

UNITED COLORS OF BENETTON Spring/Summer Collection 2012

United Colors of Benetton's collection for **spring/summer 2012** is an irresistible, unstoppable explosion of colours. Vibrant colours and prints – long-standing brand signatures – are the seasonal must-haves. Colours highlight all the trend-setting elements: geometric shapes, patterns, decoration, fabrics, moods and ideas for a long, hot summer.

Women's Collection

Polka-dots – Showers of even, ordered, uniform polka dots, or cascades of large and small ones, overlapping like soap bubbles. They settle on cotton pullovers and silk Bermuda shorts and on skirts and dresses, always contrasting their neutral or non-neutral background.

Silk – The latest trend requires silk to be glossy, brilliant, flowing: exactly as we've always imagined it. Elegant and chic for cigarette pants, tulip mini skirts, masculine-cut shirts or scarf-blouses constructed on movement and pattern. The only rule to follow is to wear one silk article at a time and match it with strictly matt and perhaps even rough denim, cotton, jersey or knitted fabric.

Lace – Cool, simple, almost childlike broderie anglaise is the starting point for variations on a lace theme. Rather than just a decoration, it becomes the fabric of choice for a full wardrobe. It's obvious that even knitwear, with its open-work and sheer effects, aspires to being considered lace.

Flowers – Tiny, romantic and printed all-over, like oases of peace in a garden. Floral patterns mix and match even on the same garment: they give a cool air to little sleeveless shirts or soft blouses, a precious touch to slip dresses. Or, for something completely different, there are maxi flowers; enormous, tonally-printed hibiscus blooms in proportion to the length of dresses and long skirts.

Stripes – All colours, all sizes, all directions: they intertwine, disappear, follow one another in random order or perfectly aligned. Variations on the theme depend on style creativity and colour schemes, from thin-striped shorts to the maxi-striped scarf-blouse, from the simple kimono-blouse to sailor T-shirts or vaguely ethnic jacquard knits.

Checks – Not exactly checks but rather summer variations on tartan, which therefore takes the shape of a gabardine trench coat or ankle-length kilts (but made of muslin!) with the classic leather buckles; or Madras for folk sun dresses and, ultimately, they become hesitant, right-angled brushstrokes for slip dresses.

Blues – Digressions on the blue theme: formal trousers, the chic cardigan, the elegant blouse or refined dress. Then there's the indigo of denim and all its classic variations from jeans to shorts, from a short jacket to a mini bib-and-braces. Summer blue may become turquoise and turn into large, rich, knee- or ankle-length gathered skirts, jodhpurs to wear with a blazer or cotton sheath dresses. Blue is classically matched with off-white.

Men's Collection

Travel – Absolutely casual and suited to travel: this is the rule for men's spring outerwear. Little safari jackets, short check jackets, short trench coats. Plus a figure-hugging nappa blouson and when it's blazer time, it is made of easy-wear, unlined cotton to take out of your suitcase just as it is.

Colors – Summer is just as colourful for him, too, with lots of creativity in bold colour schemes – blue and orange, coral and turquoise, yellow and red, green and cornflower blue – and in multicolour solutions for individual garments such as the '50s-style knitwear with the sleeves, front panel and edging in different, contrasting shades.

Pastel tones – An unusual look for the man of the house, who is bold enough to wear boiled-sweet colours and always looks natural be they shirts or T-shirts, trousers or Bermuda shorts, light sweater or waistcoats.

Used effect – The look is of clothes “beaten into shape” through wear and washes: colours have become faded and indistinct or literally discoloured. The key articles are bleached jeans, faded or mottled chambray shirts, or sweaters that are gradient-dyed to look as if they've undergone multiple washes.

Knitwear - The knitting mania focuses on the male wardrobe, so say hello to handmade spring pullovers: from the faux duffle coat with frog fastenings to a round-neck, purl-knit sweater, from a tennis-style cable sweater to a zipped cardigan with a collar, from the sailor's jersey to a shawl-collar sweater with a jacquard yolk.

Stripes & checks – He embraces this female trend but with a touch of understatement: English stripes for polo shirts, sports stripes for T-shirts, fine stripes for shirts and ethnic-jacquard bands for medium-weight pullovers. Basic checks, almost tablecloth-style, for Bermuda shorts and country smocks.

Child Collection

The favourite, classic images of the season provide the inspiration for **United Colors of Benetton's spring-summer collection 2012**. Children will enjoy the freshness, light-heartedness, comfortable fit and good looks, adapting them to their taste and creativity. The themes have very specific sources of inspiration but can be interpreted in many different ways.

