

Style has less to do with the way you look, and more to do with who you are, says Chata Romano, a renowned image consultant and author.

Romano has dedicated her life to transforming women into butterflies without any serious effort.

"I just look at people and see what they can become," she says.

In her latest book entitled *Style*, she says: "You don't need a magic wand or a surgeon's scalpel to achieve a perfect body, and you don't need a vast array of garments to have a wardrobe that works."

The practical tips provided on how to add some style to a dreary outfit, often require simple changes.

Romano maintains the biggest problem is that most women do not shop to suit their lifestyles.

"Women should look at four factors before going shopping. Firstly: what is my lifestyle? Am I a working woman, which means I need 80% smart clothing and 20% casual clothing; or am I a mother at home, which means I need 80% casual and 20% smart clothing.

"Have a look at your wardrobe and see if what you have is you," she says.

"Secondly, be aware of colour and fashion and follow the trends. Out of the latest selections, decide on what would suit you. There are four kinds of skin tones: soft - which is a pale skin; medium - a golden skin; deep - an olive skin, and rich - a dark skin. Skin tones help you to identify the correct colours for make-up, hair and clothing.

"Thirdly, the style that you choose should suit your body shape. I don't work with traditional shapes like apple or pear, because they put people in boxes. You need to take into consideration bust size, height, facial shape, length of neck, length of arms and then work according to what is right for you.

"Lastly, your budget. You don't have to earn a fortune to look good. Clear out your wardrobe of things that you haven't worn for the last three years. Mix and match items in your wardrobe. Go to cheaper stores instead of boutiques.

"Of course if you enjoy spending and you've got the money, by all means go for it. Make a list of what you have and go and buy the missing



MAGICAL MAKEOVERS: These three women were made over the Chato Romano way. They are Lorraine (top left), Brenda (top right) and Annatije (above)

items. But don't duplicate. Don't buy a navy and a black jacket in the same style. You could for example buy two jackets, one classic wool and one suede for winter," she says.

Romano says there are five basic colours that every woman should have in their wardrobes, which will allow easier mixing and matching.

"Neutrals are very important, black, navy, grey (the different shades are very sophisticated), red - even though many people believe it's not fashionable, but the right shade could work as a basic colour, and whites (and creams)," she said.

Simply wearing the right clothing and accessories can disguise those unflattering zones on a woman's body.

Romano mentions five of the many areas of women's bodies which concern them.

"Women always say to me 'I want to be thinner'. That's fine, you don't have to go on a heavy diet before you

do. Look for styles that run from north to south rather than from east to west.

"Wear single-breasted, not double-breasted clothing. Do not wear wide collars because they make you look wider.

"For those who want to look taller - avoid turn ups (at the ends of pants). Find a shoe that has a pointed tip as opposed to a square tip, which will make you look shorter.

"With wide shoulders, avoid wearing big collars, go for a regular collar.

