

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GRADS GO SOPHISTICATED FOR THIS YEAR'S PROM

Montreal, Quebec – February 14, 2003 - It's that time of year again, when teens turn their thoughts to prom, one of most memorable moments of their high school careers. For many young women, the search for the perfect prom dress begins several months in advance of the actual event with many hitting the shops as early as spring break.

“We see many young women, often in groups of 2 or 3, coming to our stores early in the season to try on the season's newest prom gowns,” says Marina Stathakis, dress buyer for Laura stores across Canada. “Typically they begin coming in a few months before prom, with some falling in love with the very first dress they try on and making their purchase on the spot, while others preferring to visit us over the course of a few weeks before making the big decision. Regardless of when the final selection is made, the girls have a lot of fun and really enjoy the process.”

Trying on prom dresses is all part of prom prepping and to make it go a little smoother, Laura Petites dress buyer Nancy Brodeur offers these suggestions. “Depending on your height and size, determine whether you should be trying on gowns at Laura (regular sizes 2-18), Laura Petites (petite sizes 2-14 proportioned for girls 5'4" and under) or Laura Plus (plus sizes 14-22). By doing so, you'll be sure you're getting the best possible fit.” Brodeur also recommends coming in with a pair of high heels and a variety of underpinnings, such as a halter or strapless bra, to slip into before trying on dresses. “It's amazing how these items will affect the overall fit and look of a dress.” Finally Brodeur advises bringing along a great gal pal or your mom for an honest second opinion.

And what's hot for prom 2003? Laura Canada offers these stylin' suggestions for grads looking to turn a few heads at this year's prom.

- **The Look.** This season prom gowns get sophisticated as elegant A line and sleek column silhouettes dominate. Fabulously feminine halters, bustiers (with side or back lace ups), strapless as well as delicate spaghetti strap numbers are the season's hottest options. For extra glam, fishtail hemlines, romantic ruching either at the bodice, side or back of gowns as well one-shoulder necklines are the details you'll want. And if wearing a long gown just isn't your thing, then think short and sassy! Knock-out, 'cocktail' length dresses accented with drop dead gorgeous features such as ruffle necklines and hems, flutter sleeves as well as high-low, hanky, and side to side hemlines are the dresses for you.

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GRADS GO SOPHISTICATED cont'd

- ❑ **The Colours.** Go for colour this spring as luscious hues that include watermelon, mango, coral, raspberry, fuchsia, pink, red, black and white combos, ice blue, periwinkle, gold, lilac, winter white as well as black come on strong. Ombre or graduated colour effects that give a stunning wash of colour, from lighter to darker shades of one colour, also rule giving gowns a hot new look.
- ❑ **The Details.** Dazzle your prom date, with the season's decadent details – beads, rhinestones and sequins. Delicately scattered onto fabrics that include matte jersey, liquid satin, peau de soie, organza and iridescent chiffon, these irresistible accents will have you shining like the star you truly are. Other 'got to have' details and fabrics you'll want to look for include: metallic brocades, striking back strap detailing, embroidery as well as new ruffle rag trims on the hemline and shoulders of dresses.
- ❑ **The Finishing Touches.** You've got the dress, now it's time to glitz and glam it up with the season's coolest jewels and ravishing wraps. This spring you'll be all a flutter in 'must have' butterfly and flower motif necklaces, chokers and earrings. Girly gorgeous in rose, amethyst, clear and sapphire crystals as well as in frosted stones, these pieces add that special touch that makes all the difference. For an extra helping of drama, long 'glamour girl' drop earrings, cuff bracelets, mesh chokers and black velvet ribbons accented with crystals are all fab choices. For a totally cool effect you'll also want to 'tie' your whole look together with a wrap accented with 'fem' details like extra long fringes, pretty butterfly motifs, beading and cut out flowers. Whether you decide to colour match back to your dress or go for great contrasts, use this season's awesome accessories to give your gown a look that is totally you!

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