

“Four times a year they have
new fashions, but don't think
you have to wear all of it.
To go by the rules is absurd.”

In the Red

Clear colors and easy shapes are priorities for Hutton, and if she can't wear pants, she'll choose a dress that doesn't cling or constrict. Reminiscent of the body-conscious knits designed by '70s superstar Halston (who once called Hutton "perhaps the greatest mannequin in history"), this gown (\$550) is from OMO Norma Kamali, another longtime legend. Cuff, Patricia von Musulin.

AMERICAN ★ IDOL

PJ pants in public, boat shoes, slouchy trousers,
men's army hats, safari shirts, slinky dresses...

Lauren Hutton

made authenticity, audacity, and ease her fashion
watchwords—and forged a new freedom for women.
She's still at it.

BY KATHERINE B. WEISSMAN AND LAMBETH HOCHWALD
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUVEN AFANADOR

“An awful lot of people with great style have no money whatsoever. They have studied themselves and seen what works.”



West by Southwest

This lived-in look is textbook Lauren Hutton—her clothes always seem like things she’s owned and loved forever. The intentionally rumpled trenchcoat (Gryphon New York, \$610) works nicely with slightly baggy, tattered “boyfriend” jeans (I Heart Ronson for JCPenney, \$44). The mix of rancher casual and Native American craft is, of course, associated with two Laurens: Ralph L. did the plaid shirt (Ralph Lauren Blue Label, \$165); the turquoise and silver necklace and bracelet (Vicki Turbeville) look like something Lauren H. might have picked up on her global travels—she collects accessories worldwide and is crazy about “things I bought when I was with good friends that have good stories surrounding them.”

Suiting Herself

Hutton has a history with menswear, ranging from down-and-dirty denim to Giorgio Armani’s slouchy ‘70s pantsuits, from Calvin Klein’s minimalist ‘80s silhouettes to modern practitioners like Paul Smith (shirt, Paul Smith London, \$295), Ralph Lauren (pants, Lauren by Ralph Lauren, \$179), and the Olsen twins (blazer, The Row). Balanced proportions—here, the juxtaposition of a perfectly fitted jacket and easy bottoms—are crucial to pulling off anything oversize. Her shoes are Sperry Top-Siders, the boat shoes she made famous: “I like the way they feel. They make you prance rather than shuffle.” Ring, Me & Ro.



atching Lauren Hutton pull clothes from a rack, you see immediately that she has picked up a trick or two in her more than 40 years of dressing for the camera. A genius at coupling colors and pairing fabrics, this symbol of American style is passionate about everything she puts on: a striped men’s dress shirt (“Let’s lose the collar stays and pair this with a big tweed jacket”), slouchy pajama pants (“I think these need pockets, but they’re fun—I’ve been wearing PJ’s out and about forever”), an oversize cotton sweater (“I disappear in beige. It’s the same color as me!”). Shimmering into a long red gown, she says, “I can *move* in this dress. This will work!” At 65, the ever-gorgeous Hutton knows what she likes—and with her signature easy, unconstructed look, is still a trailblazer for generations of modern women.

Growing up in 1940s Charleston, South Carolina, Hutton bumped right up against the code of Southern femininity: “Everything was very proper. It was patent leather and organza.” But then her mother became, as she delicately puts it, “downwardly mobile”; they moved to the backwoods of Florida, where Hutton felt free. “I hit the trees. I became a boy-girl. I liked wild things.”

She landed in Manhattan in the early ‘60s, a self-described “short, very American, irregular thing” with a gap between her front teeth. (She told her modeling agency she’d fix it, “but I really had no intention of doing so.”) The mannequins of the moment were “European swans—giant, beautiful, perfect girls.” When Hutton was sent to fabled fashion photographer Richard Avedon, he was dismayed by her inexperience. “He asked me where I came from, what I did. I told him that I ran, played, and jumped in the swamp.” So he got her leaping for the camera. Three months later: 14 pages in *Vogue*.

With her spirited presence and girl-next-door looks, Hutton became a muse for the designers who were then inventing American sportswear—clothes for women who worked and played with as much verve as men. Off-camera, Hutton [CONTINUED ON PAGE 196]

Express Yourself

A FEW WORDS of wisdom from the master of personal style.

★ **ON WARDROBE ESSENTIALS:**

"Always have a navy blazer. White pants, tan pants, navy or black pants—whatever looks good on you. Well-made T-shirts in long and short sleeves.

And a good pair of black heels and camel-colored oxfords.

If you can afford to, get high-quality classics so you can wear them forever and ever."

★ **ON BASIC BLACK:** "It wipes me out. I can't wear it. Not everything works for everybody."

★ **ON BIKER CHIC:** "Motorcycle clothes need to be thicker. When you're going fast on the highway, you don't want to leave skin behind."

★ **ON ACCESSORIZING:** "I have small bones, so I can't wear big jewelry. The jewelry ends up walking around. I want *Lauren* walking around."

