



Lauren Rothman is the author of *Style Bible: What to Wear to Work*.

Q + A

## Dress Code

Fashion expert Lauren Rothman helps you greet the holiday season in high style.

**SPIRIT:** What are the go-to trends for women?

**ROTHMAN:** Metallics like silver and bronze will be popular, as well as cobalt blue and emerald green. And, as always this time of year, you're going to see red. In terms of specific styles, I'm loving pieces with embellishment, especially brocade work on pants and leather accents on blazers and dresses. The long-sleeved sheath dress will no doubt make an appearance,

and peplum—a short section of flared fabric attached to the waistline of a blouse or dress—continues its reign.

**S:** And for men?

**R:** The medium-gray suit is a favorite. I prefer charcoal, but as long as you're staying away from light grays you'll be fine. A suit with a slight sheen to it is festive yet understated. If you want to subtly show personality, go for one with contrasting thread on the buttons.

**S:** What is the proper attire for a holiday party?

**R:** Your look should be reminiscent of what you'd wear on a nice date—not too casual and not overly dressy. But because it's the holidays, you have license to glam things up a bit. Ladies can pair a silk top with a brocade pant or sport a pencil dress with a peplum waist. Guys should ditch their khakis in favor of darker slacks—think charcoal, navy, or black.

**S:** How else can guys take their look up a notch?

**R:** Instead of a plain white shirt, try something with stripes in an unexpected color. And to really stand out, add a sport coat and accessories, like cuff links and a pocket square, but leave off the tie.

**S:** When is the best time to shop?

**R:** The best holiday wear is out before Black Friday, so early to mid-November is prime time to hit the stores. If you wait until December, most things will be pretty picked over.