



Dear FASHIONGRANNY,

You are famous in Columbus! Recently, I had the pleasure of visiting Hilton Head, and I think your area is lovely. While vacationing, at poolside, I read your column in the Lowcountry Weekly. You're a hoot! I brought the paper home and now all my girlfriends and I have an "Ask FASHIONGRANNY" discussion every month, as we can access you online and really, any excuse will do for us to get together! I have a question. I am planning to come back this Fall and want to know what to pack. Can you help me? Thanks in advance; keep on writing and we'll keep on reading!

Signed, Buckeye Blair

Dear Buckeye Blair,

Thank God for our Ohioans! When I first moved here, I took a course offered on Hilton Head Island called “Hilton Head Ambassador,” which taught the History of our Sea Island chain in facts and figures, and in those facts, the class was quizzed as to “What State sends us the most tourism?” The ABC’s were: New York, New Jersey and Ohio. Personally, I’d have guessed New Jersey; it seemed at the time, everybody I met on Hilton Head was from New Jersey!

The answer was and still is Ohio! Something about the straight 12-hour driving shot to Paradise. Cheap and Close. That’s exactly how I like to think of where I live. Cheap and Close. You’re a nice lot, however, great for our economy and a friendly sort. Welcome back!

Let me see. The Sea Islands. In the Fall! FASHIONGRANNY has had the privilege of living in the Lowcountry now for 8 years. Coming from Northern California, where Fall seasons were crisp and clean, you always knew what to wear. Our Fall is equally beautiful, but not so crisp. It could be hot, hotter, cold, or colder, and truly anymore, can you really count on the weather?

Here’s what FASHIONGRANNY would pack to spend a week on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina (coming from Columbus, Ohio), for you and your Husband... if he’s listening.

(Double, etc. the amount for each week)

First, travel light! A carry-on case or one checked bag each is all you need.

You:

Besides your essentials, bring...

2 bathing suits and cover-ups.

2 pair of shorts/Bermudas

2 pair cropped pants, Black and a solid color of your choice

1 cotton skirt

5 Tops

1 Black sweater

1 Dress

Your favorite hat

Sandals, Black patent Kitten-Heels, Athletic

Light Jewelry and Accessories

Red Tote umbrella

Him:

Besides your essentials, bring...

2 bathing trunks, (not Speedos)

2 pair shorts/Bermuda Khakis

1 pair Jeans

1 pair long pants

5 Polo's, assorted colors

1 laundered shirt

Your favorite hat

Sandals, Athletic, Loafers

Jacket or Blazer, Tie (yes! A tie sir!)

Black Tote umbrella

Now, I'm not telling you how to dress, but you did ask me for suggestions and I swear by my formula! It is easy and it always works if you work it. You will be ready for any occasions in my neck o' the woods looking clean and classy! There are so many places to shop while you are here; you can always pick something artistic up to compliment you as well.

FASHIONGRANNY has a small request for all the existing and future visitors to our Sea Islands. You all know that when it comes to Fashion, less is more; so Puleeze, when you do visit, just because you are on vacation, don't wear something here you wouldn't wear at home.

Do not wear anything that has a print of Turtles, Martinis or Flipper! The fact that we are a tropical locale, with indeed some of those species in evidence, does not mean you emblazon them on your clothing! Moreover, the martini glasses! Are we just a bunch of Early Bird Special Boozers? Enough already!

Men! That Jimmy Buffet “Wasted Away Again in Margaritaville” look? It’s horrible! I’m sorry, I couldn’t sugarcoat it; it’s beyond passé, it’s horrible. Ditch the Hawaiians, tuck something in, and get a haircut. This goes for our locals too!

Buckeye, I totally can understand why you choose the Lowcountry as a destination for vacating the seeming humdrum of hometown life. Besides the geographical ease in which to access, there is a peace here not found in too many places, well-traveled or not.

Enough said, Pink Porpoise print short shorts disrupt the fashion peace.

See you in the Fall!

Dear FASHIONGRANNY,

When am I too old to wear a Bikini? I am 63 now and recently my daughter called me to the side of the pool to ask me, more like plead with me, to “consider going forward, wearing a one piece bathing suit!”

Somewhere my little leftover ego was crushed; I felt it crumble inside my chest. Yet I heard her critique loud and clear!

So, before I go one-piece shopping, I wanted to hear what your thoughts were. Is there a Bikini cut-off age? Have I arrived?

Signed, Orchid

Dear Orchid!

Ouch! I’m sorry! I can tell you’re crushed! It’s a rude awakening, old age is, isn’t it?

Yes indeedy, a rude awakening!

Right away, I can tell you, at 63, you have arrived, and that the cut off date for women wearing Bikinis, Two-Piece bathing suits, or visiting a nude beach is 50! Fifty! Five-Zero!

This is my rule; I made this one up. It's FASHIONGRANNYS rule exclusively. Blame me. I've chosen this age as I just plainly like the number. It represents half of a hundred, a milestone of sorts.

My vanity would not have allowed me to even entertain the notion that I didn't still look athletic and youthfully fit in a bikini at 50, because my mind was still active and artistic. I could twist my little eye up into a "soft focus" lens, looking – to me – like I did in junior high. I wish someone had told me about myself!

It is a good thing your daughter told you. She obviously cares. You could have become a laughing stock or worse. An old lady in a Bikini! If you think about it, that's an oxymoron. Old

Lady and Bikini are at the opposite ends of the beauty spectrum, no?

The fact that you “heard her loud and clear” tells me that she told you the truth! Just go with the flow. Be glad you got a head’s up!

Fifty years old is also, “half a century” old. When you put it that way, you know it’s time to cover up, not remove clothing! Remember, age is tricky! You probably looked great in a two-piece at forty-nine.

Go buy an elegant, solid color one piece. Now there’s your beauty ticket! Go to the light! The light! Go toward the light!

This fashion warning is for men too! Please, no Speedos. No wild Board shorts in glowworm colors please. “Either/Or” could be a serious violation of the “Ugly In Eye” rule, and we all know the penalty for that!

Marco Polo!

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