

Style therapy means feeling better from the outside, in

By Stephen Knapp
Staff Writer

“Style is a simple way of saying complicated things.”
— Jean Cocteau

While it’s true that everyone has their own special style, it’s equally true that not everyone’s style is especially, uh, stylish. For those who’d like to upgrade their image but simply don’t have the time, knowledge or knack to take on the job, help is at hand. Meet Morrison resident Nathalia Faribault, style therapist.

“My job is to find out what you’re comfortable looking like, and then putting together a fashionable wardrobe that matches your personal style,” Faribault says. “I’m good at helping people feel good about what they wear, and about themselves.” According to Faribault, style therapy shouldn’t be confused with style consulting. Rather than just shoehorning everybody into the latest L.A. fashion, her twin emphases are personal contentment and social propriety.

“There’s a public conception that if you’re not blonde and a size 4, then you don’t look good,” Faribault says. “Anybody can dress well in an age-appropriate manner, but a lot of people just don’t know how to do it. That’s what I’m good at, and I can do it for men and women and for any budget.”

So how does one come to be a style therapist? That’s hard to say because, as far as Faribault knows, she’s the only one. A former Good Clips franchisee, current member of Fashion Group International and erstwhile Parisian, Faribault certainly knows chic from shinola. Her newly minted profession, however, is merely the logical conclusion to a lifelong interest.

“I’ve been doing it for a long, long time for free,” she says. “I’ve been helping friends and family members with their clothes for years because it’s something I have a talent for and have always enjoyed. When I sold my franchises a year and a half ago, I decided to develop a website and pursue my passion.”

Helping someone express her personal style requires that Faribault know something of the person. Accordingly, each client fills out a brief questionnaire designed to identify their specific personality, lifestyle, self-image, social landscape and professional circumstance. After discussing the results, Faribault does what she does best.

“We go to their house and get rid of all the clothes that don’t belong there. I call it coming out of the closet,” she laughs, “because some things should come out of there and stay out. Like pantsuits — nobody wears pantsuits anymore, unless it’s Hillary Clinton. In most cases, we can keep most of what they have, except we’ll find ways to use it differently.”

While some of Faribault’s clients come to her without a clue, many are merely having trouble adjusting to new fashion conditions. A woman with a closet full of neutral-colored blazers and wool pinstriped skirts sought Faribault’s counsel after shedding her corporate attachments for a less conservative gig as a design consultant. Another client — a recent college graduate — asked Faribault to help her move up from campus casual to business class.

“A lot of times people just need help getting out of their mold,” Faribault says. “Moving into a new area of influence often means dressing in a different way, but you can still do it in a style that’s comfortable to you.”

A particularly useful feature of Faribault’s service is travel style therapy. Whether it’s a week in Monte Carlo or a

weekend wedding, she can suggest easy ways to look your best without hiring a pack train for your luggage.

“You can take just a few pieces that work well with each other and use them in different combinations,” she explains. “You can have a different outfit every day without taking a steamer trunk full of clothes.”

Other style therapy services include accompanied shopping trips, ongoing style counseling, group style sessions and style-therapy gift certificates for those who may not realize they need a little fashion fine-tuning.

As the term suggests, style therapy is much more than obeying the whims of fleeting fashion trends. Style therapy aims to make you feel as good as you look.

“When you’re comfortable with your personal style, you present yourself positively, confidently,” Faribault says. “If you know you look good, you feel better about yourself.”

“Fashions fade; style is eternal.”

— Yves Saint Laurent

To learn more about style therapist Nathalia Faribault, call 303-697-1299 or visit www.styletherapist.com.

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