

Agent Orange

Bright, bold shades of orange inject energy and vitality into Pre-Fall collections. By Anna Loren

DESIGNERS TAKE NOTE: the Pantone Colour Institute, the global authority on colour, has named the reddish-orange hue Tangerine Tango its colour of the year for 2012. The vivacious shade, described by Pantone executive director Leatrice Eiseman as “hopeful and optimistic”, takes the crown from 2011’s Honeysuckle, a sweet, flirtatious pink. The company has long aligned its colour of the year with the zeitgeist, and 2012’s pick is no exception: Tangerine Tango was chosen to provide “the energy boost we need to recharge and move forward” from recent troubling times. “There’s the element of encouragement with orange,” Eiseman explains. “It’s building on the ideas of courage and action, that we want to move on to better things.”

Marrying the strength and urgency of red with the warmth of yellow, orange is a colour that denotes energy and vitality. In India, orange – specifically the golden saffron shade – signifies courage and sacrifice, and is worn by both Hindi swamis and Buddhist monks. In the West, it signifies creativity and compassion, joy, motivation and courage. Orange was a uniting thread throughout northern hemisphere designers’ Pre-Fall collections, shown throughout December and January in each of the big fashion centres. On its own, in the form of simple, standout dresses, or juxtaposed with neutral separates, the colour was shown in a variety of hues, from bright citrus to burnt and moody.

RESENE OUTRAGEOUS

Oscar de la Renta’s Pre-Fall collection – peppered with knee-length skirts, tailored trousers and flowing handkerchief dresses – was an exercise in charm and elegance. Tones of cerise, crimson and violet were applied liberally to pleated silk, as was Resene Outrageous, a clear bright orange, full of frenetic adrenalin and purpose.



Oscar de la Renta

RESENE PURSUIT

Carolina Herrera described her Pre-Fall collection as “a continuation of spring”, but while the cuts may have been designed for warmer weather, the colour palette – orange, brown and deep blue – was quintessentially Fall. Ladylike frocks with ‘50s silhouettes were rendered in Resene Pursuit, a racy, combustible orange.



Carolina Herrera

RESENE PULSE

For his Pre-Fall collection, Band of Outsiders’ Scott Sternberg was inspired by Diane Keaton’s masculine aesthetic – an inspiration that showed through in his woollen blazers and use of nautical stripes. Resene Pulse, a determined flame red with a touch of depth underlying it, provided a pop of bright colour against a backdrop of navy, white and grey.



Boy by Band of Outsiders

RESENE AYERS ROCK

Resene Ayers Rock is an Uluru desert sunset, full of fire and splendour. Used in the Calvin Klein collection on soft, pleated wool felt, Resene Ayers Rock provided an energetic kick to an otherwise muted colour palette of deep brown and wheaten shades.



Calvin Klein

For its own part, the Pre-Fall season has grown exponentially in recent years, and is now seen by many to be as important as Fall itself. In the northern hemisphere at least, the Pre-Fall season has translated into increased sales, as the designs are generally sold at full price for longer than the Fall collections. And designers are singing its praises: “They are four equal seasons now,” Jason Wu told reporters backstage after his show. **ap**

RESENE FLASHBACK

Fur capes, berets and flared trousers abounded in Alice + Olivia’s Pre-Fall collection, so it was no surprise when designer Stacey Bendet revealed her inspiration was the classic Parisian aesthetic. Elegant silk dresses and shirts were rendered in Resene Flashback, a fire fuelled jaunty orange, illuminating and cheery.



Alice + Olivia

RESENE DAREDEVIL

Narciso Rodriguez described his Pre-Fall collection – an oddly cohesive mix of neoprene and bulky fur – as a “sporty, painterly crash”. Graphic black and white blocks were juxtaposed with shades of indigo, caramel and Resene Daredevil, a fluoro orange, not to be ignored.



Narciso Rodriguez

RESENE APRIL SUN

Resene April Sun is an intense burst of gold and orange, vibrant and energetic. Vera Wang incorporated this cheery shade – used in a bright print reminiscent of a sunset – into a flirtatious yet structured collection, inspired by Jane Birkin and Yves Saint Laurent.



Vera Wang

RESENE CLOCKWORK ORANGE

Resene Clockwork Orange is a bold statement of iconic orange, a 1960s retro perspective. Used liberally alongside shades of emerald, cobalt and burgundy, Resene Clockwork Orange lent vibrancy and vitality to Jason Wu’s Indian-inspired range – a collection he described, simply and fittingly, as “regal”.



Jason Wu

1. Resene Outrageous
2. Resene Pursuit
3. Resene Ayers Rock
4. Resene Pulse
5. Resene Flashback
6. Resene Clockwork Orange
7. Resene Daredevil
8. Resene April Sun

