

In The Red

It's been years since I've had the courage to wear red lipstick. Perhaps it's my way of dealing with the dreary economic climate.

It's no longer chic to splurge. My current fashion wave is all about frugality, but like a strict diet, my newly found thriftiness lasted about a week. It was leading me into my own Great Depression. I didn't want to splurge; all I needed was a surge.

I've outgrown the kinship I once felt for Becky, the heroine in *Confessions of a Shopaholic*. Her reckless behavior now seems so passé. Nowadays, my ears ring with financial guru Suze Orman's voice. A few weeks ago, her book *The 9 Steps to Financial Freedom* fell off the bookshelf and landed face up. I put it back right next to *Sense and Sensibility*. It was a sign. I had to pay attention to the word "budget." But who said I had to be austere? On the contrary, now more than ever I needed glamour in my life.

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My stimulus package came in the form of a Dior red lipstick. For just under \$30, my Celebrity Red lipstick is an instant pick-me-up. I now walk around wearing my brightest shades, waiting for the paparazzi to catch up with me.

It's been over a month since I converted to red. Everywhere I go, people take note. They hold doors open for me, offer me their seat and generally move out of my way. Most importantly, it appears as if they are holding on to my every word. The last time my lips got this kind of attention was when I was at a cocktail party, laughing out loud, not knowing I had a piece of spinach stuck between my teeth.

With the current financial climate, subjects such as the new Balenciaga blouse or a pair of Chloe clogs are frowned upon in some circles. Some deem fashion frivolous when people are losing their jobs and homes. But shopping for a bright red lipstick? That's something else. Everyone understands its psychological power. The Lipstick Index is the only thing that's on the economic rise, just like in World War II when it boosted morale (in men and women alike). In fact, I'm no longer fazed by words like "credit crunch" and "recession." I've decided that a drab attitude is not going to get me anywhere.

Even if it means wearing my new red lipstick with last year's clothes, I feel like a million dollars. Confidence is always in.



Top Must Have Red Lipsticks

- 1) Celebrity Red, Rouge Dior by Christian Dior, \$28
- 2) Red Sinner by Lipstick Queen, \$18
- 3) Audace Allure by Chanel, \$30
- 4) Rich Red Signature by Estée Lauder, \$19.50
- 5) Cerise by Chantecaille, \$28.
- 6) Gala 21, Rouge G by Guerlain \$45

How To Achieve The Classic Red Lipstick Look

- 1) Apply concealer around your lips, then, using a big brush, dust your face with a light coat of powder. I love Mineralize Skinfinish by Mac.
- 2) Outline lips with a lip liner as close to your lipstick color as possible.
- 3) Using a lip brush, carefully apply your favorite red lipstick, filling in the line inside your lips. Kiss a tissue and apply again.
- 4) Keep everything else on your face to a minimum. Dust a light eye shadow over your eye lids. Chanel's Liberty, Estée Lauder's Apricot and Dior's Ready to Beige are wonderful neutral colors.
- 5) Apply a thin flick of black eyeliner to the corners of your eyes and a single coat of black mascara. Stay clear of blusher.
- 6) Roll your tongue on the inside of your lips to avoid lipstick marks on your teeth.
- 7) Smile! You're ready for just about anything.