Dry Clean Only; Not The Best Fit For Busy Female Shoppers

Contributed by Mintel
Monday, 31 January 2011

Whether theyâ€™re looking for a business suit or a little black dress for a night on the town, women enjoy clothes shopping.

In fact, according to latest research from Mintel, 87% of women have gone clothes shopping for themselves in the past year and 84% have made a purchase.

While shoppers search the sales rack and examine the garment tags, thereâ€™s one phrase in particular they donâ€™t want to see: dry clean only.

Indeed, three out of four female clothes shoppers (75%) say they avoid items that require a trip to the cleaners.

Meanwhile, 59% are loathe to purchase clothing that has to be hand washed separatelyâ€”and women aged 65 and up are even more likely to pass on fashions with tags that bear the hand wash separately mandate, with 68% reporting as much.

â€œDry clean only or hand wash separately account for one more errand or household chore that busy women simply donâ€™t have time for,â€• says Kat Fay, senior beauty analyst at Mintel. â€œWhen you consider the demands of work, family obligations, children and a social lifeâ€”some women may just find it easier and less time-consuming to purchase an item that doesnâ€™t have specific cleaning instructions.â€•

What women want
So, if women are turned off by dry clean only or hand wash separate garments, what clothing attributes constitute the perfect fit? It seems 84% of female clothes shoppers are seeking out easy to mix and match separates, while 78% are drawn to classic styles that donâ€™t go out of style and 71% are looking for items that donâ€™t have to be ironed.

â€œFrom what weâ€™ve seen, most women want to look great without much fuss. Theyâ€™re looking for clothing thatâ€™s ea accessorize and layer, but can also transition seamlessly from work to an evening out,â€• Kat Fay notes. â€œAdd in larger dressing rooms and faster checkout for long lines and you could have some very happy shoppers.â€•

Chicago, USA - 14 January 2011