

Chata takes the plunge

She's built a reputation as one of SA's leading image consultants.

Now Chata Romano is launching a new book that's going to take the fashion world by storm.

FOR someone who leads a hectic life, Chata looks refreshingly relaxed as we chat by the poolside of her local gym. She's about to launch a nationwide tour of fashion and image workshops, and she and husband Avri are on the final planning stages of their new fashion book, set to land on the shelves next year.

The petite powerhouse says she owes a great deal of her success to her fitness and health-oriented lifestyle.

"I hate exercise," she says with a grin, "but I make myself do it. Every morning I swim at the Sandton Health & Racquet Club. Getting there is the battle - once I'm in the pool, I really get into my routine.

"And I don't pull my punches when it comes to telling my clients what exercise can do for them. I had a top executive in to see me recently who felt he needed a total makeover. It soon became clear to me that there wasn't a drastic amount of work to be done: potentially he had a great shape but too many meetings and business lunches meant he'd lost it - and

he kept telling himself he had no time to exercise.

"I told him the first thing he needed to do was go to gym. Clothes look so much better if you've got a good body to hang them on!

"He took my advice and now, thanks to exercise, a revamped wardrobe and some pointers on style, he looks far more impressive and dynamic than ever. And although he wasn't short on confidence before, he says even that has improved."

BUT not all Chata's clients are high-powered businessmen. In fact, most are women of all ages - teens through to pensioners, all with the single aim of looking smart and stylish.

Chata's biggest ambition is to take the fear out of mixing and matching. Most of us tend to get nervous and think that a wardrobe packed with garments is essential in order to look different, she says. But that's just not so.

In a recent survey, Chata found that

women only wear 30% of what is in their wardrobes, which means that 70% of what they spend on clothes is wasted.

"Never compromise on what suits you - always ask yourself whether what you are about to buy has the right ingredients for you: the right colour, fabric, style, length and proportion," she says.

And with that, she hauls herself out of the water and gets into mental gear for the business of making people look and feel on top of the world.

● *MegaLife* asked Chata to compile a list of hot tips on packing. Most of us pack far too much whenever we go away, whether we're heading up to Jo'burg for two days on business or up the Amazon for three weeks of jungle fever. Next month, we'll bring you Chata's packing hints. And for those of you who can't wait, Chata will be holding national workshops for women on colour and figure analysis and mixing and matching. See facing page for details. ▲



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