

# InStyle

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InStyle

BZ Marketing Services  
1901 Mason Ave Suite 103  
Daytona Beach FL 32117-5105



"HAND-FINISHED CLOTHES THAT EXUDE A CASUAL LUXURY"

# Lela Rose

AMERICAN FASHION DESIGNER LELA ROSE SHOWS US THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO EMPLOY THE USE OF BOLD COLORS AND INTRICATE EMBELLISHMENTS WHILE MAINTAINING A SOPHISTICATED, YET MODERN AIR

BY PEYTON KLEMM

Artists can find inspiration from anywhere, so it's not surprising that they also vary their techniques and change the materials that they choose to work with. This is the case for American artist turned fashion designer, Lela Rose. She turned her passion for painting and sculpting, along with her entrepreneurial spirit, into a highly successful fashion design business. Today she is known for her ability to combine refined elegance, feminine design, and sophistication with modern whimsy. She does this through her use of color, fabric, and handcrafted details.

Lela Rose is a southern girl at heart. She has a passion for style, design and décor, which possibly came from her roots in Dallas, Texas, where she was born. The budding artist dabbled in design while she was young by working with her mother to design her own dress for the high school prom. She eventually moved from Texas to Colorado for college where she was a painting and sculpture major. It was there that she also established a side business of designing vests from vintage scarves. This business sparked her interest in design. Upon graduating in 1991, she moved to New York to attend Parsons School of Design.

Hard work and determination led Lela Rose to graduate from Parson's in 1993 and begin working with esteemed designers, Richard Tyler and Christian Francis Roth. The appreciation for

couture fabric and intricate details that she gained through her experience with the designers led her to launch her first, self-titled collection from her apartment in 1998.

Lela Rose designed for private clients until 2001 when Jenna and Barbara Bush wore her custom pieces to their father's presidential inauguration. It was then that her designs earned national attention. This publicity enabled her to expand her line into high end retail shops and was a turning point for the designer and her brand.

Today, the Lela Rose brand continues to create "beautiful, hand-finished clothes that exude casual luxury." The collections widely range to include ready-to-wear dresses, coats, tops, skirts, pants, and knits. There is an accessories collection that includes clutch purses, jewelry, and scarves. Additionally, there is a Lela Rose bridal collection that launched in 2006. This bridal line offers one of a kind bridal gowns that mirror the sculptural, flattering, and sophisticated elements that embody the brand.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VOGUE

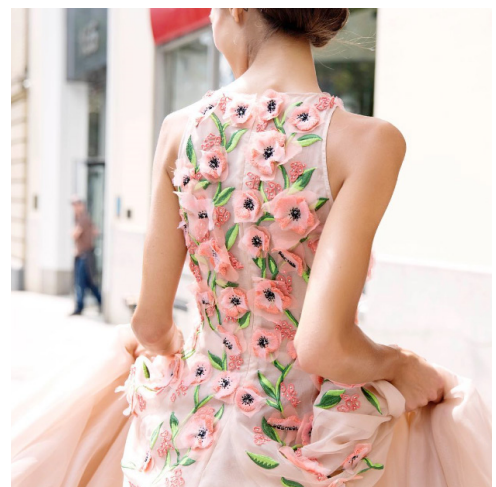


PHOTO COURTESY OF TAYLOR JEWELL

As a designer, Lela Rose's pieces reflect her philosophy that "woman want to look beautiful and feminine, but be comfortable though the day and go straight though dinner." She infuses that mantra into each of her collections by ensuring that each dress and set of separates she creates can go easily throughout the day. She keeps her busy schedule in mind when creating pieces



PHOTO COURTESY OF VOGUE

for her customer. She knows that she wants to wear beautiful pieces that take her from work, to meetings, to a luncheon, and then a dinner party.

Lela Rose is "all about fashion, food, and entertaining." She loves to entertain and approaches her events the same way she approaches designing a new collection. She says that "both events start with having one idea for a theme, and then that detail runs throughout everything." Lela Rose shows that design, not just fashion design, has become part of her life through her book, *Prêt-a-Party*. Here she explores the ideas of dressing yourself and dressing your table, and combines them into a how-to of entertaining. She encourages readers of the book to infuse fun and creativity when entertaining, and to not stress if things are not perfect.

Lela Rose's current designs have not strayed much from her original ones in 1998. Today they continue to exude classic femininity and sophistication, while also always incorporating delicate embellishments, whimsical prints, and intricate construction. Today, the Lela Rose label is sold in more than 75 specialty stores nationwide and is worn by high-profile celebrities and public figures such as Gwyneth Paltrow, Claire Danes, Anne Hathaway, Selena Gomez, Uma Thurman, Jessica Alba, Selma Blair, Olivia Munn, Sofia Vergara, January Jones, Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, and First Lady Michelle Obama, among others.

Lela Rose has enjoyed success over her eighteen years of working as an artist turned designer. Today she lives with her husband and two children in New York City.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LELA ROSE



PHOTO COURTESY OF LELA ROSE



**"I'm all about fashion, food, and entertaining"**

-LELA ROSE,  
SPRING 2017  
READY-TO-WEAR  
COLLECTION

## WHAT FANS ARE SAYING

"I've always loved everything Lela does, but this collection in particular was right up my alley. The setting of the show was so creative too, instead of sitting along a runway like most shows, the show took place in a cafe where they served a light meal while the models walked by us. At the end, we all left with homemade biscotti and a list of dresses we couldn't wait to order."

- **Julia Engel, Gal Meets Glam**



PHOTO COURTESY OF GAL MEETS GLAM



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