

Invest in a versatile trench coat

Ronelda Rhode-Fielles



On Trend

Winter is a cloudy, grey and dark season, but our wardrobes can still excite us in so many ways.

We just have to think and plan. The temptation to wear black most of the time is stronger than ever, whether it is a jacket or long sleeve polo neck and jeans, but everyone seems to be combating this with colour outerwear. And in a good way.

The joys of winter are in the layering.

Invest in colour outerwear or bring subtle or bold printed coats into your wardrobe and throw this over a casual ripped or other jeans and top to create an instantly polished look.

Women are wearing sleeveless all year round – even in the cold winter months but if you cannot bear the thought of shivering all evening or grabbing an old, worn out cardigan from your wardrobe, then planning ahead will help.

Your coat is something that is easy to overlook.

The last thing you want to do is throw on the parka you wear to walk the dog when you are feeling festive and elegant.

Sometimes you need or want something longer and this is really hard to find except in the huge puffer coats that make you look like the snowman.

Try a super elegant coat – you won't want to take it off all night. The statement coat has the same function as a beautiful dress: if it's good

enough, it doesn't need any accessory.

Whether you are wearing a dress or pants with a sleeveless top, here are some ideas:

A gorgeous jacket can glam up a basic little black dress.

If it is nicely fitted it will look good over a dress, with black pants or a pair of dark wash (or black) jeans.

All you need are pretty earrings and a bracelet, if you are so inclined, and you are good to go.

Or maybe you just want to cover your upper arms a bit but don't need a lot of added warmth.

Then a wrap will do the trick and it's hands-free.

If you don't need to be all dressed up but don't want to feel like you are wearing your work or ultra-casual clothes to the event, try a pretty understated jacket.

These are just a few of the many, many ideas.

There are a large number of coats and jackets available this winter season, including wool coats, longline coats and military inspired jackets (full lengths).

Other styles include capes, ponchos, denim jackets and the wardrobe staple that is worth investing in is a great trench coat.

The trench is a favourite as it's very versatile.

A beautiful coat is an investment in your wardrobe – something you will have for years – and you will smile every time you go out and put it on, delighted at how smart you were to



■ Make a statement with your coat.

get something so beautiful and practical.

For more information you can go to www.ronelda.com Follow @RoneldaRhode on Instagram and Twitter, and you can also find her on Facebook. If you have fashion-related

questions for Ronelda or think you have a talent for putting together trendy outfits, email your queries, comments – or pictures – to fashionfundi@inl.co.za

This column will appear once a month.

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Read of the Week

The Reb and The Rebel
Edited by Carmel Schrire and Gwynne Schrire
UCT Press
Review: Brian Joss

It's astonishing what "the big cupboard" can hold. In this case, it was a handwritten diary and autobiographical poem belonging to her great grandfather that Carmel Schrire found.

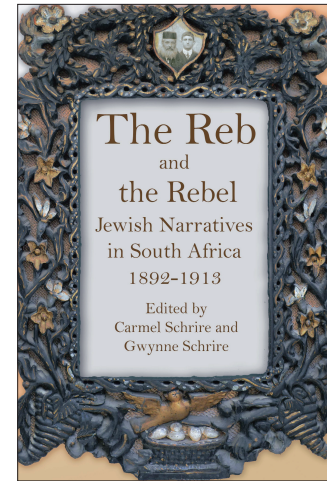
Her cousin, Sea Point resident, Gwynne Schrire, had the reminiscences of his son, and it was the discovery of these three original manuscripts that eventually led to the book, *The Reb and the Rebel*, being published.

Sub-titled "Jewish Narratives in South Africa 1892–1913", it is a fascinating insight into life in Cape Town and Johannesburg by Reb Yehuda Leib Schrire (1851–1912) who was well versed in Jewish law: he was a cantor and a shochet – a kosher slaughterer.

He arrived in the City of Gold from Lithuania in 1892 and, in his diary, describes his journey from his birthplace, Oshmanyne, through Germany, Holland, the Canary Islands to his arrival in Cape Town on the Dunbar Castle and then to Johannesburg.

His description of the long trip is so lively that you feel you are on the ship, on the train and on the mule cart with the Reb, Yehuda Leib.

He also devotes a chapter to the "customs of the inhabitants" and if you think that deaths after ritual circumcision are a modern phenomenon, they're not. "Many of them die at the hut and only those who survive and heal will be accepted as men," he writes in his diary.



After a few months, he returned to Cape Town intending to go back to his wife in Russia, but he was persuaded to stay, and, as it was winter at home and summer in Cape Town, he remained before he decided what to do.

In the poem, the Reb, who is reunited with his wife and family, waxes lyrical about his life, through triumph and adversity, with one thought in mind: returning to the Holy City. However, that was not to be.

The memoirs of the District Six-born rebel, his

son Harry (1895–1980), are just as compelling and explain much about the Reb.

However, Harry's amusing reminiscences about District Six and Jewish life in Cape Town will intrigue many. Harry Nathan describes his school days, the social life of the Cape and what today would be called a start-up business, the Great Saccharine Venture.

There is also an engaging story about a cantor who "adopted" one of Reb Yehuda's compositions as his own.

Harry also recalls his "gang" – the Harrington Street Loafers – and the mischief they got up to.

Another amusing anecdote is about a Polish Jewess who was charged with keeping a brothel. The three memoirs give an unusual insight into a way of life long gone. You will have to keep referring to the footnotes that accompany the three memoirs, even so, it does not detract from what is a compelling read.

It is not only a valuable addition to the history of the Jews in this country, but also that of South Africa.

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