

THE POWER OF POLKA DOTS

POLKA DOT, A TIMELESS PRINT

Polka Dots have been a quintessential element at Carolina Herrera since the brand was created in 1981. The classic spots have been featured both in fashion and in perfumery, the best example being her first collection held at the Metropolitan Club (New York) in 1981. Since then, spots have prevailed in different forms, colors and textures in her biannual shows at the New York Fashion Week. Printed, embroidered, sewed or outlined with sequins; grandiose or tiny as little water drops falling on tulle; this timeless motif has become an artistic canvas. Carolina Herrera has transformed spots in an endless source of inspiration.

Polka Dots are so symbolic that they have accompanied her in decisive and personal projects: Carolina Herrera New York, the first fragrance of the couturier, is enveloped in a sophisticated packaging decorated with this always-in-style iconic print. In black and white, elegant and irreverent, Polka Dots have become Carolina Herrera's sophisticated trademark.

This powerful aesthetic code is still valid: in the Spring-Summer collection of 2019 it is modernized by means of amazing vaporized shirts enhanced with maxi-collars or mini-dresses inspired by the eighties and air shoulders that combine flowers and polka-dot balloon sleeves. A groundbreaking visual game, where stripes are present as well, and which recalls the fabulous plastic imagery of Cubist painters.

WITH A LITTLE MYSTERY

Carolina Herrera favorite show was her debut, because as she has often explained, "everything was already there". Several codes of her now famous style already dominated the collection: the color white, the tunic dress, metalized hues, perfect tailoring, sculptural sleeves, and, of course, Polka Dots.

Carolina Herrera sent down the catwalk great models of the likes of Pat Cleveland, Jerry Hall and Iman in a show that celebrated the glamour and mystery of the stars of Hollywood's golden age.

Carolina Herrera wanted to be a *vamp* and a *femme fatale* when she was young: she marveled at the style of Greta Garbo and Marlene

Dietrich. She recreated the enigmatic and elegant atmosphere of their films at the Club Metropolitan with models walking at the rhythm of a live band playing Cole Porter.

Carolina herself has become an icon: photographers like Francesco Scavullo, Jose Sigala, Leonardo de Vega, John Colao, Annie Leibovitz or Robert Mapplethorpe have captured her magnetism, strength and beauty. The white and black portrait signed by Skrebneski, where she poses with a polka dot veil also in black and white, is one of the most renowned.

THE HISTORY OF A SYMBOLIC MOTIF

Polka dots are highly expressive at Carolina Herrera: a privileged witness of the evolution of the Haute Couture –she started attending Paris Fashion Week in her early teens–, the usage of this fashion statement is a tribute to tradition, specially to Spanish culture and to European designers. In the 80s, their effortless elegance prevailed: they appeared mainly in black and white and paired with stripes. In the 90s and from the year 2000 on, they cemented their cult status with a colorful and cheerful palette.

The black and white motif is at the center of Carolina Herrera's fashion universe and it is usually teamed up with other of her famous prints, like stripes, flowers or blocks of opposite colors. Through this powerful, striking code, the designer demonstrates her skill for balance and harmony: she is a master at playing with volumes, fabrics and colors.