

# Elena Miro dresses trademark 'real' woman

MILAN, ITALY: Italian fashion house Elena Miro's models, voluptuous, sensual, but most of all "real", slinked down the catwalk to kick off Milan Fashion Week yesterday, 24 February 2010.

Basic black dresses and other dark solids flattered the fuller figures sporting Elena Miro's fall/winter 2010-2011 collection.

Or how about stretch trousers in shimmering beige hugging a shapely derriere, or a cream-coloured decollete wool suit jacket revealing an ample bosom?

The brand's goal is to "help real women to feel confident and at peace with themselves," said owner and chief strategist Elena Miroglio.

The collection headlined the show for the fourth year running, since an uproar over "heroin chic" in the fashion world followed the death of a top Brazilian model from anorexia in late 2006.

Under the new rules, girls under 16 cannot take to the catwalk, and models must produce a certificate proving that they have no eating disorders.

"The reasons for anorexia go much deeper," Miroglio told AFP. "The important thing for the designer is to be able to present a different kind of beauty, both in marketing and in the media."

The diminutive Miroglio, 39, said the average size of Elena Miro models was 46 (British 16, American 12), and the lines all start at size 42.

The Italian government and two top fashion associations signed a code of ethics in 2006 after Brazilian model Ana Carolina Reston died of heart failure weighing only 40 kilos (88 pounds).

The following year, President Giorgio Napolitano made Miroglio a Knight of the Italian Republic, praising the Elena Miro brand for "emancipating women from a restrictive concept of beauty."

Elena Miro is now in the 25th year of "the soft revolution," the company said in a statement.

The brand "has contributed to and enriched people's perception of what is chic and sexy and has placed personality at centre stage," it said.

Recalling a 1997 ad campaign with the slogan "Goodbye Skinny Girls," it said the drive was "a riposte to the fashion world's

neglect of the 'Mediterranean-shaped' woman."

Milan Fashion Week, which runs through Monday, will feature Fendi, Prada, and Dolce & Gabbana on Thursday.

The top designers are squeezing their shows into four days this time after it emerged that fashion maven Anna Wintour, editor of the American Vogue magazine, would be cutting short her stay.

Wintour, the inspiration for the book and subsequent film starring Meryl Streep, "The Devil Wears Prada," is regarded by many as the most influential person in the industry.

The highlight of Friday's shows will be Gianfranco Ferre, Versace and Jil Sander.

Bottega Veneta, Max Mara, Armani and Gucci will follow Saturday, with Marni, Roberto Cavalli and Missoni giving their shows on Sunday.

While there will be other shows on Monday, none of the big names will take part.

Several thousand buyers from around 40 countries are expected overall, as well as 2000 journalists.

*Source: AFP*

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