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Inauguration Fashion: Melania Trump's Patriotic Statement, Lauren Sanchez's Faux Pas and Ivanka's "Jackie O. Moment"

The first lady went patriotic at her husband's swearing-in, wearing two U.S. fashion brands, while the new Cabinet stepped into the spotlight in sharp styles and fresh colors.

BY INGRID SCHMIDT JANUARY 20, 2025 11:29AM



Lauren Sanchez, between Mark Zuckerberg and Jeff Bezos, at the 2025 Trump inauguration. KENNY HOLSTON-POOL/GETTY IMAGES

The ceremony was moved indoors for the first time in 40 years, due to **frigid weather in Washington, D.C.**, giving **fashion** a brighter spotlight at the event that might be considered the Oscars of the political world. On Monday, Jan. 20, key members of the new administration arrived together at the Capitol in an energetic burst of style and color.

“When Trump’s Cabinet hopefuls got off that bus together, that was an instant made-for-TV moment,” says Washington, D.C.-area fashion stylist and self-described style strategist Lauren A. Rothman, who has been in the business for over 20 years and dressed a few inaugural guests this year. “There were bold pops of color that show up on a TV screen. The hair was styled to look glossed and ready, so it won’t move with the weather. Some of the men didn’t even have coats to evoke a strong, ‘I can get through 25 degrees with no problem’ attitude. There’s a costume effect that is Trump-specific. His Cabinet understood the assignment.”

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All eyes were on incoming first lady **Melania Trump**, who made a statement in a crisply tailored navy blue coat by New York-based fashion designer Adam Lippes, topped off with

United States. She finished off the look with leather gloves and stiletto pumps.



Melania Trump, with son Barron (left), at **Donald Trump's** second inauguration. SAUL LOEB/POOL/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

“Melania looks armed for a historical, and long, day in a navy look, ready for battle,” says Rothman. “Her military-inspired look allows her to blend into the background, but the distinctive boater hat sets her apart. A wool boater, rather than the traditional straw, is unexpected and screams fashion — elegant yet effortlessly carefree.”

For her initial debut as first lady in 2017, Melania Trump donned a baby blue custom-designed Ralph Lauren dress with a matching cashmere jacket and elbow-length gloves, plus coordinating blue Manolo Blahnik pumps. For that occasion, as today, she selected an American fashion designer.

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Known for her independence, the two-time first lady has not often used her wardrobe choices to focus on American brands or to make any larger sartorial statements. During her husband's first term, when one of his main mantras was "Buy American," she was criticized for not wearing more American labels and several designers spoke out about refusing to dress her.

During inauguration weekend events, Melania Trump turned to her trademark understated elegance in some of her favorite European designer brands. On Saturday, the incoming first lady wore a roomy gray, double-breasted Christian Dior coat over a white jacquard Dolce & Gabbana pantsuit and white flats during an inaugural reception at Trump National Golf Club in Sterling, Virginia. She donned a black cape coat by Dior and black Christian Louboutin boots on Sunday for a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery with her husband. Sunday night, she went for a refined floor-sweeping tuxedo cape from Saint Laurent paired with a Dolce & Gabbana tuxedo shirt, cummerbund and a long black sequined skirt, notably by the American fashion label Carolina Herrera.

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The first lady's stylist is Hervé Pierre, the former creative director of Carolina Herrera, who designed an ivory silk crepe column gown for her to wear to the inaugural balls in 2017 and is said to have purchased much of her wardrobe off the rack.

President Trump wore a black suit and overcoat accented with a subtly textured mauve-toned tie to his inauguration. During Saturday's events, he also mixed things up from his more traditional GOP-red neckwear by wearing a deep purple tie with his black suit, perhaps to send an uncharacteristic message of bipartisanship.

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"Trump's softer-colored tie is a noticeable shift from his usual bold tones, reflecting a less aggressive and more nuanced approach than we are used to," says Rothman. "Given his keen awareness of optics, it signals a different, perhaps more measured, type of power."

Outgoing President **Joe Biden** and first lady **Jill Biden** both went patriotic in Ralph Lauren, the first fashion designer to be awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom earlier this

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Among guests who made the cut for the smaller inaugural ceremony were billionaire tech titans Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg and Jeff Bezos, who entered the Capitol together. Bezos' fiancée, Lauren Sanchez, wore a white suit with a lacy corset bra noticeably peeping out from underneath her jacket, a racy touch that clashed with the solemnity of the event.

