

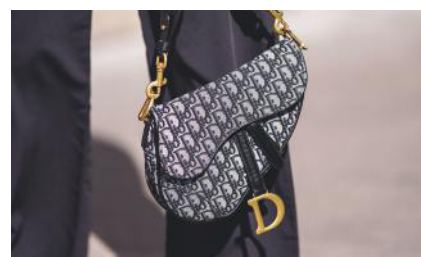
HERE TODAY... STILL HERE TOMORROW



Old Money, Dark Mermaid, Coastal Grandmother – William S Burroughs has nothing on TikTok trends. But in the neverending swirl of -core aesthetics and ‘this season’s must-have accessory’,



some pieces have greater



longevity than you might think. Welcome to the new age of viral, where the ephemeral is investment-worthy.

WRITING ABOUT VIRAL FASHION for a magazine is a tricky thing. Between these words being penned and this magazine finding its way into your hands, an infinite number of trends, micro-trends and IYKYK brands will have hatched and enjoyed their moment in the sun. Most, however, will already be forgotten, destined for just a fleeting encore at the end of the year when someone pens an article entitled ‘Biggest Fashion Moments of 2023’. But as the definition of ‘viral’ evolves, it appears that some of them might be in it for the long haul.

Currently, the threshold for something to be considered a ‘viral fashion trend’ is low. Google it, and you’ll be faced with a pandemic of -core aesthetics and niche accessories that assorted

individuals are being paid to popularise. But despite the saturated market, I am confident in predicting that the seemingly inescapable ‘quiet luxury’ (fuelled by the holy trinity of *Succession*, Sofia Richie Grainge and Gwyneth Paltrow’s ski-trial appearances) will be one of the year’s defining trends – and as such, I can only assume that we have entered the era of ‘peak viral’. After all, if the neutral-cashmere minimalism of quiet luxury was – as some maintain – *really* the antithesis of look-at-me internet culture, why is my TikTok FYP full of Loro Piana and The Row? And how has Savette (a relative newcomer founded by Amy Zurek, an alumnus of The Row and Khaite) garnered such a fiercely loyal following for its beautifully handcrafted logo-free leather bags? This year, viral culture has essentially swallowed much of the opposition to it; the proof is there that these ‘trends’ are genuinely investment-worthy.

There has, in fact, long been an element of truth to this. In the hands of Jonathan Anderson, Loewe has managed to prioritise craftsmanship and longevity while flirting with internet fame (remember the nail-polish heel?). Pieces like the Puzzle bag have graduated to cult status, with its combination of style and ingenious functionality (the seam construction means it can be folded completely flat). And for the XL tote version that made its debut on the AW23 runway, the pre-launch Instagram excitement was palpable. Thoughtful designs like this may not shout for our attention, but they manage to demand it anyway.

The #oldmoney #vanillagirl aesthetic is not the only trend that has demonstrated

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longevity. On the flip side of TikTok, low-rise jeans and logo-laden crop tops have been steadily powering a Y2K revival. This nostalgic notch on the trend cycle harks back to the dark days of dial-up (Google can help if that means nothing to you), when fashion spectacles lived exclusively in magazines and on MTV: think Britney and Justin in double denim, or young Paris Hilton’s entire wardrobe.

The recent Y2Knaissance has given new life to classic pieces that just missed out on digital immortality – and, just like that, Carrie Bradshaw’s beloved Dior Saddle bag is once again a wishlist-topper. Indeed, Dior has been particularly successful in reviving past styles thanks to its willingness to reinvent, something that has been encapsulated by the Lady Dior. (I know, slightly pre-Y2K, but bear with me...) In its original form, the style experienced the ’90s equivalent of a viral moment when it appeared (numerous times) on the world’s most photographed arm, that of Diana, Princess of Wales. Since then, it has undergone countless reincarnations – among them, Maria Grazia Chiuri’s Lady D-Lite and the horizontal Lady D-Joy – helping maintain its status as a must-have.

These retro call-backs are proof that any piece that enjoyed a viral moment back in the day has investment potential because, ultimately, everything old becomes new again. Similarly, there’s nothing to stop your old investment pieces from, one day, achieving viral fame: case in point, the Givenchy Shark Lock boot, originally released in 2012, but (thanks to appearances on the likes of Kylie Jenner and Dua Lipa) currently being artfully unboxed by TikTok users around the world. Meanwhile, pre-Y2K-fave Diesel has made a huge comeback under the guidance of Y/Project’s Glenn Martens: his millennium-inspired 1DR bag went viral last year having welcomed Megan Thee Stallion and Julia Fox into its fanbase.

So in the peak-viral era, where your wardrobe options are endless and literally *everything* has trend-worthy potential, it’s comforting to know that investing in a hype or a moment can be precisely that: an investment. Alternatively, it might be something that your kids will mock... until they need to borrow it to tackle the vintage trend for 2020s-core. □

Luxury Accessories, Ground Floor; Harrods Shoe Heaven, Fifth Floor; and harrods.com

VIRAL VALUE

The pieces we’re buying into, from retro classics to modern masterpieces



Savette Symmetry Pochette bag £1,035



Givenchy Shark Lock boots £1,750



Dior Small Lady D-Joy bag £3,800



Diesel 1DR XS Denim bag £395