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SWISS CHRISTMAS ICE-TRAVAGANZA

A Swiss Fashion Show right in the heart of New York



The open air showing, at the foot of the illuminated Christmas tree, in front of the ice-rink at the Rockefeller Center.

Switzerland is well known in the United States for her cheese, chocolate, watches, beautiful scenery and good hotels. With regard to textiles, certain specialities are already quite well known but, for one reason or another, her women's ready-to-wear clothing does not enjoy the same renown. That is why the Swiss Travel Office in New York had the idea of showing Americans a different side of Switzerland for a change, taking advantage of the winter season to give this fashion show a slightly touristic flavour. The Exporters Association of the Swiss Clothing Industry leapt at the idea and feverishly set to work even though it was a well-nigh impossible task to hope to put on in three short weeks a show intended to attract and startle the sophisticated people of New York, who were all very busy doing their last-minute Christmas shopping in an unprecedented spending spree. The task was made even more difficult by the fact that it was necessary to try and capture the attention of the fashion reporters who are notoriously even more blasé than the general run of the population. The culminating difficulty was the fact that the organisers had decided to hold the show at the ice-rink of the

Rockefeller Center, a place that had never before unbent to private enterprises.

All these ambitions were daring enough to warrant success and surprise New Yorkers. And because they were so wildly extravagant, the show was called the *Swiss Christmas Ice-Travaganza*. Organised with the assistance of Swissair, it took place on the appointed date at the ice-rink of the Rockefeller Center, under the huge illuminated Christmas tree; the rink was brightly decorated with the flags of the Swiss cantons and the show was accompanied by a men's choir singing Swiss songs and by the music of the Alpine horn. The theme of the show was « What the elegant woman wears in a winter-holiday resort ». The show consisted therefore of ski clothes and after-ski wear, cocktail dresses, dinner and ball gowns, coats, etc. with footwear to match. In ice-cold weather—the temperature was the lowest recorded for thirteen years—the dainty American mannequins braved the elements and boldly bared their shoulders to show their models to a packed audience. This spectacular parade, which met with the greatest success, had been preceded by a very comfortable press-show in the lounge of the Waldorf Astoria for the benefit of representatives of fashion magazines from all over the United States. This most difficult to please and sophisticated of audiences had to admit the evidence of their own eyes: that Switzerland is not altogether what they had thought her to be. Her « ready-to-wear » industry produces extremely smart, high quality articles in the finest of fabrics, and at prices far lower than those usually paid for this class of model; and many of them are already to be found in some of the best American fashion houses. It is hardly necessary to add that the show was televised and filmed for the news reels.

A gala evening gown in grey tulle worn with a long red velvet coat passes before the critical gaze of the fashion reporters at the Waldorf Astoria.





The press show at the Waldorf-Astoria. Evening gown in pure silk satin with large floral motif; draped evening gown in white jersey, trimmed with mink; cocktail gown in printed satin on a yellow ground.

Attractive reversible ski jacket, one side in black and white imitation fur, and the other in white poplin.

Photo Tenca



The experience having proved a success, it will doubtless be repeated, but in less haste next time. Meanwhile let us congratulate the promoters and organisers of this fashion show as well as the Swiss manufacturers of dresses, coats, suits, knitwear, footwear, hats, etc. who contributed to the outstanding success of the occasion.



Coat with a hood in shaggy woollen fabric lined with belly fur of Canadian grey squirrel; trousers in the same fabric.

Photo Tenca



Coarse knit mouse-grey pullover with collar that can be turned up to form a hood.

Photo Tenca



After-ski outfit in black and grey Jacquard jersey, with jacket in cherry colored jersey lined with black.

Photo Tenca