

Mommy Chic

Liz Lange is back! The woman who infused chic, form-fitting designs into the wardrobes of pregnant women everywhere is re-launching her high-end maternity collection after a year-long hiatus to re-assess her brand. Here, Lange, a mother of two, talks to the *Resident* about how her line has changed in the last year and shares her tips for flawless style, before (and after) baby. —**Rachel Bowie**



New York Resident: What inspired you to launch Liz Lange Maternity?

Liz Lange: It was definitely that time in my life — I was newly married, I was thinking about babies, and my friends were all starting to get pregnant. Back in 1996, I was working with this one designer but we weren't making maternity clothing. My friends used to always come to our showroom and try things on and buy things. I noticed that when they got pregnant, they would still come in. I would say to them, what are you doing here, you should be in a maternity store, this isn't maternity, and across the board, they would each say, oh no, you don't understand, there is *nothing* out there. I began to notice that the maternity clothing out there looked so radically different than any non-pregnancy clothing and I didn't understand the disconnect. My friends would squeeze themselves into things in our showroom — anything that had a little stretch in it. I noticed that they actually looked so much better when they were in something like that. I had this ah-ha moment and I couldn't get it out of my head.



Jennifer Blazer in black (\$265), Cassandra Tuxedo Blouse in white (\$160), Madison Jean in dark wash (\$150)

NYR: How would you describe the Manhattan mom that you're designing for?

LL: What I love about the Manhattan mom — and so many moms are this way — is that she's absolutely everything. She's the ultimate multi-tasker. She's pregnant, and she might

already have little ones at home. She's everything from a mom who is at the park everyday with her kids trying to manage all that, to a mom who's a lawyer arguing in front of the Supreme Court. I always call myself an accidental feminist. I didn't realize it, but I started thinking, gosh, the maternity clothes [available] are so insulting. We've come so far as women and the clothing needs to keep pace with that.

NYR: What would you say are the most important factors to consider when shopping for clothes before and after baby?

LL: When you're pregnant, the most important thing is that the clothing is nice and fitted so that everyone can see that, yes, I'm pregnant, it's not just that I've gained a little weight. It is important to invest in a few key pieces. I would try to replace the things that you wear a lot when you're not pregnant. If you're someone who lives in a great pair of jeans, then you certainly want a pair of those. If you're someone who works in an office every day and you always get into a suit or a little dress, you've got to make sure you've got that. It's about trying to make the things in your closet work for at least the first trimester. Then, if you buy smartly, these things will take you through your third trimester and, then, into what I like to call the fourth trimester, which is the time after you've had the baby.

NYR: Moms are constantly on the go — do you have any time saving fashion tips?

LL: If you have a few pieces that mix and match together, it makes getting dressed in the morning a breeze. One thing I always do, as a busy mom myself, is when I get into bed at night, I glance at my schedule for the next day on my Blackberry. I make a mental note of what I need to do and, in my mind, pick the outfit that I'm going to wear. None of us moms, at this point, can afford those mornings that we all used to have where you're in your closet, putting things on, throwing them off — you just don't have the time for that. ■

*Kid Picks

Liz's go-to places to shop for her children in New York

Target/Westchester Location

"I get them practically everything at Target. They have the best bathing suits for kids, they've got the coolest T-shirts and nightgowns, everything. I love their kids' stuff — I am there every weekend."

Best & Co. at Bergdorf Goodman

754 Fifth Ave., 212-872-8847

"I love Best and Company for really dressy special things."

Lester's

1534 Second Ave., 212-734-9292

"My children are 8 and 10 now, but they have a great baby department."

Ralph Lauren

867 Madison Ave., 212-606-2100

"Ralph Lauren has a beautiful children's store and I shop there a lot for my children."

Spring Flowers Children's Boutique

538 Madison Ave., 212-207-4606