

# PREP RALLY

Designers put a fresh twist on American classics

The preppy look has always been a dubious fashion trend among the mainstream, but now it's back with a vengeance.

Need proof? Consider the Balenciaga spring runway show in Paris. There, one of the industry's most fashion-forward

## SENSE OF STYLE Jill Radskén

designers, Nicolas Ghesquiere, paid homage to seersucker.

While it's doubtful that Ghesquiere ever visited Sankaty Head Golf Club on Nantucket, Details magazine editor Matthew Edelstein said the preppy-minded collection proves the long-term power of what he calls "our American Pucci."

"It's interesting when people outside this country can mine our heritage and turn it into

something fresh," Edelstein said.

Balenciaga's idea of a seersucker jacket features a narrow shoulder and higher armhole — a silhouette many American men will dismiss outright. But those preppy purists will have another fresh alternative in the new men's line from Lilly Pulitzer.

Set to land in stores around Father's Day, the line has its pragmatic side — in a navy blazer, linen shorts and cotton polo shirts — but doesn't shy away from the bold prints that are synonymous with the 50-year-old label.

"The quality and construction is superior to anything I've seen recently," said Rob Skolnick, owner of E.A. Davis in Wellesley.

Skolnick is hosting a private viewing of the new Lilly line for customers next week, and believes men will ease into the line with the ties and polos. But the retailer believes he can sell the bright blue paisley blazer as well.

"It's to wear as a formal piece for a dinner party instead of strictly sport coat," he said. "They're going to stand out, that's for sure."

Standing out from the crowd was the vision for Rebecca Ryan's preppy tote bag line. An Andover native, Ryan had tired of the cookie-cutter, logo-heavy style of

Miami (where she now lives).

Last April, she launched Bunny and Chad, named for a fictional couple she always referenced upon seeing a preppy person or style.

"It captures the fun atmosphere," said Ryan. "I love the people and the carefreeness."

Her e-commerce site ([www.bunnyandchad.com](http://www.bunnyandchad.com)) features several styles, but

it's the totes that best represent her aesthetic. In large and small styles, the white canvas bags (\$55 to \$65) have contrasting handles and ribbon detail. All have the Bunny and Chad label on one side and a logo of two bunnies and a heart on the other.

"It's more of an idea (than a trend)," said Ryan, theorizing on the power of preppy style. "Anybody can be Bunny and Chad."

And, apparently, more young people want to be, said Details' Edelstein. The best new twists on preppy for men are a whale belt paired with ripped jeans or an updated skinny repp shirt.

"It's like adding an exclamation point to a look," he said, but then he cautioned first-timers. "You don't want to look like a psychedelic sofa."

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**IN THE PINK:** A bright shirt and tie add a dash of color to a classic Lilly Pulitzer outfit, above. Angela Moore's playful bracelet collection, left, sports the traditional preppy color combination of bright pink and green.



**HOP TO IT:** Rebecca Ryan's tote bags from her Bunny and Chad line feature a heart and bunnies logo.

STAFF PHOTO BY NANCY LANE