, Staples) and score beautiful cardstock or paper you can print on your computer or adorn by hand. Personalize your invite with stickers, scrapbooking cutouts, ribbons, glitter glue, photos, puff paint, lace . . . whatever strikes your fancy. You can also find great templates online at sites

like americangreetings.com. Make sure to include the essentials: date, place, time, theme (if any), BYOB, dating details (can you bring a plus one?) and include how to RSVP—via phone or e-mail. Maybe even come up with a cute poem for the invite. Ashley’s husband is a songwriter and always comes up with the most witty invitation texts.

Size matters

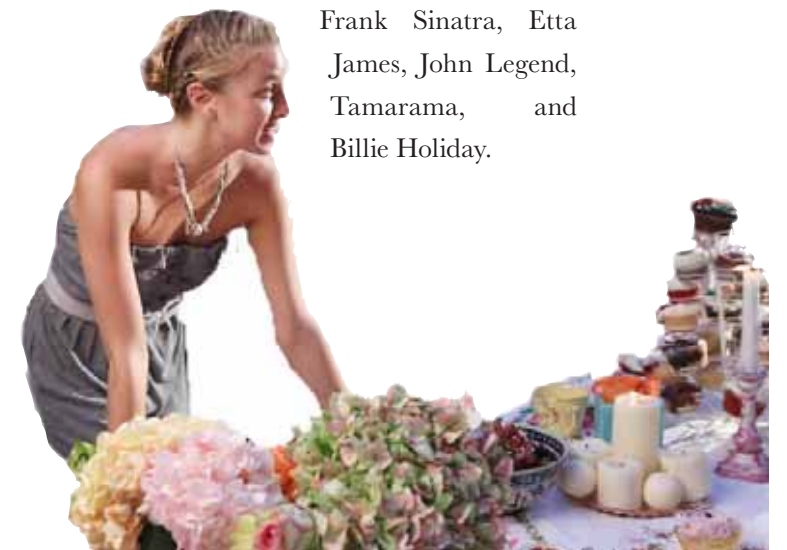
The number of people you invite should never be more than ten greater than a space can hold (you hear that, Roxy?). Otherwise, you’ll be packed in like a bunch of sardines. Not fun. A good rule of thumb: approximately 10 percent of your invitees will not attend. If you are inviting guests from out of town, the percentage is higher. If there are still people you’ve left off, create a “B” list. Just make sure your RSVP date leaves enough time till the party to invite your backups (at least a week is reasonable).

Decide what drinks and food to serve

Make sure you have plenty for the number of people coming. I prefer to put things out buffet style and let people help themselves—it lets me mix and mingle and not worry about waiting on everyone. You should have enough chips, dips, nuts, and pretzels to keep people snacking all night. I would also suggest vegetable plates or different types of bruschetta for the more health conscious—I love to put out bowls of hummus and guacamole with crudité’s or cheese plates.

Set your sound track

I like to put together a playlist on my iPod of great tunes—it can help to fill those awkward silences when the party is just starting. Some of my faves: Adele, the Kooks, the XX, La Roux, and Ratatat, and I love Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, Etta James, John Legend, Tamarama, and Billie Holiday.





WHITNEY 101: SIX SIGNS IT'S OVER

If your relationship is experiencing several of these, honey, you're history. . .

1 *Absence is making the heart grow colder.*

You should be able to be apart for a night or even a few days and not worry his eye (and God knows what else) is wandering. Like the time my friend Allie went on a modeling assignment and her longtime live-in boyfriend, Adam, kissed another girl. Freedom should not equal a free pass to fool around behind your back.

2 *The fire has fizzled.*

You can't remember the last time the two of you kissed, cuddled, fooled around, did anything besides argue.

3 *You have nothing to say.*

Literally. You stare across the table from each other at dinner, and the conversation is tense and strained. It probably should have clued me in when all Jay and I had to talk about was work, weather, and how wonderful he was.

4 *He doesn't want to make future plans.*

Major red flag: you ask him to come to a work party and he mumbles something about "a previous commitment." Then you ask about another night and he's busy as well. A boyfriend is never too busy to spend time with you.

5 *You don't think happy thoughts.*

When your relationship began, every time you pictured his face it made you feel all warm and fuzzy. Now when you close your eyes and see him, you see only red. And the thought of you two breaking up enters your mind every day.

6 *You're constantly fighting.*

Nothing he does is ever good enough.



MY DAILY MEAL PLAN

I try to eat organic food as much as possible. It makes me feel better physically, and I really like the idea of trying to consume foods that contain as few chemicals and toxins, and as little nonsense, as possible. Roxy and I recently had a fajita night for the Super Bowl. She wanted to get salsa and guacamole in a jar and cook up the veggies with those Mexican seasoning packs. I just couldn't do it. I grew up with everything having to be fresh. I'd rather take the time to chop tomatoes and onions. I'm not a prefabricated girl. My fave new kitchen toy is the Ninja Chopper. You just put in your ingredients and hit a button, and it chops and blends.

