

# A woman to look up to

**SHE'S** petite, perceptive and turned out to perfection. Chata Romano (26) is a glowing example of the new South African woman — lively, confident, skilled and attractive.

That's no surprise, for Chata's business is to show women how to dress in combinations of fabric, colour and style to suit and set off their looks, personalities, life-styles and needs.

Chata has always been fascinated by fashion and at the age of eight started re-making and re-modelling her clothes in new styles and colour combinations.

She said: "It allowed me to be creative and I thoroughly enjoyed it. As I grew up, girls turned to me for advice and guidance on what to buy and wear."

## Colour check

After leaving school, Chata trained as a fashion buyer and designer, before starting her own consultancy and design studio about a year ago.

"It's doing well, despite the national economic downturn. One doesn't have to be a millionaire to dress well — my service emphasises affordability as well as quality.

"South African women are becoming more independent, self-confident and sure of themselves — and this

embraces fashion as well. What they do need, however, is expert professional guidance.

"For the first appointment, I visit the client at home to learn as much about her as possible — life-style, personality, tastes, needs and ambitions. I even look at her wardrobe.

"I examine each item, checking colours, fabrics and styles — all are equally important — to see what can be mixed and matched. I try to look see through her eyes and think with her mind; and in each wardrobe I look for a basic foundation on which a stylish, eye-catching and comfortable collection can be built."

## Shopping trip

Chata encourages housewives with children to wear comfortable and hardwearing clothes, but that would still make her feel good about herself. Businesswomen need to look professional and confident — but still feminine and attractive.

"Women must use their clothes to emphasise their strong points. I give each person a list of combinations and shopping suggestions based on my estimation of her and how she relates to fabric, colour and style.

"She is given expert advice on how to extend her collection. I encourage



**CHATA ROMANO: Well on her way to becoming an indispensable asset to any woman's wardrobe.**

her to have confidence in her own ideas and stress that accessories play a vital role, providing the subtle finishing touch," she said.

**ROB LINDEN**