

STYLE & FASHION



La Playa Beach Umbrella in Custom Nomi Fabric, \$1,150, Santa Barbara Designs, 800-919-9464

Pret-à-Surf Retro Bikini, \$295, shopbop.com

Sabre Teaspoon, \$7 each, Gracious Home, 212-517-6300

Eyewear, \$435, Bottega Veneta, 212-371-5511

Keds x Kate Spade New York Kick Sneaker, \$75, Kate Spade New York, 866-999-5283

Large Dog & Cat Bed, \$113, plumandivory.co.uk



Comme des Garçons Patchwork T-shirt, \$558, farfetch.com

Three checked looks from Prada's fall show

IN THE AIR

Go-Go Gingham

The checkered motif breaks out of the picnic basket

BY LAURA NEILSON

LITTLE IS EVER as it seems in a Prada show. That was certainly true for the label's fall 2013 presentation. Dramatically suggestive silhouettes were projected on the walls: birds alighting on a window sill, a lone cat, a woman in a doorway. On the catwalk, models had dripping-wet hair that suggested a sudden change of plans. It all lent the event an air of film noir-ish unease.

However, it was the many coats and dresses in gingham-checked wool that best expressed designer Miuccia Prada's penchant for tradition-twisting. In her hands, the innocent pattern became sensual and a touch wayward on dresses with slipped-off-the-shoulder straps (pictured above) and swiny coats worn over semisheer dresses. It all seemed to say: The lady has misbehaved.

Ms. Prada "is obsessed with this Hitchcockian, twisted midcentury woman—slightly repressed but strong," said Barbara Atkin, vice president of fashion direction at Canadian department store Holt Renfrew. "Gingham has the connotation of vulnerability. I kept thinking of Dorothy in the 'Wizard of Oz' trying to find her way home. I think the Prada show was a commentary on women's vulnerability and struggle."

Prada isn't the only one playing with gingham. This summer, the fabric that usu-

ally lines picnic baskets is showing up in myriad unexpected forms.

"This season, it's the new stripe," said Karen Mulligan, who designs swim label Pret-à-Surf with Jillian Demling. "It's so versatile. It can be really subtle, and seem almost like a solid. Anyone can wear gingham."

The design duo offers two gingham bikinis for summer: one in red with retro high-waisted briefs, and another with a more modern cut in navy. Also checking in this season: a printed pair of classic Keds sneakers (made in collaboration with Kate Spade), Bottega Veneta's oversize sunglasses and a body-hugging shift by Stella McCartney that Dorothy never would have dared dream of.

The pattern is also re-emerging in design and décor, treading the line between countrified and preppy, and going well beyond wallpaper and upholstery.

French tableware company Sabre Paris makes slightly surreal acrylic spoons in a rainbow of gingham patterns. Architect and designer Paola Navone produced her Euphoria snei chair for the Italian furniture maker Eumenes with a fat blue-and-white check, which Ms. Navone said reminds her of the linens from the Italian trattorias of her youth. She explained: "Sometimes you discover that something you grew up with—when you see it somewhere else—it's new again."



Euphoria Made To Measure by Paola Navone, \$850 for two, eumenes.it



Wool Vichy Coat, \$3,840, Prada, 212-334-8888



Stella McCartney Evening Dress, \$1,780, Neiman Marcus, 212-840-1200



At Home with Marieke Bread & Butter Plate, \$7, Salad Plate, \$12, and Round Platter, \$27, dillard.com



FLASHBACK Gingham wallpaper in the country home of Gloria Vanderbilt, seen with sons Carter and Anderson Cooper in 1972.

FAST FIVE

SIMPLICITY IS GOLDEN

Summer should be all about ease. Jettison that wristful of paraphernalia in favor of a single gold cuff



1. Yellow Gold Kelly PM Bracelet, \$8,000, Hermès, 800-441-4488 2. Skinny Archer Cuff, \$95, gilesandbrother.com 3. Anita Ko 18K Single Panther Bangle, \$8,800, Jeffrey, 212-206-1272 4. Juste un Clou Yellow Gold Bracelet, \$6,900, Cartier, 800-227-8437 5. Brass Peak Cuff, \$100, ...

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