

Why is Low Cost Such a Selling Point?

By Jen (<http://abbeypost.com/blog/author/jena/>) Tuesday, September 16, 2014 0

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Note from AbbeyPost Founder and CEO, Cynthia Schames:

This is an editorial post by our blog writer, Jen. In addition to being a great writer, Jen is a plus size woman, a New Yorker, and she has strong opinions on lots of things, from shapewear to where to find the best vintage accessories.

And unlike most disclaimers you'll read on editorial posts, in this case, her opinions DO represent those of the company!



Jen, rocking her favorite AbbeyPost dress with some awesome vintage accessories (and check out those fab purpley-lilac shoes!).

Cheap Clothes.

The cult of cheap clothes seems to be everywhere. Either I see yet another retailer screaming about the low cost of their clothes, or I see a woman asking her social media network for suggestions for a source for a “cheap” dress she can wear to some event that’s happening in 3 days.

I get it. I really do. Too often, plus size clothes are poorly made from cheap fabrics, yet they cost a fortune. So we figure if we’re going to be stuck with low quality anyway, we might as well pay an appropriate price for it. The thing is, now that there are places that sell well made clothes that are worth the cost, at a variety of price points. The problem is taking

the time to find them. (Hint: [AbbeyPost Made to Measure \(http://abbeypost.com/shop\)](http://abbeypost.com/shop) is one of them.)

It can be quite a project to hunt down sources of well made clothes instead of settling for what’s cheap and easy. Just like it’s sometimes easier to hit the drive-thru at McDonald’s instead of waiting a few minutes, getting home and making a healthy meal for yourself and the family. It’s easy to see why we don’t all do it all the time.

It’s also sometimes hard to find room in the budget for nice clothes without planning far in advance. If you can spare the money, you feel guilty for spending the money on yourself instead your kids. When you’re buying all

your kids' clothes (and maybe your husband's), maybe you just don't have any energy left over for shopping for yourself. And shopping for yourself with kids in tow (<http://abbeypost.com/blog/shop-kids/>)? No. Thank. You.

No wonder some women "shop" for clothes by tossing the least ugly stuff on the Target clearance rack into their cart alongside the baby formula and toilet cleaner.

You Deserve Better.

But don't you think you deserve better? Even though most clothing retailers don't seem to think we deserve much at all, we all work hard to earn our money. If I spend money on a cheap outfit that won't last through more than a few wearings, I end up feeling like I'm disrespecting the time I spent working.

My time and labor is worth more than a \$20 dress I'll wear once or twice before it falls apart, or before it goes out of style and ends up in the closet for 2 years before I donate it (or worse, sending it to a landfill!). I deserve better than that. And so do you.

But how do we find better-made stuff? And who has the time or energy? Here's an idea...

Shop Like A Man?!

In some ways, we need to shop more like men do. If a guy needs a suit for a wedding, he doesn't run to a cheap suit store 3 days before the big event. If he has absolutely no reason to wear a suit again in the next couple of years, maybe he'll fake the look with a nice jacket and tie.

Or he'll go to a store that sells decently-made suits at his preferred cost-level, pick something out for at least \$100 and have the store alter the suit so it fits him perfectly. He accepts the cost because that's what suits cost. And

the store tailors the suit to fit because suits are the only clothes where retailers haven't [slacked off on fit \(http://abbeypost.com/blog/history-of-fit/\)](http://abbeypost.com/blog/history-of-fit/).

But the same guy's wife will try to find something for \$15-20 at a big box store because:

1. Cheap occasion dresses exist despite the [negative environmental and social impact \(http://abbeypost.com/blog/cheap-plus-size-clothes-arent-worth-cost/\)](http://abbeypost.com/blog/cheap-plus-size-clothes-arent-worth-cost/). (I really encourage you to click that link. It's eye-opening. Cheap clothes come with a much higher cost than you might think!)
2. The shortcut of just grabbing something that will do for the moment is faster and easier than looking for a versatile dress that she can wear so many times it justifies the higher cost.
3. Everything else we have to buy is so doggone expensive, whether it's a wedding gift or date night movie tickets, so we just want to save money on something, anything...and that ends up meaning that we settle for the short end of the stick.

Those are all valid reasons. But you know what's cheaper and easier than buying a low cost occasion dress? Wearing something you already own.

When you spend the time and money to give yourself a well-made wardrobe, you'll always have something nice enough to wear in any situation from a job interview or important client meeting to date night, a friend's [wedding \(http://abbeypost.com/blog/wore-versatile-wedding-guest-dress/\)](http://abbeypost.com/blog/wore-versatile-wedding-guest-dress/) or your kid's [graduation \(http://abbeypost.com/blog/graduation-guest-dresses-explained/\)](http://abbeypost.com/blog/graduation-guest-dresses-explained/). But building a versatile wardrobe complete with a variety of [accessories \(http://abbeypost.com/blog/secret-making-outfit-stylish-accessories/\)](http://abbeypost.com/blog/secret-making-outfit-stylish-accessories/) takes a little more time and money. You need to make time for yourself to go clothes shopping and come home empty handed when you can't find anything up to your standards. You have to spend time surfing online looking for new (or new to you) retailers, and reading product reviews.

Those low cost last minute dresses? We buy those because we're looking for something we like enough to wear for just one day. And why would you spend more money than you have to on something you don't love?

You don't have to stop everything and pour all your time and effort into building a list of stores you can rely on for more than low cost. Just take a little time for online research at lunchtime. Instead of meeting friends for just lunch, add on a quick shopping trip. Start casually looking for a new outfit long before you need it, either because of a special occasion or because your old clothes wore out. Think about your wardrobe as a work in progress, and build it incrementally, one quality basic at a time.

Reject The Status Quo and Demand Quality

Before you know it, you'll be in the habit of demanding quality clothes instead of settling for overpriced garbage. You'll be more comfortable (<http://abbeypost.com/blog/comfortable-work-clothes/>) because your clothes fit properly. You'll have a closet full of clothes that you can rely on, because they really fit and they didn't fall apart after their first trip through the laundry.

I used to settle for whatever fit and seemed office appropriate. Then I got fed up and refused to buy any piece of clothing that wasn't excited about. It helped that I stop working at a job where I'd never be able to dress according to my personal style, but the big thing was that I stopped hating my body for being the size that it is. I stopped blaming my body for my problems finding decent clothes and started blaming the stores who treated me like I didn't deserve any better.

I'm much happier for it. It wasn't easy getting myself to the point where I could reject the message that people my size don't really deserve good clothes. And it took a while to track down clothes I can get excited about. But you know what? So worth it.

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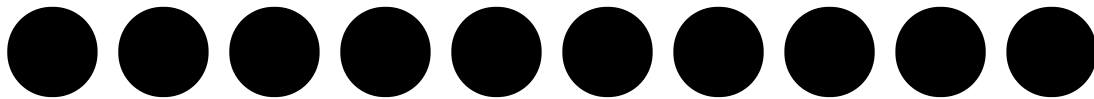
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