GIRL

Spring time - The first signs of spring to enjoy in the city, mixing colours which still echo of winter (beige and burnt) and childhood basics (red and blue) with tingles of spring – acid green and blossom white. Simple, basic clothes with elaborate outerwear, plus indigo denim. Plain colours worn with varieties of stripes and smart polka dots.

Fleurs de Provence - Spring in full bloom: floral bouquets and colours galore on floaty dresses, skirts frothy with full petticoats and light muslin blouses mixed with light blue deconstructed denim items. T-shirts with romantic Sarah Kay prints. The colours of Provence: green, blue,

pink and periwinkle.

Flashdance - The rock mood of the 1980s. A play of contrasts: black and white, lace and distressed denim, sorbet colours and fluoro details and, here and there, Mickey and Minnie Mouse prints. Skinny jeans, tutu skirts, masculine shirts and tiered T-shirts.

Petite Danceuse - The dance is ballet and the wardrobe is in party mode: silk, creponne and cotton dresses with bows and pleating, tiers and flounces. Jersey comes alive with ballerina and ballet shoe prints, while everything is barely coloured in pale blue, pink, peach and blue in an air of sophisticated elegance.

Greetings from Capri - The summer heat is rolling in, the Neapolitan island evokes the colours of the sea: cottons, muslins and light denims for trousers, skirts and a girl's first pair of shorts. Plus sleeveless blouses and school smock-like dresses. Light denim trench coats for cooler days. In the best tradition of Capri, Gingham checks and sailor stripes mix with strawberries and cherries from the garden.

Greetings from Santorini - Greek horizons, deep blue sea and midday sun: blue, turquoise, pale blue, chalk white and coral pink. The theme is about romantic little girls who like to dress snazzily: short skirts, transformable dresses and floral tops as well as short, casual chinos and linen shorts. An abundance of lace: Chantilly, broderie anglaise and crocheted, mixed with bleached denim and pale chambray.

Greetings from Miami - The summer is the hottest of all, so the wardrobe is the coolest of all, and brilliant with it. Shorts and T-shirts, sarongs and tops, slips and minis only in light, ultra-cool cotton. Brilliant colours shimmer under the sizzling sun: raspberry and water melon, turquoise and lime green, acid and thirst-quenching.

BOY

English club - Warmer days are here and the wardrobe is prepared with a nod towards the über-serious English schools. Sporty yet refined, elegant yet informal. A luxury fabric, linen, in basic colours – beige, dark blue and amaranth – for barracuda jackets, blazers, shirts and Bermuda shorts. Graphic motifs convey the preppy look, while the knitwear's diamonds and jacquard stripes are very English.

Countryside - The boy's version of Provence in spring encroaches on the Camargue. Washed chinos in various lengths, distressed jeans with patterned shirts and linen sweaters worked on the wrong side. Countryside outerwear is a grey, heavy cotton caban jacket with the air of belonging to a sailor or a mustang handler. Pale shades evocative of dust, sand and damp earth.

College team - Spring American-style with casual clothes and brilliant colours. Cargo pants made of cotton or distressed or plain denim; light or heavy sweaters bonded with jersey. Above all, fleece tops and T-shirts printed and decorated in the preppy style or sometimes with childhood memories of Mickey Mouse cartoons.

California trip - Summer's coming, we're getting into the holiday mood and are inspired by a journey on-the-road. Clothes with a vintage air, designed for comfort. Cotton biker jackets and rip-stop field jackets for those sudden cloudbursts; camo patterns and out-of-focus graphic motifs: and all in neutral shades with yellow and turquoise flashes.

On the waves - Summer sets sail in blue and white, beige and pale blue. Fabrics are cooler and, in addition to cotton and jersey, there's linen for trousers, Bermuda shorts and shirts. Plain colours and tartans, with lots of red, for loose-fitting shirts or shorts.

Urban jungle - Summer adventures take in safaris and the African savannah. Clever camo colours – green, sand and camo prints – for trousers and Bermuda shorts, while T-shirts take on the hues of courageous yellow, grass green, orange and cornflower blue. Denim takes the lion's share of the fabrics and opts for distressed modes.

Vintage beach - There's no summer without the sea. So California, with its endless beaches, palms and surfboards, tempts us from the placed prints of T-shirt in fluoro colours: turquoise, fuchsia, lime. The tropics pop up in multi-pocket shorts with printed hibiscus blooms or camo patterns in a nautical version, i.e. blue. Shirts display bright tartans in really brilliant colours.

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