



AUSTRALIAN FASHION: THE HIT LIST

Laura Brown breaks down her fashion favorites from down under—just in time for Australian Fashion Week.



Having lived out of Australia for almost 15 years, I can now, quite oddly, consider myself a tourist. A tourist in all the fun ways like, "Look how beautiful Sydney Harbour is!", "This new restaurant in Bondi is the coolest!" (insert other gushing, jetlagged asides) but also, happily, in fashion. When I was a baby journalist in Sydney, Australian Fashion Week was just launching, and ooh, it was so exciting. We wore all of our highest heels to celebrate—finishing each day of shows elated, and hobbling.

Now, as Australian Fashion Week kicks off next week - cleverly, for the resort season - I got to thinking about my favorite Australian labels, some which will show next week, some which won't. Some will be the store you happen to walk into and buy the best T-shirts you've ever worn (Jac & Jack), others will create beautiful hats and headpieces (Hatmaker by Jonathan Howard). Explore them all, as I do—promise they will make your life, and your wardrobe—better. Here are my top ten:



1

Ellery

Ellery is the great Aussie international success story. Designer Kym Ellery now shows in Paris, and editors clamor over her curvaceous, monochromatic tailoring. A proud Aussie with a European flair, Kym is also the best advertisement for her clothes. Flared sleeves, flared trousers, flair all over.



2

Romance Was Born

Man, I love these two, Anna Plunkett and Luke Sales of **Romance was Born**. Two eccentrics who celebrate the color and patriotism of Australia, but with a high fashion spin. Their pieces give such joy—whether it's a bold print with a map of Australia hidden in it, or the coolest metallic boots with a slightly Dries van Noten flavor. They have been picked up by Saks for fall, so watch out for these two special talents.



3

Bassike

There is nothing basic about **Bassike**—well, there is, in the way they design bold and brilliant striped T-shirts, in every incarnation from black and white, fine to chunky. But what distinguishes them further are their gorgeous coats, loose trousers and some of the most desirable shirtdresses I've seen. You'll want to wear nothing but trousers, blazers and sneakers once you leave their store.



4

Jac and Jack

My obsession with **Jac & Jack** t-shirts borders on the unhealthy. I was with a friend when I happened into their Paddington store a couple years ago, and checked out their rails of linen T-shirts. You know when you find the perfect tee—great cut, falls beautifully, crisp white, sage, blue, blush - and you have to buy all of them? Well, that's what I did, and continue to. They apply this simplicity to the rest of your wardrobe—from jeans to the easiest, chicest scarves. I defy you not to walk into the store and empty your wallet.



5

Zimmermann

Ah, nothing says summer like a **Zimmermann** dress. Sisters Nicky and Simone Zimmermann, who first came to prominence with killer swimwear, own the happy season. I have a wardrobe full of their perfectly patterned, lace detailed dresses that unfailingly, everyone asks, "Who made that?" Their international star is rising so fast, however, that I also hear, "Zimmermann, right?"



6

Dion Lee

Dion Lee is a smooth operator. If you want to go to a cocktail party and make all the girls jealous, Dion is the man for you. His sinuous pieces cut-outs, halters, are total ladykillers, mankillers, whoever a girl might want to kill with a dress.



7

Maticevski

Toni Maticevski is Australia's red carpet star. He has dressed innumerable stars in his grand, knockout gowns—he brings to mind a gorgeous hybrid of Zac Posen and Roland Mouret. Try on a **Maticevski** and suddenly you're Grace Kelly on the French Riviera. So you'd best not take it off.



8

Camilla and Marc

Jennifer Lopez wears **Camilla and Marc**, so that's all you need to know, really. They do the sauciest minidresses around, and are fearless with color and color blocking. They're also brother and sister and fantastic people and my friends. So there.



9

Dinosaur Designs

Dinosaur Designs is just heaven. Famed for almost 30 years for their resin jewelry, the Dinos keep crafting beautiful pieces in molten blends of colors - from metal jewelry to beautiful home accessories. You will want to scoop up an armful of their resin bangles and rings. And then another one.



10

Hatmaker by Jonathan Howard

Tucked away in a little shop frontage in Paddington, **Jonathan Howard** crafts the most beautiful hats and headbands—visit for the chicest leopard print wide-brimmed number or a headband covered in metal flowers and berries, that would rival Dolce & Gabbana. A real high fashion aesthetic but an Australian spirit.

