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FAT: THE NEW THIN

Two years ago, navy was the new black. Last season, red was the new black. This fall, however, the designers from Milan and Paris are shouting a new mantra: fat is the new thin.

That's right, ladies. Count on Donatella, Ralph, Calvin, Isaac and Stella to us on our toes. After all, if it weren't for them, wouldn't we just be living in clothing like the rest of the schmucks in the world? We've gone through microminis, A-lines, leathers, pleathers, pumps, heels, flats, heroin chic or rich-bitch chic, but we could always count on one thing: the comforting, consistent value that your dress size should always be less than your shoe

However, now it's time to throw out your supplements, your firming cream, your *Shape* magazines. Fire your personal trainer, yoga, and pilates instructor and take that colonic tube out of your ass! It's time to get fat.

"I think the fashion world is sick of seeing clothes just hang on a model like a hanger," gushes John Galliano of the new trend. "Why should clothes necessarily 'fit'? It's time to see fabrics stick, pull, grab, and pucker. I'm seeing bare little midriffs; I want stomachs hanging out of shirts. It's time to see dimples, and flesh squeezing out of hems like sausage spilling out of its casings."

"It'll all be about the butt of Jennifer Lopez, the ankles of Hillary Clinton, and the stomach of Catherine Zeta-Jones (when she was pregnant)," says Bill Blas. "I just bought a Rubens painting, and I'm fixated by it. I was staring at my cleaning lady Gertrude today, and I almost grabbed onto her, so mesmerized was I by her flesh. My God, she's fabulous."

The rumor going around town is that the Hollywood set is practically racing to catch up with this new trend. (But not too fast now, ladies; you don't want to burn *too* many calories!)

While the hoi polloi are just starting to revert back to buying butter, non-dairy soda, refusing to mop the extra grease off their pizza, and meeting up with friends with names like Sara Lee and Oh Henry!, the beautiful people on both coasts of course are doing everything more exotically and expensively than the common folk.

Why binge on Keebler products when you can munch cookies made with butter, milk and hand-shaped semisweet chocolate chips from Dean & DeLuca, as the *Lauders* have been spotted doing? Why waste your time heading to McDonald's when the Hilton sisters reputedly hire caterers to set out a junk food buffet for breakfast, lunch and dinner, just in case the little darlings feel like having chicken, fries, and Krispy Kremes all at once?

Of course, not everybody is happy about the new wave.

"I don't know what to do," says Kate Moss dejectedly. "I haven't eaten since 1992; there's no way I can catch up. I just can't measure up to these fat chicks."

"If anybody recalls, I clearly said that I would kill myself if I were ever as fat as Marilyn Monroe," sniffs Elizabeth Hurley. "That remains true. If I can't moan anymore, at least I can wait for *Austin Powers III* to come out."

"We have the most work to do out of everybody, because we're the thinnest," wails Gwyneth Paltrow, eating with me at a New York cafe. "We have further to catch up than anybody else!" Our companion, Renee Zellweger, nods emphatically, her mouth too full of fettucine alfredo to respond. I bet she wishes this trend were revealed prior to her post-"Bridget Jones's Diary" weight loss.

"I hear that Calista Flockhart is hiring a professional to help her out," an unnamed fatty wannabe starlet confides. "There's this one doctor in Beverly Hills who's helping lots of girls out."

I spoke with Dr. James Zbylut, a plastic surgeon in Hollywood (after waiting in the reception area with several members of NBC's Must See TV lineup.)

"It's true, some doctors out there are taking these thin girls in on a Friday and turning them into lardasses by Monday," he confirms.

"Remember liposuction? Well, it can be performed in reverse, too. We're just pumping the fat back in.

"However, there are drawbacks. Some girls bounce right back to their pre-weight. They just don't have the training and discipline to stay fat. They need to know that there is no automatic solution, no 'magic pill' for being fat. The best way to get fat is not through an instant cure, but through a dedicated diet of high fat and sugar, and a lack of exercise."

Meanwhile, the word on the street that in order to accompany the newly corpulent, Manolo Blahnik is designing XXX-Wide mules, and Prada is coming out with a new twist on the common Igloo cooler.

"The question has always been, Fit or Fat?" says Donna Karan, in the midst of designing a new muumuu. "The answer this season is fat, definitely fat."

"I am so goddamn happy," reads a release from Oprah Winfrey's press office.