

Perfect ACCENT

Worn with basic black or deep, dark navy, red pops.
Michelle Dockery, who makes a vivid impression on Brit
hit *Downton Abbey*, shows how to translate the trend

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LIZ COLLINS
STYLED BY SAMIRA NASR



Giorgio Armani beaded silk top
and silk satin pants. Tiffany & Co.
18kt gold rings, worn throughout.
Fogal stockings. Giambattista
Valli satin slingbacks.



Proenza Schouler leather jacket and skirt. Miu Miu silk satin cropped top and leather pumps. Tiffany & Co. sterling silver necklace with 18kt gold and sterling silver lockets.



Oscar de la Renta silk faille peplum jacket and latex skirt. LaCrasia Gloves leather gloves.

The Dish On DOCKERY

Of all the romances on *Downton Abbey*, the smoldering “Will they or won’t they?” sparks between Lady Mary Crawley and her distant-enough cousin Matthew Crawley have struck the deepest chord with viewers, turning these characters into the Ross and Rachel of costume drama. In the third season, which began in January, the two got hitched in a wedding befitting their lofty social status.

Getting to the altar wasn’t exactly easy. Michelle Dockery, who plays Lady Mary, is quick to point out the contrary qualities of her character. “My initial impression was that she was an arrogant aristocrat,” she says. But the actress, who nabbed a Golden Globe nomination for the part, has infused Mary’s blue-blooded steeliness with an emotional fragility over the course of her relationship with Matthew (portrayed by the delicious Dan Stevens). “She’s matured because she has her man, yet she never loses that edge,” Dockery says over caffè lattes at Gemma restaurant, in New York’s Bowery Hotel. “She’s got a sting in her tail.”

There’s feistiness in Dockery too. As a child growing up in working-class Essex, England, she would entertain her family with impersonations of then-Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Years later, she attended the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, waitressing to pay her way. In 2010, after a succession of plays and small TV appearances, she landed her breakout role in *Downton*. Though she was cast in another period piece, as Princess Myagkaya in last year’s big-screen eye-candy epic *Anna Karenina*, Dockery is eager to expand her range, hopefully with a comedy. “I’m inspired by Rose Byrne,” she says. “She can do dramatic stuff as well as *Bridesmaids*.”

Dockery credits her own sense of humor with keeping her grounded in the wake of the PBS series’s success, chuckling over how much American TV she watched as a teenager (“I’d be using phrases like ‘what-ever’”). Now the tables have turned. “It’s interesting,” she notes. “A friend who lives in Brooklyn will say things like ‘Awright, mate!’” —SHARON STEEL

Jil Sander cotton jacket and skirt. Carine Gilson Lingerie Couture silk and lace bra, worn throughout. Tiffany & Co. locket necklace. Miu Miu leather gloves and pumps.



Olatz silk pajama shirt. Van Cleef & Arpels diamond, mother-of-pearl, and 18kt rose gold pendant necklace.



Valentino silk gown. Tiffany & Co. locket necklace and 18kt gold bangle, worn throughout. Fogal stockings (also opposite page). Giambattista Valli slingbacks.



Prada cotton dress and embroidered cotton-linen bag. Louis Vuitton metal bracelet with grosgrain band, worn throughout.



Lady Mary's FASHION WISDOM

"I've gotten an education since working on Downton Abbey," says the actress, who attributes her newfound fashion sense to the show's costume designers, Susannah Buxton and Caroline McCall. Dockery shares what she has learned:

EMBRACE COLOR "My character wears a lot of bold jewel tones. I never thought a color like red would suit me, but now I find myself wearing more of these colors off the show as well," says Dockery, who donned a midnight blue Louis Vuitton dress, complete with an Edwardian-style bustle, to last year's Emmys. "I like giving a nod to *Downton*," she says.

SHAKE THINGS UP "This season, as the plot of the show moves into the 1920s, we're getting away from rigid corseted gowns and into less-structured dresses with above-the-knee hemlines," says Dockery. The actress has been loosening up as well, "getting a bit edgy from time to time," in designs by Christopher Kane. Erdem, also a favorite of the Duchess of Cambridge's, is another go-to. "The clothes are elegant, and I love the way they play with fabric, mixing leather and lace, for example."

OFFER ONLY A GLIMPSE "I'm quite into the French way—simple elegance with just a suggestion of sexiness, nothing vulgar," she insists. Lady Mary would approve.

Max Mara silk organza jacket.
Dries Van Noten wool-mohair pants.
Van Cleef & Arpels pendant necklace.
Opposite:
Valentino gown.
Tiffany & Co. locket necklace.
MAKEUP: POLLY OSMOND
HAIR: CHRISTIAN EBERHARD

