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CHICAGO STYLE ICONS

Five of the city's most fashion-forward folks discuss where they shop, what they buy and why **BY JENNY B. DAVIS**

It's one thing to follow trends; it's quite another to create them. And that's exactly what these five high-profile Chicagoans do every day. Each has created a personal style that's not only individual, it's inspirational. Here's a peek at their style prowess.

Nate Berkus

Live well. It's a philosophy that Nate Berkus not only embraces every day in his personal life, but one he shares with the world as one of the country's leading experts on interior design. Berkus is perhaps best known for his guest appearances on "The Oprah Winfrey Show," where he regularly transforms spaces from drab to fab. He also hosts a Friday show on XM Satellite Radio's Oprah & Friends channel and recently wrote a best-selling interior design how-to book called "Home Rules."

Although he travels the world searching for style inspiration and his next *pièce de résistance*, Berkus's roots remain firmly planted right here in terra Chicago. He still heads Nate Berkus Associates, the design firm he founded here in 1995; he lives in the Gold Coast neighborhood; and, of course, he loves to shop in the city. "I've shopped all around the world—flea markets in Paris, a local bazaar in Turkey and auctions in Manhattan," Berkus says. "But I love coming home to my favorite haunts, where they know me and they've flagged just what I love and thrown in some suggestions for my latest client, too." The city is chock-full of great finds, he says, like the "incredible suede chair from the '60s" that he recently picked up at the **Broadway Antique Market** (6130 N. Broadway St., 773-743-5444).

When he's looking for clothes to complement his casual, comfortable style, he heads to **apartment number 9** (1804 N. Damen Ave., 773-395-2999). And when on the hunt for home décor, you'll find him perusing treasure troves of art and antiques at **Leslie Hindman Auctioneers** (122 N. Aberdeen St., 312-280-1212); checking out Asian antiques and other custom furnishings at **Bizen Home** (111 W. Kinzie St., 312-832-6868); or delighting in the latest at **Scout** (5221 N. Clark St., 773-275-5700), a quirky Andersonville shop that only carries items that are worldly, unique and one-of-a-kind. Like Nate himself.

Kali Evans-Raoul

As the founder and president of The Image Studios, Kali Evans-Raoul specializes in helping people create an image that, she says, "projects to the world in seconds the attributes you want the world to see."

Evans-Raoul is arguably her own best example of this customized approach to style. "Every time I walk out of the house, every accessory and every element of my wardrobe should speak to 'creative, successful, happy and well-groomed'—because that's me," she says. Her comfortable-chic style includes lots of layers and dark colors plus unique accessories, and it works well for a woman who's juggling a growing business (she launched The Image Studio's Los Angeles office in July) plus a traveling husband and two kids.

Among her favorite designers are Kay Unger (available at **Neiman Marcus**, 737 N. Michigan Ave., 312-642-5900) and Pam Vanderlinde, owner of **Zone** (1154 W. Armitage Ave., 773-472-4007). Among the distinctive pieces Evans-Raoul has picked up from Vanderlinde is a red satin brocade jacket—a "diva jacket," Evans-Raoul calls it—that works as well with black tie as it does with blue jeans.

Her other no-fail approach to dressing? Relying on assistance from stylist Robin Baab, who works with her at The Image Studios. "I think many more women should delegate the development of their wardrobe," Evans-Raoul says. "There really is an art and science behind fashion, and there are people who are truly gifted at it." Evans-Raoul is clearly one of them.



Kali Evans-Raoul



Amanda Puck

Amanda Puck

Publicist extraordinaire Amanda Puck loves fashion, and her signature, unconventional "downtown chic" style does more than turn heads—it helps draw attention to her clients, which just happen to be some of the city's hottest boutiques.

On her must-shop list is **Jake** (3740 N. Southport Ave., 773-929-5253; 939 N. Rush St., 312-664-5553). "They have the best selection of emerging designers, so you feel like you have the most current labels out there," Puck says. Her favorite Jake finds are shoes from Barbara Bui, like a rockin' pair of cream patent and snake-skin platforms that she wears with everything, and Martin Margiela leggings. She just bought a fringed evening bag at the **Yves St. Laurent** boutique (51 E. Oak St., 312-751-8995) that she loves so much she hung it on her wall so she can enjoy it even when she's not using it. And she also loves the va-va-voom special-occasion dresses from The 900 Shops like **Gucci** (900 N. Michigan Ave., 312-664-5504).

When Puck's busy life demands casual, she maintains her chic style with yoga-friendly gear from **Lululemon** (2108 N. Halsted St., 773-883-8860; 900 N. Michigan Ave., 3rd Floor, 312-951-5923); basic tanks and Ts from **American Apparel** (46 E. Walton St., 312-255-8360) and, of course, those amazing leggings from Jake.



Lee Allison

Lee Allison

Chicago's most sartorial men know what knot to wear—neckties designed by Lee Allison. His whimsical yet sophisticated cravats (\$90) can be found locally at independent boutiques like apartment no. 9 and **Shirts on Sheffield** (2807 N. Sheffield Ave., 773-868-1600), along with **Macy's on State Street** (111 N. State St., 312-781-1000) and his online store (www.leeallison.com). Stripes have been hot, he says, and the skull-and-crossbones pattern continues to sell well.

Not surprisingly, Allison looks pretty darn good in a tie himself. "I've been told that I'm pretty good at dressing up," he admits, calling his personal style "updated preppy." But he also

appreciates more casual apparel. Case in point: the basic shirts he recently picked up at **Nau** (2118 N. Halsted St., 773-281-1363), an innovative retail concept store for men and women that specializes in well-designed, eco-friendly apparel like organic cotton and hemp fabrics.

Whatever the look, he says, "I definitely shy away from logos and I generally stick to a basic color palette of off-white, grays, blues and black." With the exception of shirts and ties: "That's when I dial up the color and have some fun—hell, it's my job."

Lindsay McKay

Lindsay McKay has dressed plenty of megawatt rock stars like Red Hot Chili Pepper Dave Navarro and a fun little band called The Rolling Stones. And through her successful Bucktown menswear boutique **TK Men** (1909 W. North Ave., 773-342-9800), she helps plenty of regular guys rock the right look, too.

When she's styling clients, McKay pulls styles from her own shop, of course, but she also looks for edgy pieces at **Una Mae's Freak Boutique** (1422 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773-276-7002), which she appreciates for its eclectic mix of vintage and contemporary pieces, and at **Filene's Basement** (1 N. State St., 312-553-1055; 330 N. Michigan Ave., 312-482-8918), a favorite for bargain-priced basics.

When it comes to her own signature style, the spunky iconoclast liberally borrows from the boys. "Honestly, I dress like a tomboy in heels," she says. Plus, she might add tight vintage tees and oversized jewelry to that "tomboy" look. Her favorite stop for shoes is **Barney's** (25 E. Oak St., 312-587-1700), but she is just as likely to be scouring the sale racks at **H&M** (840 N. Michigan Ave., 312-274-1111; 22 N. State St., 312-263-3614), especially for jewelry. "I love saying, 'I got this for a dollar,' and H&M is brilliant for accessories," she raves. Her latest obsession, though, is home décor, and she admits she's "obsessed with about 50 things" at the urbane furnishings shop **Zella Brown** (1444 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773-276-1746). "If I am not looking at clothing lines, I am looking at interior design," she says. ☺



Lindsay McKay