

From yoga mat to matinee and beyond

Company creates clothingline for fitness femmes

BY ROBIN TIERNEY

Special to *The Examiner*

Flattering, flirty, comfy, casual, versatile, easy care, wrinkle-free, quick-drying, elegant, chic — is this activewear or evening attire? Both, if you're talking about Kimberly Wilson's tranquilIT clothing collection.

Wilson's line will get a lift by the rising interest in yoga apparel among style-conscious fitness buffs of all persuasions — as well as trendspotting fashionistas for whom "active lifestyle" simply means lifting lattes and toting shopping bags.

Lauren Brownstein, a devotee of Wilson's popular Dupont Circle yoga studio, started with Wilson's wrap top that could be thrown over a tank or T-shirt. Despite concerns about the spillage factor, she took a chance and chose white. Not only did the multifunctional piece pass the wash 'n' wear test, Brownstein wore it all summer long.

"It's so lightweight, I can toss it in a briefcase or purse. It's so much easier than dragging around a sweatshirt, and I feel comfortable wearing it in restaurants and theaters, where I always get cold," explains Brownstein. "It's really pretty. The fabric feels and hangs nice, and it looks elegant."

On a trip to New York City, the fundraising consultant planned to take a yoga class right after a business meeting. She wore a black tranquilIT long-sleeve top that covered the drawstring waist of her velour exercise pants for a smart business-casual look. She uses the same top to dress up jeans.

Transitioning easily from sunrise salutations in the yoga studio to a starlit night on the town, Kimberly Wilson's creations keep pace with D.C.'s on-the-go urban lifestyle.

Having grown up in what she fondly calls "fashion forward Oklahoma," Wilson, now 32, taught yoga in her living room in the late '90s after moving to D.C. Her business evolved into tranquil space yoga studio in Dupont Circle, which specializes in vinyasa (flow) hatha yoga. There you'll find her boutique, which features the tranquilIT clothing line Wilson launched in 2002.

"I was tired of running around town in T-shirts and black leggings when everyone else wore suits," recalls the entrepreneur, ebullient even after her late-night return from the MAGIC fashion industry



Photos by Amy Mullarkey/For The Examiner

Above: Kimberly Wilson, founder of tranquil space yoga, poses in front of Dupont Circle wearing a lavender tie top from her collection. Below: Wilson's unique wares are for sale at her boutique/yoga studio in D.C.



IF YOU GO

tranquilIT boutique/
tranquil space yoga studio
2024 P St. NW
tranquilspace.com; tranquilit.com
202-223-YOGA

trade show in Las Vegas. "I wanted something to throw on and look somewhat dressed up. ... I figured others did too." The result? "Chic, comfy wear that transitions from the mat to the market or museum."

Beginning with simple staples such as capri pants and tank tops, Wilson's collection of "Luxe Lifestyle Wear for Yoga & Beyond" grew along with her expertise to a wide range of fresh, attractive, comfortable tops and bottoms.

Pieces from tranquilIT are machine washable, tumble dry and

come in small, medium and large. Most pieces are black; some come in other colors. The tops are made from a lush rayon jersey, while the pant fabrics include a soft stretch cotton and velvet.

"I wore the black velvet pants to my engagement dinner, which looked dressy paired with a simple tank top," Gina Davis says. Each piece "is very comfortable, and you can dress it up or dress it down." The Logan Circle yoga practitioner cites another advantage: "Other companies' designs look generic. Kimberly's positive personality comes through in her clothes; she adds these special touches."

Sales have doubled in the past year, which Wilson attributes to trade shows, trunk shows and word of mouth. As a result of marketing her designs online a little more than a year ago, about one-third

LOOK OF THE WEEK

WASHINGTON



Jay Westcott/Examiner

Joanna Navarro, of Bethesda, wears an I.E. cardigan that she bought at Hecht's.

Cardigan sensation

As the temps drop, layer with color, style



Argyle shrug available at delias.com. (\$36)

CELEB



Actress Helena Bonham Carter poses after a press conference to present her latest movie, "Tim Burton's *Corpse Bride*," at the 62nd Venice Film Festival on Wednesday. -AP

of her orders come from beyond the D.C. area. The tie wrap top has been a best-seller, and the first shipment of her new fall pucci print tunics is nearly sold out.

The energetic entrepreneur has produced two yoga CDs and posts a thought-filled blog (tranquilIT.blogspot.com). But yoga and fashion are not her only passions: Wilson, who holds a masters in women's studies, donates 10 percent to 30 percent of boutique proceeds to My Sister's Place, a D.C.-based group working to eradicate domestic violence, and up to 25 percent of her trunk show proceeds to the Fund for Women Artists.

Coming attractions to tranquilIT: Gaucho pants ... velvet capelet ... and, smiles Wilson, "a unisex drawstring pant that's less fitted and better for men in class than those bitty bike shorts."

"Kimberly has a great eye and instincts about what people want to wear — attractive, versatile, easy to wear, easy to mix and match," Brownstein says. "These are the kinds of pieces I wear over and over because there are so many ways to wear them and you can accessorize to make the look your own."

"You really can mix and match the whole line to create a comfy, chic outfit with your fave pieces," Wilson concurs. And you don't even have to be a yogini to make it work.