★ **ON DEVELOPING A SIGNATURE LOOK:** "When I first came to New York, my favorite outfit was a pair of aqua terry cloth shorts and a men's maroon mohair sweater. All I'm saying is that you couldn't have been dumber than me. Finding your look isn't complicated if you go in without being frightened. Notice what people are complimenting you on. Experiment with new things once in a while, but have your tried-and-true pieces that work."



◀ *Night and Day*

Changing for evening used to be a big production: The whole point was to transform yourself. But Hutton never favored frilly ball gowns that didn't feel like her. She pioneered the modern concept of glamorous elements treated in a more offhand way. The splendid sweep of this long, silvery skirt (Ralph Lauren Black Label, \$1,098) teams with a fitted leather jacket (Helmut Lang, \$1,325), layered scoopneck tees (The Row, \$300 each), and Elsa Peretti for Tiffany & Co.'s Diamonds by the Yard necklace—a classic example of dressing down something precious. Ring, Patricia von Musulin. Shoes, Robert Clergerie.

The Natural ▶

"This hat reminds me of my daddy," Hutton says. "He was fighting in World War II when I was born, and I never met him, but it's a real GI hat—I found it in the '60s and have worn it ever since." (It so impressed Revlon's Charles Revson that he had it copied for the Charlie perfume ads.) She also likes the genuine safari shirt from venerable outfitter F.M. Allen (\$148): "For years I got my safari clothes in Kenya, from a company where the local police bought their uniforms." Authenticity matters to Hutton, even in makeup: She's supplementing her original cosmetics line with a certified synthetic-free collection, beginning with September's launch of the All Natural Face Disc (11 products in one palette). Sweater, Gap, \$70. Pin, available at The Family Jewels.





1. In Zihuatanejo, Mexico, 1969.
2. One of 26 appearances on the cover of *Vogue*, 1973.
3. Hutton, the year she negotiated the first exclusive contract in modeling history with Revlon, 1974.
4. In the pages of *Ambiance*, 1978.
5. Hutton's signature leap in *Vogue*, 1966.
6. Modeling a Giorgio Armani trenchcoat.
7. With members of the Masai tribe and godsons Teo and Nicky in Kenya, 1996.
8. Alligator wrestling for *Vanity Fair*, shot by Helmut Newton, 1989.



[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 193] channeled her energy into daredevil activities like deep-sea diving, dogsledding, alligator wrestling, and motorbiking. No wonder she developed an androgynous style—you can't run and jump in a tight skirt and heels. "It's sexy to see curves under straight-cut men's clothes," Hutton says. "And the stars I liked—Carole Lombard, Marlene Dietrich, Kate Hepburn—always dressed that way."

After a decade of film and TV work, Hutton went back to modeling in her 40s. She realized that most makeup, with its heavy textures and shimmery formulas, was made for younger skin. In 2002 she launched Lauren Hutton Good Stuff, cosmetics that go on invisibly and don't make faces look spackled. (A cheerleader for wrinkles—"our medals of the passage of life"—Hutton is fiercely against facelifts and airbrushing.)

On the subject of age-appropriate fashion, she's less inclined to be prescriptive. She believes in a foundation of classics, but her style advice isn't about shopping so much as figuring out who you are. First, she says, make a candid external assessment: "To put together the best look, you have to use your eyes and brain together." Remember which colors inspire compliments. Identify friends with similar bodies and pay attention to what looks best on them. Pick what pleases you. "And don't buy something because a salesperson tells you to!"

In truth, Hutton finds fashion rules "absurd"; her goal is to make an organic connection between outer wrappings and inner life. Because her clothes are in sync with her personality, they never wear her; because she holds on to favorites, they carry a bit of history. "I like to have things for years—things with holes, raggedy things," she says. "They make me feel good."

Feeling good, for her, is the touchstone of style, and she cultivates it. Long an environmental activist, Hutton has found her own piece of earth: After a near-fatal motorcycle crash nine years ago, "I needed a softer place to live than New York City concrete, so I bought a 1917 beach shack in Venice, California. It has a big vegetable garden. It's great therapy. A garden responds. You see things change and grow."

Evolution is something of a Hutton trademark. Even with a knee brace from a surfing injury and a business that keeps her more tied down than she'd like, she continues leaping into the unknown. "The doctors told me I'd be fine if I play only golf and tennis doubles for the rest of my life," she says with a laugh. "But I dive. I dogsled. I guess I'll have surgery." After all, you don't get to be an icon by standing still.

"This outfit is built for speed, and it's feminine, too—new-fashioned and old-fashioned at the same time."



White Lightning

"I want these shoes," says Hutton of the oxford-style lace-ups with a silver patina (Robert Clergerie)—the fusion of menswear and metallic is very much her thing, and great for day or night. Another surprise: the cotton cashmere V-neck sweater swooshing out into a feminine flounce (Theory, \$255). Pale, narrow linen-blend pants (Urban Zen, \$695) and a tasseled silver bracelet (available at Jacques Carcanagues)—a lot like prayer beads—have a definite *Passage to India* feeling. Tank, Hanro, \$56. For details see Shop Guide.

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