

FASHION | STYLE

Triple- pierced ears at 50: Think pearls and diamonds

By: JEANNE BEKER • Saturday, April 17, 2004 - Page L5

Dear Jeanne: I just turned 50 and the Janis Joplin look of copious beads and bangles that I admired so much as a young woman simply doesn't cut it. In the eighties, I triple-pierced each ear. When I take all the earrings out, I am noticing ear creases that make me loath to walk about with "naked" ears. On the other hand, I suspect my multipierced look is too adolescent for my age. I am a fine-featured woman with short hair and have always loved earrings. The big and the bold may seem overpowering, although I do like dramatic looks.

Any suggestions on earrings? Earring Obsessed

Dear Obsessed: I'm with you: I loathe a naked lobe. Tiny gold hoops are always tasteful, but if wearing hoops is a problem, I also love simple studs — very elegant, and they go with any shape of face. I'd suggest multiple plain, small, white pearl studs as one of your looks. Also consider small diamond studs (or cubic zirconium if that's more your budget). If you still love the look of a bolder, beautifully designed earring, I'd say go for it. And while I agree that less can be more as we age, being 50 is a time to express yourself with confidence, so if it feels good, wear it. That's my motto, plain and simple.

Dear Jeanne: I live in Vancouver and wonder if you could suggest someone who would do a makeover on me. I need to know the cost of this service as well as I am on a low budget. I recently saw a show on Oprah where a designer has put his clothes in Target at very affordable prices and would love to know of something here. Shar



Dear Shar: The designer you saw on *Oprah* was likely the popular Isaac Mizrahi. He used to design very pricey clothes that most average women really admired, but could never dream of owning. But his big baby now is this very affordable line at Target stores. A shame it's not available here in Canada yet. While personal shoppers, or image consultants may sound like a bit of a luxury, I've been assured by Angèle Desgagné, president of the Toronto Chapter of the Association of Image Consultants International, that especially for those on a tight budget, hiring an image consultant could be a great investment. She feels the cost of a consultant's services is repaid many times over the years, just through money not spent on unsuitable clothing. Sometimes, it really is important to have your body type, colouring, and personality assessed by someone who can be objective. For more information on how to contact an image consultant, check out <http://www.toronto.aici.org>.

Dear Jeanne: Wow! I'm amazed that you're so upset by a dissenting opinion (Tuscany, March 27). What a bitchy response to someone who thinks your advice is wrong. There are millions of people who don't live in a world that is so concerned with how we look, but rather value what people think and how they act. A good journalist would not get emotional nor respond emotionally as you did, and I hope you will learn from this. Mary Garner

Dear Mary: Sorry you perceived my response as "bitchy." I didn't mean it to be. I was just surprised at how strongly the writer had lashed out at some mere fashion advice. I find it strange that someone who isn't a fashion enthusiast, or that "concerned" with style, is reading the Style section . . . and a style advice column in the first place! Style is a subjective thing. There are no right or wrong answers. But as my friend, the great designer Tom Ford maintains, fashion is meant to make us feel beautiful — and ultimately make us feel good about ourselves. A lot of people take the subject of fashion far too seriously, yet even though I'll be the first one to say that fashion really doesn't matter in the great scheme of things, wearing nice clothes can make us feel better about ourselves, and others for that matter.

Send questions to jbeker@globeandmail.ca.

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Angèle Desgagné, AICI, CIP is a Certified Image Professional Member of the Association of Image Consultants International and President of AICI Toronto Chapter (2002-2004). She is the owner of Imagélite International, an image-consulting firm that offers Personal Image and Personal Brand Management Services. AICI is a worldwide non-profit association of men and women specializing in visual appearance, as well as verbal and non-verbal communications. AICI promotes and supports image consultants while enhancing and furthering the profession of image consulting.

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