

Covering up in style



Animal Print Kaftan With Camisole, Star by Julien Macdonald, Debenhams
 £40
 www.debenhams.com



Pink Kaftan, Zandra Rhodes for Marks & Spencer
 £35
 www.marksandspencer.com



Tabalah Chiffon Tunic by Diane Von Furstenberg
 £415
 www.dvofurstenberg.com



Kaftan by Jeannie McQueeney, at Harrods
 £329
 www.harrods.com

There's nothing like feeling 100 per cent confident when you're in your swimsuit. The right kaftan will help, says **Zoe Strimpel**

GOING to the beach is a whole fashion experience. Think you can get away with your swimsuit and an old T-shirt or sundress? No way. The sun, sand, sea or pool call for a lot more. Leaving aside totes, towels, deckchairs, designer sunscreen, fetching hats and gleaming sandals, let's focus on your body. What you fling on over your swimsuit is almost as important as the suit itself. After all, this is how you'll be seen up at the bar for cocktails, walking through the hotel lobby and ambling into town for a midday glass of rose. The days of sarongs are gone - too casual with their hints of hippydrom. Now it's all about kaftans, which range from the uber luxe - designers from Diane Von Furstenberg to Fucci to Mosconi offer them - to the high street. The trend this season, according to Hayley Woolf, a fashion spokesperson at Debenhams, is strong prints, including animal, floral and even ethnic designs. As with swimsuits, block colours are also popular, and there's no doubt you'd cut a dash poolside with Zandra Rhodes's creation. From tunics to kaftans to dresses, there's something for all tastes guaranteed to leave you feeling stylish both pre and post-swim.



Multi-Coloured Chiffon Kaftan, House of Fraser
 £29
 www.houseoffraser.co.uk



Long Cotton Kaftan by Tooshie
 £270
 www.tooshie.com



Embroidered Kaftan by People Tree
 £65
 www.peopletree.co.uk



Black Laurel Kaftan, Monsoon
 £35
 www.monsoon.co.uk

TALKING OF MEN'S SHIRTS...



Sara Hollamby Style Counsel

WHAT is the most important item of clothing a man could wear for work? Well in my opinion, it's not necessarily his suit, although good quality tailoring is vital - it's his shirt. Why? Because it is a piece of clothing that is next to your skin and must therefore feel soft and comfortable. It is washed every time it is worn and must therefore be hardy. The collar is next to your face and must always look completely pristine either with or without a tie. It traverses the seasons so it should be a natural fabric that works in the heat or the cold weather and it shouldn't crease too much because you need to be able to remove your jacket without looking like you've slept in it. And I could go on.

All this and yet men often grab the first one they see on the shelf and expect it to meet all those expectations as well having a perfect fit. And I'd be surprised if the perfect fit is even taken into consideration as much as it should be.

TICKS ALL THE BOXES
 Recently I came across a company called Green & Jack's, which may well solve even the most difficult body issues, without breaking the bank. Prices start at £79 but for a shirt that ticks all the boxes and is made to fit you per-



fectly whether you have long arms, a short neck or any other oddities, it's well worth it. They even have a contrasting fabric option for inside the collar and cuffs, which adds a quirky Sixties touch when the collar is worn without a tie. And once they have your details, shirt shopping is as easy as buying a loaf of bread - easier, actually, because it's all online. If you've ever experienced a fabulous shirt that makes you feel special, you'll know why it's the most important item of clothing you can wear for work. Go on, treat yourself. www.greenandjacks.com. Sara Hollamby is a business image consultant at WorkingVoices.com. Email sarahollamby@blueyonder.co.uk



JEANNIE McQUEENY