

# FASHION

ANNA KOSMANOVSKI MEETS GEELONG FASHIONISTA

One's style will tend to ebb and flow with the seasons of life but for Kirsty Cassidy, the blogger behind Geelong Fashionista, this journey is documented for all to see. When pregnant last year, she opened her fashion blog – established since 2012, which is a long time in the blog world – to a new market as she shared maternity looks and style inspiration for mums-to-be.

From posts showing jeans and a T-shirt under the hashtag #everydaystyle to styled shoots celebrating her love of accessories and eclectic ensembles, Geelong Fashionista has evolved as Kirsty has.

A challenge came, though, when searching for maternity wear for her petite frame.

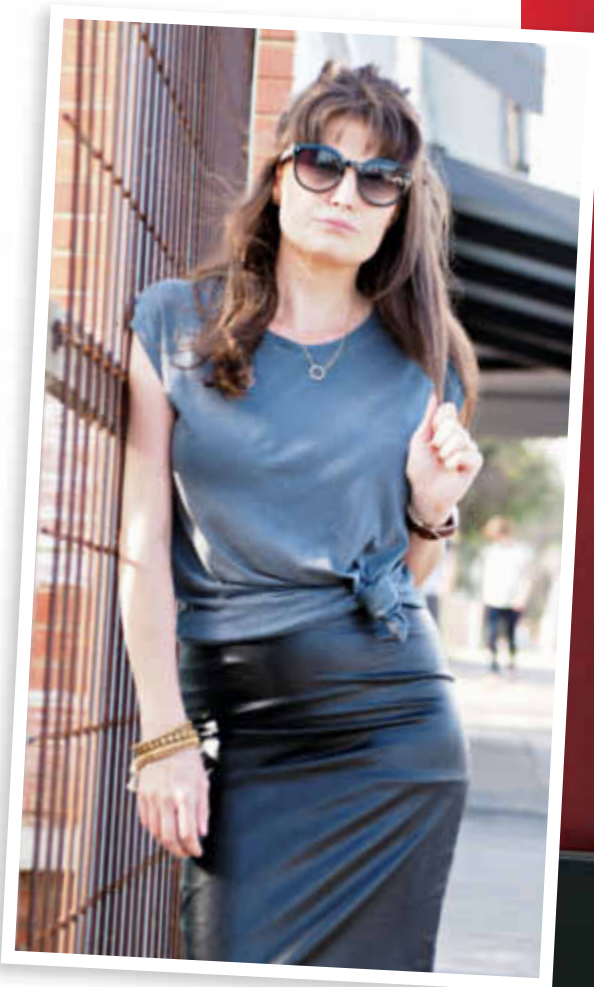
"They make things for really tall people," she says, "whereas I'm petite. I was lucky as I made contact with a company and they got me to be a brand rep so they gave me quite a few clothes, which was really handy."

For weddings and formal occasions, she says she had luck at Kookai. "They have such good stretchy material, and it still works now because it retracts back into place."

The Ocean Grove stylist says she regrets not starting the blog earlier.

"I actually have wanted to do it for such a long time. I remember even back at uni thinking, 'oh this would be cool'."

"It took me a good 18 months before I had the courage to tell people about it. I think, because I take photos of myself, I was a little bit shy at first ... but then I realised, it's not about me being a model, that's not it at all. It's about me showing my style."



## "I LOVE PAKINGTON STREET. IT'S AWESOME, THE LITTLE SHOPS THAT POP UP HERE AND THERE."

Kirsty has invested time and creativity into her blog and it is now paying off. She's a brand rep for labels and has a loyal following.

"I just love what I do," she says. "It's the community that's evolved ... people who follow back and that you talk to online. I love that, the community."

Kirsty draws on her background in marketing to give her blog a professional, polished edge. "I've always had a love for marketing and events and I guess that's where it all stemmed from. I just say how I feel and what I think. It's very real."

"Don't get me wrong, I get some fantastic products out of this blog, which is fantastic but I wouldn't say I liked it unless I did."

When TWR meets Kirsty, she's wearing a well-curated outfit which, if it was a picture on Instagram, could tag back to various labels involved. The elegant black ribbon tied around her wrist? Courtesy of local label, Ribbon Ties. Her watch is from Sydney label The Horse, fine gold necklace a Country Road score. And then there's the score of earthy bangles – a "Bali find ... cost almost nothing", plus her frilly white lace sundress that was an online buy.

For her personal style, considerations such as versatility, quality and generally cost-friendly fashion play their part, but trends not necessarily so.

"I probably used to buy anything that was really trendy, whereas now I buy what I want. And if it happens to be a trend, great, otherwise I've really found that I'll just do what is my own style."

"I've found you don't need heaps of stuff any more. If you buy something that is really good, it will last and work with many things."

Although there are many Melbourne fashion blogs, showcasing the Geelong region is a strong point of difference.

Blog posts often feature local labels as Kirsty has partnered with Elm Knitwear and Macaroon Kids.

For shopping, her favourite local haunt is a promenade beloved by many. "I love Pakington Street, I love a good stroll up and down. It's awesome, the little shops that pop up here and there."

Does Geelong have a unique style?

"I think we do. Geelong is relaxed and that coastal vibe comes in for sure."

For the aspiring fashion blogger out there, Kirsty has some advice.

"Go for it. You'll find your voice. If it works, it works. If you've got something to say, there are people who will want to listen." ●

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