

WOMEN'S SURF APPAREL AW15/16

Cold Water Surfing is attracting more and more followers in the search for empty line-ups and un-crowded breaks. And while the clothing situation for female boardsports enthusiasts has come a long way since the 'shrink and pink' mentality, there are still just a handful of brands addressing the women's new found desire to surf where others won't even think of dipping a toe. **Anna Langer investigates.**



photo: Rip Curl

Of course the surfing part of CWS cannot be done without a wetsuit, but since girls are always cold, they also need gear to wrap up in before and after their session. Hence inspiration is taken from "travel and Cold Water Surf environments," as Finisterre's Buying and Sourcing director Debbie Luffman explains, "taking elements from these expeditions" like tent pegs that are translated into jacket fastenings. Rip Curl and Urban Beach used similar "influences from retro road trip adventures", and Chiemsee cite "expeditions into the unknown" and the "adventurer in each of us". There is also a strong vintage influence, like the "retro surf accents" seen at Billabong, who are "celebrating heritage sport in a fresh bohemian way", and the "vintage fabrics drawn from 60s and 70's" combined with modern details from Amuse Society. Rusty used Japanese attention to detail to create a new "considered or groomed grunge look" that is based on lots of layers.

Layers are not only a great look, they are also essential for warmth, "enabling cold water surfers to achieve comfort and protection from the elements," says Finisterre's Debbie Luffman. Emma Watkiss, Graphic Designer at Urban Beach, agrees: "We want our consumers to be as comfortable as possible in their quest for the awesome adventures that this season can bring", basing their collection on layering pieces too.

This concept plays into the silhouettes as well, ranging from short to long and facilitating "warmth created through modular layering." Finisterre work with "protective, soft cocoons inspired by nature" and "enhanced pocket sizes for ease of us", Rusty is "playing with different lengths" on tops too, including "longer lengths in our jerseys and knits," says Connie Dixon, Ladies Product Manager. Relaxed fits such as beach pants (Amuse Society) and joggers (Rusty) are dominant, but Billabong and Chiemsee also add "sporty and feminine" styles. Balancing the layers, Rusty introduces "a cosy quilted fleece cape as well military inspired anoraks."

Urban Beach use "multiple different garment weights to be built up together" for their layering approach, such as "slinky textured materials and relaxed base fabrics to ensure comfort, mobility and style." Billabong work with "brushed wool, soft velvet, nylon ripstop for the jackets, cosy knitwear with fuzzy surface and slub/canvas." Finisterre use "bonded merino wool jerseys, wool/polyester blends,

tech meshes, fleeces, boiled wool" and Amuse have a "new crepe woven as a print vehicle, which is heavier than the softer wovens from Summer." Urban Beach use flannel, as do Chiemsee, who also have a waxed fabric emphasizing a used look, as well as a new "Powerstretch Fleece that is highly functional but has a great street look too." Rip Curl have a tech 5K/5K lamination on their slub and wool like polyesters and also use a wool mix for "sweaters in heavy gage made by hand from 50% acrylic, 40% wool and 10% alpaca".

Colour palettes are "affected by immediate surroundings" says Finisterre's Debbie and mentions Fauna, Wild Flowers, Coffee, Frosted Glass, Pebbles, and Fallen Leaves as inspiration. Urban Beach go for "primary, classic, nautical colours and vintage washes," with "rich, bold and bright central autumnal hues". Billabong, Rip Curl, Chiemsee and Amuse stick with Fall shades as well, while the latter add "gold accents" for their typical "rock muse" feel. The Rusty collection on the other hand is "all about staples, there is a very strong monochrome look with a splash of plum tones, indigos and of course our famous army for the military look" says Connie.

Patterns are oriented in a similar direction. Like the "ever-popular tribal print" from Billabong, geo navajo print from Rip Curl, "blown up lkat in indigo hues" from Amuse and "nomadic prints, feathers and wolves" from Urban Beach. Finisterre keep it classic with "checks, stripes, twills, herringbones, monochromes and fair isles" and Rusty go for "animal prints" that "always play a part in Rusty ranges."

The choice of apparel facilitating Cold Water Surfing is still manageable for the female customers, but growing steadily as more high-tech materials become available and the need for such gear becomes more prevalent. We're excited to see what the future will bring!

AT A GLANCE

- LAYERING
- LONGER, PROTECTIVE SILHOUETTES
- WARM, EARTHY AUTUMN COLOURS
- SOFT & WARM MATERIALS