

BUSINESS PROFILE

Advertorial



You're guaranteed to fall in love with Smitten Apparel. Holly Mastrogioacomo has.

Since the day she first opened Guelph's newest boutique of both new and nearly new women's and children's clothing – Smitten Apparel – she's had a glow. And that glow is infectious, warming every shopper who crosses the threshold into her store..

"I love the idea of helping women feel good about themselves, by offering them fashion-forward clothing at reasonable prices," Holly said. "Women deserve to feel good and look good, without spending money needed for other priorities, such as groceries and other family expenses."

Holly – who has specialized in fashion merchandising since her early 20s -- hand-picks every item that hangs in her store – from brand-new women's blouses and jeans to

gently worn children's tops and bottoms; from flawless footwear to dazzling jewellery. She has a great eye for pairing pieces, to create ensembles that belong in the pages renowned fashion magazines.

"That's the beauty of the products I carry...they are very versatile and work well with pieces you already have in your closet," Holly explained.

It's amazing how just one article of clothing or accessory can spice up your wardrobe!

Whether you're a new mom returning to the workforce, a recent graduate going on your first job interview or guest at a friend's upcoming wedding – Holly has just what you need to smarten your style and raise your profile.

"You don't always have to buy



an entire new outfit to have a brand-new outfit," she said. "Just a few new pieces can create at least a dozen new outfits, simply by pairing them with one another and with your existing wardrobe. A little oomph of something new can go a long way."

The proof is all around you, when you walk into the shop. Holly enjoys cutting photos of stunning outfits out of magazines, framing them – and displaying them next to her own version of the same outfit. It's often difficult to tell the ensembles apart – except when it comes to the price tags.

"My prices are far below what you might expect to pay for the same look" Holly said.

That goes for some of the biggest brand names on the market, including Abercrombie, Guess, Holister, Tommy and Mexx, to name only a few of the labels you'll find at Smitten Apparel.

Holly is extremely picky with the clothes she sells. With connections to well-known U.S. fashion centres, she has the pick of the litter when it comes to brand-new merchandise.

She is also happy to accept clothing, shoes and accessories on consignment, as long as the pieces meet her quality standards.

"We are always looking for more clothing for consignment," Holly said. But, as a shopper, you'd hardly know the difference between a new or nearly new item.

From the moment you slip the piece on in one of Holly's contemporary, spacious change rooms – perfect for women with strollers – you will feel transformed; and you will realize that you deserve to treat yourself.

Speaking of indulging – allow the staff at Smitten Apparel to keep an eye on your little ones in the fun children's corner of the store – complete with toys, books and a T.V. "We try to create a boutique feel – even though we offer all of the conveniences you need, like our children's corner," Holly said. "Some of my customers' kids have taken to calling us the toy store because they have so much fun when they're here." Browse in peace, without worrying what your kids are doing – they're



close by and in great hands!

This time to yourself will allow you to shop for yourself – as well as the kids, which is timely now with the new school year fast approaching!

The store carries boys' and girls' clothing, from newborn to size 14. The sizes you'll find in the women's section are also unlimited – including a great assortment of stylish maternity wear, from x-small to x-large pieces; and plus-size women's clothing, from 1x to 5x. "A lot of women have trouble finding nice evening

wear in plus sizes,"

Holly said. "We have a great selection of chic pieces and outfits that make plus-size women feel their very best."

Holly feels her best knowing that she is helping so many people – from her customers to her neighbours – and the local environment.

"Recycling is very important to me," she said. "A lot of the features of the store have come from recycled materials; and of course, a lot of the clothing is recycled through the consignment process." If you consign with Holly, you'll also have the chance to support your community.

Once your consignment period ends, you'll have the option of allowing Holly to donate your unsold items to local charities who, in turn, pass them on to women and children in need. Or, when you consign, you'll have the chance to put your items under a charitable account of your choice – the GCVI breakfast club, the Rockwood breakfast club or the Guelph Humane Society. Whenever Holly sells one of your items, a portion of the money from the sale will support the charity you've selected.

"Community is very important to me, and I want to help out any way I can," she said.

Smitten Apparel

is located at

259 Grange Rd., Unit 11.

For more

information, please call Holly at

519-763-0005 or visit

www.smittenapparel.ca

