

The Washington Post

Want to dress like Olivia Pope? It's handled.



The impeccable tailoring. The power coats. And All. That. White.

With the help of a new collection at The Limited designed by “Scandal” costume designer Lyn Paolo, star Kerry Washington and Limited head of design Elliot Staples, you can mimic the chic simplicity of Olivia Pope’s wardrobe.

Paolo has collaborated with the women’s workwear retailer and Washington, who plays Pope, on a “Scandal”-inspired collection that will appear on the fourth season of the show, [Women’s Wear Daily reported](#). Viewers who see something they like on Pope may be able to buy it directly if it’s part of the line starting in September. Limited’s “Scandal” line, which consists of 42 pieces, will be available in stores and online. Prices will range from about \$50 to about \$250.

While other costume designers have capitalized on the success of their television shows, this particular integration goes a little deeper because the



Costume designer Lyn Paolo holds a Christian Dior coat worn by actress Kerry Washington for "Scandal" in the show's wardrobe closet. (AP Photo/ABC, Danny Feld)

actual looks will appear in the show. The Limited is negotiating ads with ABC. You couldn't see a dress Janie Bryant had designed for Christina Hendricks to wear on "Mad Men" and then go online and buy it the same night.

Paolo, Washington and the Limited are capitalizing on the many [blogs](#) and [Pinterest boards](#) that have [walked](#) readers through [shopping](#) for the [Olivia Pope look](#): muted tones, luxe neutrals and

classic, feminine tailoring that connote Pope's authority and credibility in Washington, D.C. It's pretty but not loud, in keeping with Washington's reputation for sartorial conservatism. The thing that makes it so popular is that it's accessible and realistic workwear that isn't ostentatious.

Former White House social secretary [Desiree Rogers](#), perhaps the capital's most famous rocker of avant-garde designer Comme des Garçons, was practically chased out of town because her perception as fashion plate led some to unfairly assume she was unserious despite her reputation as an exacting perfectionist. Even before the [party-crashing disaster](#) with the Salahis, there were whispers that Rogers' personal style drew too much attention to herself. It took the [repeated presence](#) of the First Lady's bare arms and legs in the media just to get this place to stop judging women who eschew pantyhose — and even that's an ongoing negotiation for many Hill staffers.

Paolo's line for The Limited follows a serious trend of television influencing ready-to-wear looks that are increasingly resulting in retail collaborations. According to [Business of Fashion](#):

Matchbook, a branding agency that represents Bryant, Paolo and American Hustle's Michael Wilkinson, among others, has booked nearly 100 partnerships for its costume designer clients over the past four years, according to founder Linda Kearns, generating over \$2.5 million in fees. (Kearns projects that, this year, fees will increase by 40 percent over 2013.)



Fashion watchers witnessed the success of Bryant’s popular “Mad Men”-inspired capsule collection for Banana Republic and the Brooks Brothers suit she designed modeled after Don Draper that sold out in 10 days. Since then, Daniel Lawson of “The Good Wife” has produced a collection for the British label Number 35 and a jewelry line with PONO. Mandi Line of “Pretty Little Liars” is designing her second collection for Aeropostale. Even period drama “Downton Abbey” had [plans](#) for a [clothing line](#) that features modern interpretations of looks from the show. It was supposed to launch last year — no word on whether or not it’s still in the works.

In an interview with Variety earlier this year, Maryellen Zarakas, senior vice president of worldwide marketing and TV and studio licensing for the WB Consumer Products unit, [explained](#) the rise in costume designer-retailer partnerships.

“These fans watch every single week to see how these characters communicate themselves through what they’re wearing,” Zarakas said. “What better way to take that to the next level than working with the actual costume designer?”