"The tech giants in the front row at the inauguration showcase a blend of traditional political dressing and more attention-grabbing style," adds Rothman. "We see how Mark Zuckerberg's wife Priscilla Chan embodies classic understated elegance, while Lauren Sanchez brings a bolder energy with her cream corset, reminiscent of lingerie, layered under a blazer. Her striking choice may verge on distracting."

Vice President J.D. Vance's wife, Usha, stood out on Monday in a pink coat with a sash-tie neckline. On Saturday evening, she looked glamorous in a long black velvet strapless Oscar de la Renta gown with asymmetric floral accents on the bodice when she and her husband hosted a black-tie dinner for incoming Cabinet members at the National Gallery of Art. On Sunday at Arlington Cemetery, her white double-breasted A-line coat popped in the crowd of people who mostly wore black for the event.

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The second lady hired South Bend, Indiana, designer Mary Grace Godfrey of the brand Anagrassia to design jackets for the Vances' three children to wear to today's inauguration — navy double-breasted jackets with gold buttons for brother Ewan and Vivek and a

On Inauguration Day and the preceding weekend festivities, the vice president was reportedly outfitted by a 90-year-old tailor based in Ohio, Romualdo Pelle, who originally hails from Italy. He custom-designed multiple shirts, suits, ties, belts, overcoats and gloves for Vance, according to **a report** by Cincinnati television and radio station WKRC.

First daughter **Ivanka Trump** turned up for the inauguration looking chic and impeccably pulled together in a forest green skirt suit, cinched with a thin black belt, and a matching green hat.

“It’s a Jackie O moment,” says Rothman. “The first daughter looks flawless, seamlessly marrying her love of style and fashion with her political presence. Her background as a former fashion entrepreneur, with a brand once carried in major department stores, reflects her deep understanding of using clothing to signal both power and poise in the political sphere.”



Ivanka Trump arriving at church services on Inauguration Day. SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

Ivanka Trump wore a long-beaded Oscar de la Renta gown to Sunday night’s candlelight dinner and a camel turtleneck dress and matching coat with floral appliqués by the designer to Arlington National Cemetery. In 2017, she wore an ivory Oscar de la Renta

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Inauguration evening wrapped with three official inaugural balls (The Commander in Chief Ball, Liberty Inaugural Ball and Starlight Ball), all attended by the new president and first lady. In a glamorous end to the festivities, FLOTUS once again turned to Pierre to design her look — a strapless, cream-colored silk crepe column gown with decorative zig-zag bands of black silk gazar. She accessorized with a 1955-era Harry Winston diamond brooch with a floral pattern, worn as a choker on a band of thick black ribbon, and white stiletto pumps.

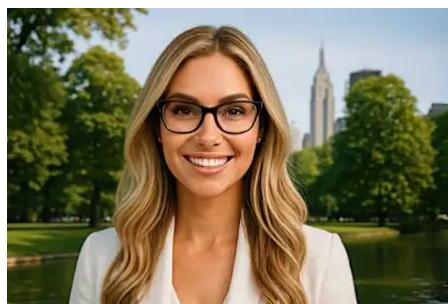
“From a broader style perspective, everyone showed up; there isn’t just one person sucking the oxygen out of the room,” says Rothman. “There’s a squad mentality feeling. My clients in D.C. are saying, ‘Does this mean I need to step up my game?’”

