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# Whatever Melania Trump wears to Inauguration Day, it will be a big deal. Here's why.

**Sam Woodward**

USA TODAY

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First lady-to-be [Melania Trump](#) is no stranger to turning heads with her fashion choices, and her husband's second inauguration will be no different.

The Slovenia-born former fashion model made statements before and after her first entrance into the East Wing in 2017 with her lavish style choices.

From a literally priceless inaugural ball gown and a [\\$51,000 coat](#) to wearing a [\\$39 jacket](#) that read "I really don't care, do u?" to visit a migrant detention center, the incoming first lady enjoys making an entrance.

"Everyone loves a good fashion moment, no matter what side of the aisle you're on," style strategist Lauren A. Rothman told USA TODAY.

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Here's what you need to know ahead of her outfit reveal on Inauguration Day.

## What will Melania wear to the inauguration ceremony?

Since her departure from the White House in 2021, Melania spottings have been rare and are expected to stay that way even after her return Monday. The 54-year-old mother to [18-year-old Barron Trump](#) will be splitting her time between New York and Florida during Trump's second term, signaling her professional duties and appearances will be limited.

"We don't hear a ton from her," Rothman said. But "we see her, we process her verbal communication cues."

That starts with her style. And at an event of the century like the inauguration ceremony, Melania is expected to send a message of patriotism and confidence.

Rothman has dressed inaugural guests and other high-end clients for more than 20 years and said that Melania's anticipated draw back from political life is sure to change her style presence, emphasizing the importance of how she shows up to inauguration events.

"I do think some rules are going to be rewritten, and I think that she is taking advantage of that in a positive way, to rewrite her own script of how she shows up," Rothman said. "That may include more looks of the moving mom, getting her kid through college and continuing to protect his privacy, and not always doing that in a skirt suit."

It has not been revealed what the future first lady plans to wear, but Rothman has no doubt it will be "powerful." Possibly an "Americana moment" similar to her 2017 look, she said – a bold pop of color, and surely a number appropriate to weather the D.C. cold.

"This time around, she's not going to be a mannequin," Rothman said. "She is living her life, and her life dictates that she won't be in the White House full time."

## 'She's upended all the rules, just like her husband'

Sporting a custom powder-blue, cashmere Ralph Lauren dress ensemble, Melania [channeled her inner Jackie-O](#) at her husband's first inauguration ceremony in 2017.

With matching suede gloves and heels, the then-46-year-old wore a powder-blue turtlenecked cropped jacket with an up do. The price of the dress was never disclosed.

For the Inaugural Ball, Melania's stylist, French-American designer Hervé Pierre, dressed her in a custom off-the-shoulder, high-slit, vanilla dress with a silk red belt, which is now in the National Museum of American history. The dress is priceless.

"She's upended all the rules, just like her husband has, for a first lady," said Kate Andersen Brower, author of "First Women: The Grace and Power of American's Modern First Ladies."

Even coming off an election that many voters decided based on the state of the economy, Brower is skeptical Melania will downgrade her taste for the sake of being relatable.

"I really don't think that we'll see her wearing more affordable clothes, because she's never done that," Brower said. "I think to her, she would think she's making (lifestyle) sacrifices to be first lady."

Despite campaigning toward middle- and working-class voters, the Trumps have not decreased the luxury of their lifestyles to relate with everyday Americans. And the [polls showed](#) they didn't need to.

"Do you see them selling Mar-a-Lago for a condo in Palm Beach?" Brower joked. "No. I don't think that she wants her personal liberty and her fashion choices (dictated)."

Americans have looked up to first ladies as figures of strength and fashion idols since Martha Washington. Especially to Trump voters, Brower said, Melania

represents a modern-day icon.

"There is an aspirational quality to Melania that Trump voters, I think, see her as this perfect, ideal woman, and so for her, she has some pressure to project that image."