

What's behind the 'mob wife' trend and what it means for fashion and beauty brands

Article

"The Sopranos" turns 25 this year, and the "mob wife" look—big hair, fur coats, animal prints, and lots of gold jewelry—is back and trending on TikTok.

While HBO denies having anything to do with the trend, “The Sopranos” likely has something to do with it as Gen Zers seek to recreate the iconic looks of characters like Carmela Soprano and Adriana La Cerva.

Like any TikTok trend, the mob wife aesthetic probably won’t stick around for too long. But there are some lasting lessons for brands.

What’s yours is mine: The cyclical nature of fashion and beauty is nothing new, but as each generation rediscovers the trends of the past, they find ways to add their own unique touches to the looks.

Take fur. Once a status symbol for the wealthy, wearing fur has become a controversial move as some consumers oppose cruelty to animals.

But now, driven in part by the mob wife aesthetic, fur is on the rebound, but with a Gen Z twist.

Fast-fashion companies are cashing in on the trend with faux fur clothing that gives consumers the luxurious look at lower costs, while secondhand retailers are also offering the look at a lower cost, using the eco-friendly model to get consumers to buy real fur without the guilt.

- Searches and social interest in faux fur jackets and similar products from Zara have increased 212.7% YoY, per Trendalytics data cited by CNN.
- When vintage ecommerce retailer The Sil teamed up with Edwards-Lowell Furs to host an online auction of pre-owned coats, the first batch of furs sold out “in a matter of minutes,” The Sil founder and CEO Natalie Bloomingdale told CNN.

“Even though fur was once synonymous with luxury, fast-fashion brands are well-positioned for this moment ... selling on points of affordability and as a suitable alternative,” Kayla Marci, senior retail analyst at analytics firm Edited, told CNN.

The lesson: Whatever the trend, you can be sure that Gen Z will be looking to fast fashion and the resale market to make it their own. We forecast fashion online resale platform sales will grow 4.5% to reach \$13.68 billion this year, driven by Gen Z’s desire for secondhand clothing.

Go big or go home: After years of perfecting the “no makeup” look, consumers are swinging the other way, sporting smokey eyes, dark lipsticks, and heavy contouring.

“I’m personally really excited to have a break from the clean girl aesthetic. I was getting so bored,” Haus Labs global artistry director Sarah Tanno told Allure. “The mob wife aesthetic has a feeling of unbothered glamour. I think it’s trending because women like feeling powerful and glamorous.”

Inspired by consumers seeking bolder looks, beauty brands are introducing new products with more pigmented formulas, like Charlotte Tilbury’s new Hollywood Beauty Icon Lipsticks, per Allure. Contouring sticks are also making their way back to shelves.

And for consumers who don’t want to splurge, there’s a dupe for every luxury brand product.

Beyond beauty, the maximalist approach applies to every aspect of the mob wife trend.

- Head-to-toe gold jewelry is a must.
- Animal prints are another staple, specifically leopard, tiger, or any other large cat.
- And the hair? Either swept into a towering up-do (a la Pamela Anderson) or teased out for lots of volume.

Similar to fur’s comeback, Gen Z has its own take on the maximalist approach.

“It’s not about having the most expensive outfit,” TikTok Kayla Trivieri told Harper’s Bazaar. Rather, she says, “It’s an energy, an aura. It’s about being very forward and bold.”

The lesson: Gen Z is rejecting quiet luxury for louder looks, but it has less to do with wealth than standing out. Confidence is key for the demographic, and the brands that help get them there (in a cost-effective way) will win.

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