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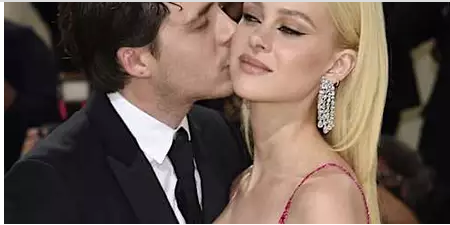
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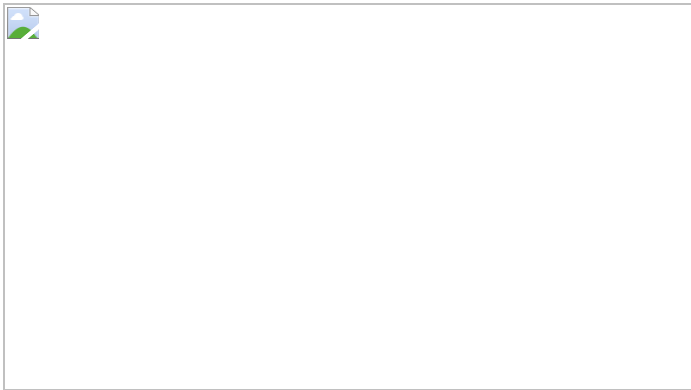
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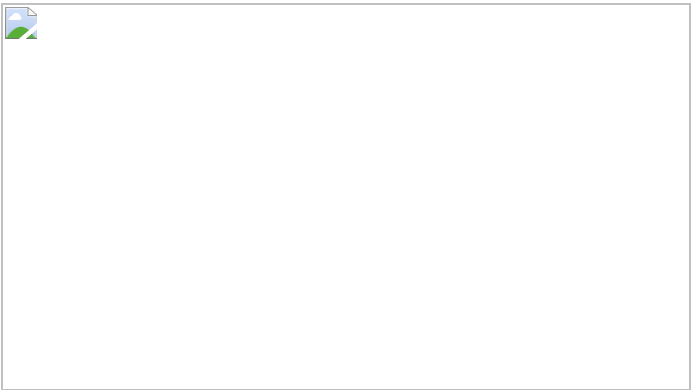
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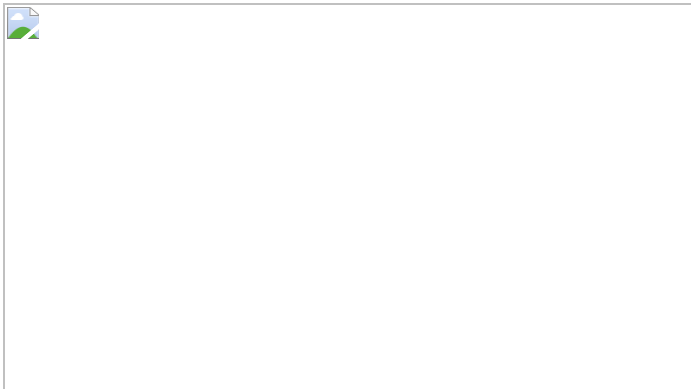
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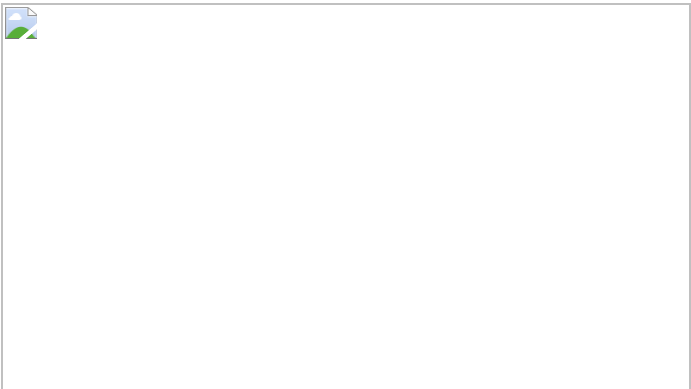
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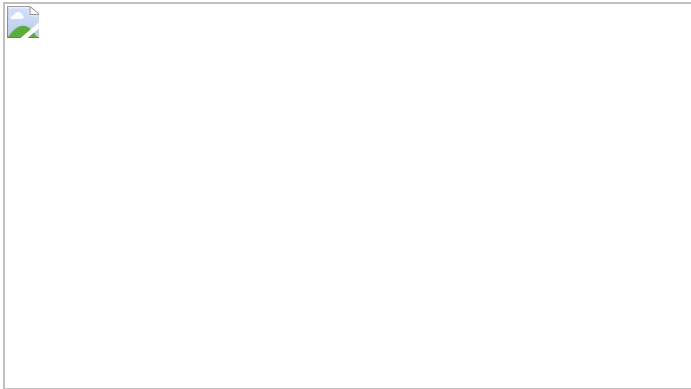
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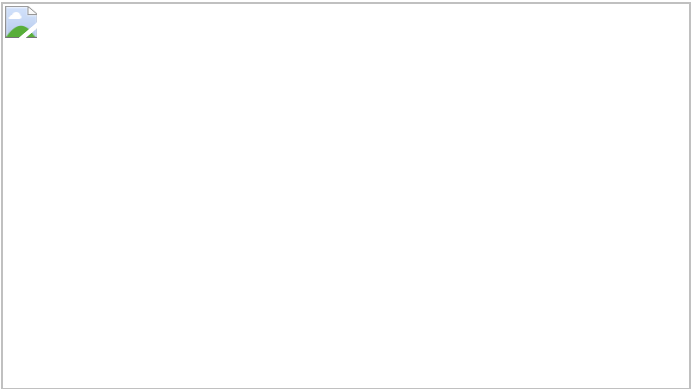
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