

colourmebeautiful

**Colour me beautiful -
Is it really that easy to be gorgeous?
On Friday 27 March, a group of interested
ladies met at the home of Wieneke van de
Vrede to find out.**

Colour me beautiful (CMB) is a personal image consultancy with studios across the UK and Europe, with the first Portuguese studio opened by Wieneke and business partner Manon Rosenboom Alves last year. Although the concept of “having your colours done” is not new, the thing that struck me was that CMB offers much more than a wallet of colours to take away. Certainly wearing the colours that complement your skin, eyes and hair can have a dramatic difference on the impact you make – as we found out when we played with swatches of colour, however several other factors come into play in helping us come across in the way we would like to. Style is one of these factors. Completing a simple questionnaire, we found that consciously or unconsciously, we all tended to fit, more-or-less, into one of six styles –creative, dramatic, romantic, classic, natural, or city chic. Sometimes this was due to circumstance, for example budget, time, work or lifestyle constraints and sometimes we found we had one style during the week and something different in our time off. Giving our current style a label was helpful. By having a clearer idea of the types of styles that exist and the associated accessories, designs and impact that each style makes, allows us to make deliberate buying decisions for items that either work with our current style or consciously move our image and wardrobe in different directions and, as several ladies indicated, to the style that they would prefer to project. This had the added bonus of helping us to consider more carefully that types of outfits we were buying and whether or not they fitted the style we wanted to achieve.



Manon and Wieneke then talked about body shape and how once again there are distinct body shapes, with the neat hourglass being the sought after female shape. By identifying our own shapes we are able to look at how colour, hem or jacket length, fabric and so on, can modify and enhance our image and knowing this, lets us make better buying decisions when faced with racks of choices at the mall.



Other aspects of the CMB presentation covered how makeup can enhance our looks – perhaps not that surprising to any of us, but what was interesting to consider is that our skin colour and even the shape of our features change as we age and consequently the colours, both makeup and clothing, that previously suited us are likely to change to some extent as well. This may be particularly evident if we choose not to colour our hair as it greys, and also if we have more or less exposure to the sun. In some cases these changes can mean needing to move to a completely new spectrum of ideal colours without our realising it.



One of the highlights of the workshop was putting our new found knowledge to the test as we were asked to stand in our own colour group, ie, warm/cool, deep/light, clear/soft. Despite having descriptions and pictures of people fitting these groups, a number of us still managed to misdiagnose ourselves and needed to be redirected, proving its not as easy as it sounds. Having found the right groups we then proceeded to look at colours that worked for us and those that didn't. In some cases this was subtle, but in others the wrong choices made us look either overwhelmed by the colour or washed out and nondescript. We also got to see how accessories, such as scarves or even the dash of a complementary colour on a blouse or scarf can lift a less flattering colour, letting us get away with it and perhaps make some existing items in our wardrobes more flattering.

As mentioned, CMB offers a range of services, including one of which I thought sounded particularly useful - wardrobe weeding! For me this might help solve the dilemma of having a wardrobe full of clothes, but nothing to wear. The outcome of this service is that I would end up knowing how to sort the good from the bad, how to create more outfits with fewer clothes, and how to keep only clothes that flatter my colouring, bodylines, proportions and personality. That's got to be a good thing!

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