



## How to get dressed

Hilary Rose

### My quest for perfect cashmere



**T**his week's Find of the Week award goes to Willow Cashmere. For the avoidance of doubt, there won't be a Find of the Week award next week, or possibly ever again, because I don't find things very often. Happy accidents tend to happen when you dawdle, and I'm not good at dawdling. I move quickly, usually in the direction of chablis, or not at all.

But in my tireless search for nice cashmere that fills the gap between Uniqlo and Loro Piana, I think I'm on to something with Willow. Obviously, there's Brora, TSE, Ballantyne, N.Peal and Uncle Tom Cobby and all in the

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cashmere marketplace, but mostly I've been there, done that and moved on. Some are too expensive; others I don't rate the colours or the style. I can get really quite vicious, for instance, about those ribbed hems on sweaters that dig in and make you look blobby. And I never really forgave Brora after I spent a fortune on a hoodie that bobbed after two wears. Don't go pointing the finger at my slatternly after-care habits either, because they're not.

So. Anyway. Willow does a lovely silk/cashmere V-neck (£109; willowcashmere.com) and covetable long, slim-fitting hoodies (£179), but what drew me was this week's topic: cashmere travel blankets. It being November, my thoughts have turned to leaving the country. I spend much of my time looking moodily at the *Times*' Travel section, and wondering if they'd like to send me on a fact-finding trip to the Caribbean. Obviously this would require cashmere, because planes are cold wherever you're sitting, and cold and dismal where I'm sitting, ie, at the back. Willow has fabulous two-ply cashmere blankets measuring 200 x 70cm for £134, which is a huge amount of cashmere for your money. I love the navy, or the pale blue and cream stripe, but they're all gorgeous. The gauzy knit deep rose/pale grey stripe wrap (left) is pretty and even bigger, but finer, for £124.

The Travel Wrap Company does what it says on the tin. Its two-ply is £229, 180 x 90cm (travelwrapcompany.com), and the African Violet is a gorgeous deep purple. Nina Campbell's navy blanket with cream trim is extremely chic if you're up for spending £355 (shop.ninacampbell.com), and the Biggest Blanket Company has beautiful cashmere/merino throws edged in silk in four different sizes: the smallest is ample, at 180cm x 235cm (£285; biggestblanketcompany.co.uk). Cocoacashmere.com has a pretty, stripy travel blanket and cushion for £150, and Madeleine Thompson's blanket and eye-mask travel set is heavenly (£412.82; net-a-porter.com).

Personally, I think £400 is a ridiculous amount to spend on any non-leather accessory, but then you probably think it's a ridiculous amount to spend on a pair of shoes. As my grandfather used to say, it wouldn't do for us all to be the same. Either way, now all I need is a trip to the Caribbean. Fat chance. ■