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5 Thrifty Things: Resort Wear Under \$50

by Cheryl Fenton of Easy Peasy for Shoestring Magazine
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I've had it with the winter blues. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, I'm packing up the fam and heading for sunnier climes.

Although the dynamics might have changed (a 3 a.m. dance party would probably kill us nowadays, for instance), spring break isn't just for college kids, so bring on the budget-friendly resorts! As a busy mom, however; I've only got about 20 minutes to pack and about 20 inches of suitcase space left after my daughter's stuff. (Even at 3 years old, her things takes up more room than you would think.)

Add it all up, and you have a picture of precisely why I love finding versatile pieces that can take my look from day-to-night. Fewer pieces means fewer minutes standing in front of closet creating travel-friendly outfits, plus fewer minutes sitting on my suitcase trying to close it.

Here are a few personal favorites that save me time, space, and — with price tags under \$50 — money:

Cotton Beach Kaftan (\$40, Topshop)

Not only is this dreamy cover-up ridiculously versatile, but its vibrant red hue packs the perfect punch for making a statement in under a second. Casually toss it on over your bathing suit for a lazy poolside luncheon, or layer it with a fitted tank, leggings, funky necklace and strappy sandals for a night on the town. The gold beading and cord add just enough sparkle to make any outfit really shine.

Cotton Tank with Beaded Bib (\$29, Newport News)

This embellished day-to-night top perfectly pairs with classic shorts and sandals — dare I even say flip flops? — for a warm afternoon stroll. If the evening air gets a bit of a chill, just add capri pants, a lightweight cardigan, and espadrille wedges for instant Grace Kelly chic.

Chain Mesh Statement Necklace (\$39.50, Banana Republic)

With its nautical feel, this "Cast Your Net" necklace had me hooked at first sight. It's all you need to instantly dress up a tee, dress (maxi or mini) or tank. The golden chain metal mesh adds a splash of rocker glam, bringing a hard (yet glitzy) edge to softer seaside looks. (Not to mention how hot it looks layered on newly sun-kissed skin. Meow.)

Flowered Metallic T-Strap Sandals (\$19.50, Old Navy)

The fabulous bunch of metallic faux-leather flowers dotting the T-strap on these sandals easily dresses up simply everything — from flirty skirts to boyish Bermudas. Plus, with a dazzlingly low price, it's perfectly OK to "splurge" on both gold and silver, especially given the comfort factor. Be still my heart, is it possible we've found fashion and function under \$20?

Classic Bermuda Shorts (\$49.50, J. Crew)

Keep things classic with Bermuda shorts, the ultimate in resort wear versatility. For a casual afternoon, don't forget to add a few unique accessories for a little interest. Combine these boyish bottoms with a flowy, feminine top and sexy wedges for a fancy dinner.

Bonus find:

Textured Patent Leather Hobo (\$20, Charlotte Russe)

Toss anything and everything into this flashy, trendy hobo — great for the beach (filled with cover-up, sunblock, snacks, maybe your dog-eared copy of Twilight) or sightseeing (camera, travel guide, umbrella).

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