

# Vacation Mode On

Is there anyone who will say no to a vacation? Well! probably not. Changing lifestyles, urban pressures, and increase in earning power are reasons to account for the numerous holidays the Indians are opting for today. And not just holiday, most of them holiday in style. This is probably why vacation wear has become an in thing today. **Bindu Gopal Rao** explores what is driving this trend.

Millennials value experiences more than anything and travel is their go-to trove for unearthing new experiences. In the past few years, travelling has become an 'it' thing to do and Indians have jumped on this bandwagon too. From family trips, backpacking, to solo travelling, they're doing it all. "But everyday clothing doesn't cater to all the needs of a traveller and that's when travel clothing comes into play. Travel clothing incorporates three absolutely important features of 'less weight', 'comfort', and 'multi-utility', which aid in trouble-free travel to urban landscapes and outdoors. This is why it is a hit with the holidaying lot. Its alignment with the global fashion trends further fuels its popularity amongst the millennials," says Prasenjit Kundu, Design Lead, Wildcraft. Wildcraft's clothing line is in sync with the needs of the new-age traveller. It includes the key features of lightness, multi-utility and comfort as mentioned earlier. Also, Wildcraft makes its apparel collection based on the 'concept of layering'. The base layer (helps in moisture management), insulation layer (keeps the body warm) and shell layer (protects from wind and water) can be mixed and matched to suit various weather conditions and user needs. Each layer is integrated with certain technologies to ensure that comfort is not compromised. For example the base layer which primarily constitutes t-shirts and



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shirts, is engineered with Hypacool technology that wicks away moisture and protects from UV rays. This layer is great for someone who's heading to the beach or a humid place, and can also be clubbed comfortably with an insulation layer (sweatshirt) or shell layer (jackets) in colder locations. Similarly, their convertible pants can be worn as shorts on the beach and cool trousers anywhere else.

## DEMAND IMPETUS

The global market for swimwear and beachwear is projected to reach 2.2 billion units valued at US\$22.7 billion by 2022, with the increasing affinity for active and healthy lifestyle activities like swimming, and the strong preference for beachside vacations. "Adding to the growth in the market is the launch of multifunctional cover-up

swimwear and beachwear, which can be worn as semi-casual wear for pool parties and day to day activities such as shopping centers, resorts, and restaurants. A world of opportunities awaits designers and manufacturers in developing markets such as, the Asia-Pacific ranks as the fastest growing market with the rise in low cost idyllic beach tourism in tropical Asian countries and the ensuing rise in the number of tourists on shoestring budgets," opines Thasneem Masood, Co-Founder and Creative Head, Rossbelle. Tanya Eldred-Bhat, Fashion Consultant at The Open Trunk adds, "With social media becoming such an integral part of our lives, we are constantly bombarded with beautiful images of people perfectly dressed while on vacation. Also, fashion has gotten clearly segmented into categories; people's awareness is very high of what defines work wear, what can be a casual wear and what should be a holiday wear." Chumbak has recently launched its AW'17 collection, Wild & Free. These designs have lavishly been used across clothing that can also be worn for travel - sculpted printed



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leggings, casual tees and tops, flowy skirts, and fun, structured dresses. "Material exploration for comfort has also been explored through this collection. The collection comprises of cotton, viscose, modal, and other lighter materials to enable an effortless wearing experience. Our customers are connected on digital and social networks all the time. We have created this collection keeping in mind different looks for different types of vacations, whether at the beach or hiking or in cities. Chumbak ensembles have been created make our customers look even better in their vacation pictures," avers Shubhra Chadda, Co-founder, Chumbak.

**NOW TRENDING**

One of the major trends is the strong demand for modest swimwear suitable for more conservative Asian cultures and societies. "With more and more consumers trendy and technologically

advanced poolside and beachside wear, such as UV - protection swimsuits and thermal swimwear would be another trend that would pick up soon. Seasonal trends and fad in swimwear would only encourage the frequency of purchase with fashion conscious consumers preferring to stay abreast of latest trends of the fashion industry. Meanwhile, sportswear segment is gearing up to offer products with enhanced functionality and comfort for consumers that include new materials with breathable and thermal insulation performance attributes, inflatable wetsuits, and board shorts with compression technology, etc. Eco-friendly swimwear with recycled textiles, biodegradable fibers, and water-based dyes will continue to gain traction in the market," says Masood. Yogesh Kabra, Founder, YXXX adds, "Vacation wear itself is a trend that is still picking up, as a concept it still hasn't been used by brands to its optimum potential in India. However, some key trends that we see are in the men's grooming sector where consumers want small/disposable shaving kit for travelling similarly the demand for our printed boxers also increase during the vacation time - they want to wear something colourful and in-tend during their vacation."



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**FASHION FIRST**

The best part of vacations is you are carefree and relaxed. “We try to capture the same element in our designs too at Only For You. We amalgamate a touch of couture to comfort making the outfit trendy and stylish. Just like the name suggests, vacation clothing is what one can indulge in while basking in the sun on the islands of Phuket or rendezvousing with friends on a yacht party. Bid adieu to shorts, t-shirts and flip-flops to embrace the stylish trend of resort wear and stay fashionable even while one is merry making. The feel, look, and the attitude of resort wear is lazy, fun, and relaxing, just what one would want while unwinding. The fabrics are free of all the fuss and stay wrinkle-free,” explain Designers Djey and Megha, Co owners, Only For You. Vacation wear is all about comfort and relaxed silhouettes. Fusion look is in where long shrugs and flowy tops are being combined with shredded denims. Apart from comfort and function, style and global trends play a major role in the creation of travel wear. “The fashion-savvy world of today demands as much style from their travel clothing as their regular casuals, after all they need to look good in the pictures. So, colour stories, silhouettes, etc., for travel wear take a leaf from the trend forecasts of the season. Currently, light quilted jackets, nylon performance shirts, lightweight convertible

pants, puffer jackets, performance softshell jackets and oversized sweatshirts are extremely popular amongst the travel crowd,” says Kundu.

**CHALLENGE FACTOR**

Marketing a category of clothing especially meant for travel is definitely a challenging task. “Our products are infused with various technologies and features that enable comfortable travel but there’s a gap to be filled in terms of their understanding and awareness in the audience. We are trying our best to make people explore experience and appreciate these technology-equipped products. The future looks promising as the new generation is tech-equipped and ever-ready to try new things,” says Kundu. However, another aspect of this is the market being targeted. “It really depends on who you are marketing to. If you are marketing to a tier II consumer segment, then yes, it is challenging and might not be profitable but the urban consumer connect really well with the concept and it is extremely interactive and fun to market to this segment,” opines Kabra. Travel wear is all the rage now, even fashion publications cover airport and travel looks. And as we move towards the future, this craze will only increase. Performance fabrics and garment engineering will soon rule the roost. So, are you ready to pack your travel gear? ■