

# FOLLOW A FASHION

Thanks to the power of social media, these four style-savvy local ladies get to indulge publicly in their passion for



“Where’d you get that?” is the envy-fueled question we find ourselves asking our one coworker who always rocks a trendy ensemble, or our friend who arguably has the keenest eye for fashion in our squad. But gone are the days when hearsay was the only way to keep up with those most fashionable folks. Thanks to today’s technology, it’s easier than ever to get style advice and outfit inspiration — you just need to know whom to follow on Instagram! Suddenly, it’s local bloggers, not big brands, that call the shots on what’s hot and what’s not in the fashion world.

Below you’ll meet four local fashion-Instas, each one of Bergen County’s most stylish residents. Learn how they got into the business, the best advice they’ve ever heard and, of course, the items they say you should have in your wardrobe. (Spoiler: they all say confidence makes the outfit!)

## **LENA KANG, CLIFFSIDE PARK, @LENAXSTYLE 64K followers \***

Former homemaker Lena Kang’s blogging career was launched in 2017 after a near-fatal health scare. When doctors identified five tumors in her abdomen and Kang found

herself fighting for survival, she says she made a resolution to live her life bolder and bigger than ever before if she recovered. “I found myself in that hospital bed with a lot of regrets,” recalls Kang, 38. After she healed, Kang (who previously had no social media accounts) and her husband Danny decided to purchase a professional camera and read up on fashion photography. Thus @LenaXStyle was born.

Now a full-time blogger, Kang says her passion for fashion derives from her longtime love of art. “As I grew up, I realized that fashion is one of the best forms of art that you can create every day,” says Kang. “You get to wake up, put together an outfit and display your art for the world to see.” The effortlessly chic Cliffside Park resident says her followers know her best for her love of accessorizing, which stems from the advice of her stylish mother.

“She taught me never to underestimate accessories as part of your styling,” says Kang. “Today, I often style my outfits with sunglasses or gold jewelry to add a little edge, that ‘X factor.’” Aside from Bergen County’s many malls, Kang likes to peruse the offerings at Nature Republic in Palisades Park, Marcia’s Attic in Englewood and Suite201 in Ridgewood for her “like”-able looks, but she cites one closet basic as the best investment you can make in your wardrobe: a reliable pair of jeans. “A good pair should fit you in all of the right places, never bag and serve as the perfect canvas for any outfit!”



\* Editor’s note: number of followers as of press date

# -INSTA

fashion. By Gianna Barone

## LIZA FONTI, WYCKOFF, @STYLISHMAMA 3K followers \*

For Wyckoff mom Liza Fonti, being savvy with the 'gram helps fuel her blogging side gig and her career. As the owner of Highlight Content LLC, Fonti is a full-time ghostwriter and social media manager by trade who originally nabbed her account handle for a client but found that it was going unused. Fonti eventually decided to adopt the name for her own blog and began documenting the ins and outs of her life in Bergen County. "I love sharing things I'm excited about, whether it's a bag or jewelry," says Fonti. "It's really become more about inspiring others by sharing what I've learned and continue to learn in life."

As for her personal style, Fonti cites Kristen Dahl in Midland Park and Katie Diamond Jewelry in Ridgewood as her go-to boutiques in the county, but don't be mistaken—she's quite the rule breaker when it comes to her personal threads. "I don't follow trends," she says. "I like to go with what feels good and right for me." According to Fonti, it's not accessories or a specific item that makes an outfit, but pure confidence and feeling good in the duds you're donning.

She's confident that she's in the right place too. "We're so fortunate to be right outside of New York City and have everything right at our fingertips," says Fonti. "From malls to small boutiques, it's all within arm's reach."



\* Editor's note: number of followers as of press date



**MEGHA ROA,  
HAWORTH,  
@\_\_MEGHAROA  
4K followers \***

By day, this Haworth mom of two is an associate in the finance world. But after hours, she flips the script and serves as the CEO of HoliCHIC, a South Asian fashion label, and as a stylish fashion blogger on social media. “I started my blog as an extension of my company to show people how to style my line’s fashions for everyday wear,” says Roa. “I began to see how interested people were in my day-to-day fashions, what I dress my kids in,” she adds, “and my account has just evolved to represent my daily life.”

Roa broke into the fashion scene when she was crowned runner-up at the 2002 Miss India USA pageant—a title that gave her the opportunity to become a runway model for a bit and develop an affinity for the industry and lots of sagacious style advice. “I’ve worn some things that were a bit out of my comfort zone a few times, but I’ve learned that style is 90 percent confidence and 10 percent the outfit,” says Roa.

As for her personal collection of clothing, Roa says that while she’s not one to splurge on expensive duds, she does believe in the investment power of a statement bag. “Purses are a great way to elevate any look—they are transitional and long-lasting and can be passed down through generations,” she says. Since she moved to Bergen County two years ago, says Roa, her go-to boutiques for chic pieces have included Mixology in Closter and Hunt and Orchard in Westwood. Being in Bergen, she says, “makes it so easy to find great pieces, whether you’re looking for ‘fast fashion’ or high-end designs.”



\* Editor's note: number of followers as of press date

**LISA EMELO, ORADELL,  
@LISAEMELOSTYLE  
2.5K followers \***

In a previous phase of life, 48-year-old Lisa Emelo was a full-time litigation lawyer who says she “cared just as much about the outfit I was wearing to court as I did about my legal argument!” That changed 10 years ago when Emelo was diagnosed with tongue cancer and found herself commuting into Manhattan for treatments rather than trials. Still, she would get all dolled up in her favorite fashions. When her doctor would ask why she was so well dressed for her appointments, she realized what fashion truly meant to her. “I told her, ‘When I look good on the outside, I feel as if I’m not sick.’”

After beating cancer, Emelo decided to pursue a full-time fashion career and became certified and trained under television personality and stylist Stacy London of TLC’s *What Not to Wear* fame, who Emelo says gave her the best piece of fashion know-how she’s ever received: “Fit is the most important element of dressing stylishly,” as Emelo puts it. “You should dress for the body you have, not the body you want.” Since then, Emelo has worked as a personal stylist for a decade and launched her Instagram account so her clients could understand a little about her aesthetic before working with her.

When it comes to her clients and followers, Emelo is quick to suggest clothing that mimics her golden rule of fit. “I love a structured blazer, and it’s worth investing in a high-quality tailored one,” says Emelo. “You can pair it with a t-shirt and jeans and look and feel just as powerful as if you’re wearing it as part of a suit.” Another pro tip? Emelo suggests buttoning that blazer at your narrowest part to create an hourglass silhouette. Emelo says she finds hidden gems for her clients’ and her own wardrobe at spots like Fax & Fawn in Westwood and DParz Shoes Boutique in Ridgewood. She agrees with the rest of our pros that confidence, overall, makes the outfit—but adds that “a great pair of shoes and a statement bag never hurt!”



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