Breakfast

One cup 0 percent Greek yogurt with chopped unsalted/roasted almonds and chopped Granny Smith apples

The lean dairy protein in yogurt is a great way to kick-start your metabolism in the morning and provides you with a healthy dose of calcium and probiotics for healthy digestive system. The almonds

provide protein, fiber, and healthy mono-unsaturated fats while the apple is a low-glycemic food, packed with fiber so it helps fill you up until lunchtime.

Or

An egg white omelet with onions/mushrooms/spinach, side of whole wheat toast. The protein of the egg and veggies will give you energy.

Or

Cinnamon raisin English muffin toasted with peanut butter and chopped bananas.

Lunch

Spinach salad with garbanzo beans, avocado, tomatoes, and a little shaved parmesan with Girard's lite champagne dressing

Or

Classic PBJ on whole-grain toast. The toast is a source of filling fiber and heart-healthy whole grains; peanut butter is packed with protein.

Or

Whole wheat English muffin toasted and topped with avocado and melted Parmesan cheese, with a side of tomato soup.



Afternoon Snack Options

- Natural, lightly salted Orville Redenbacher's popcorn
- Jell-O sixty-calorie vanilla/chocolate pudding packs
- Apple and peanut butter
- Banana and handful of almonds (approximately 24)
- Cup of pea soup

Dinner

These are some favorites for a low-key night in. When I go out, I try to eat a lot of veggies and watch out for sauces that can pack way more calories than they're worth.

- Veggie burger with a side of roasted broccoli and edamame
- Lentil soup with a healthy grains salad and no dairy dressing
- Steamed artichoke, roasted sweet potatoes, and any kind of white fish/tuna tartare

MY EXERCISE PLAN

I admit it . . . I have body envy. I wish I could look like Gisele Bündchen (don't we all?). But I work hard and use those perfect bodies as inspiration. Working out is good for both body and soul. It makes you feel stronger, more energetic. It makes your body function more efficiently—your lungs and heart become more powerful. Look, I don't love everything about my body. I've got some extra loving on my love handles that I could do without, and I'd love to have slimmer arms. But I try to focus on the positives: I like my legs, and I am starting to embrace my 32D boobs. My trainer, Danny Connolly, puts me through the paces and helps me stay lean and mean. I'm by no means an exercise junkie, but I do try to hit the gym three times a week or, at the very least, run through some of these exercises at home for twenty minutes each day. In a pinch, I'll just squeeze in some push-ups and sit-ups.

Note:

Of course, you shouldn't do these exercises if you have any injuries or disabilities. You

should always consult your doctor before beginning an exercise program.



Weighted Squats

Repeat 10–25 reps total.

1. Establish a slightly wider than hip-width stance with the toes turned slightly outside of the heels.
2. Grasp a kettle ball or dumbbell with a light to moderate weight (10–15 lbs) and allow the weight to hang below the chin with the arms in a straight or locked elbow position.
3. Tilt the hips in a backward direction



- and lower the hips and glutes backward and down into a squat. Don't allow the knees to drift over the path of the toes.
4. Keep the upper torso as erect and tall as possible, and press heels into the ground as you raise yourself back up. To make the exercise more challenging, pause longer at the lowest position.

BOSU Ball Push-ups

I do regular push-ups on my knees when I travel and can't get to the gym. The BOSU ball push-up is very challenging on the arms and particularly on the core. Start with sets of 5–10, and work up to 3 sets of 15 with minimal rest (1–2 minutes) between sets.

1. Grasp a BOSU ball on the outer

edge and place the feet fairly close together to target the core. Start in the upper position of the push-up. (For beginners, perform this on the knees.)

2. Slowly lower the upper torso down toward the base of the ball, while allowing the elbows to drift in a straight line outward. (The wider the elbows, the more overall benefit of the exercise. When the elbows drift inward/toward the sides of the body, the triceps work harder).
3. Draw the tummy in as you lower yourself down to reap maximum benefit on the abs!
4. Return to the upper position and exhale on the way up.





Finding Fabrics

I comb the fashion district going through rolls of fabrics and trimmings. I even pick the buttons and sequins myself! It's fun, but a tremendous amount of searching—a little like looking for a needle in a haystack sometimes.



Showing on the Runway

No one will know how great your collection is unless you show it. So twice a year, we try to organize a presentation or runway show to unveil my latest designs. I recently took part in the Gen Art Fresh

Faces in Fashion show in Miami, where I showed my Fall 2010 collection—along with five other new designers—to a huge crowd. Although the idea of putting on a runway show

sounds glam, a lot of hard work and detail goes into it. At a show, the designer does much more than create the clothing; she or he has to see the entire show through production. I have to cast the models; decide on hair, makeup, lighting, and music; style all the looks with accessories; arrange for the line to be transported; send out invites; and make the all-important call—who gets to sit in the front two rows of the show. *Phew!* To get everything perfect, we do a run-through. And even then, when the real show rolls around, it's chaos backstage! My heart is always racing, but I try to focus on things going smoothly, not my

