

Diverse Sources Inspire New Snowboard Outerwear

Apparel aims to please with double-duty performance, relaxed fit, and mild-to-wild style

When it comes to outerwear, the shred industry knows how to tap a broad array of inspiration. Outside of the SIA Snow Show—and perhaps a garage sale in the Pacific Northwest—where else would you find lumberjacks, vintage camping gear, gemstones, and animal skins brought together in a cohesive manner? With these disparate influences, brands are crafting collections built for exploring the backcountry and the streets.

One of the biggest trends shaping outerwear is rooted in cuts rather than colors. Although brands are offering a range of silhouettes, the resulting garments tend to emphasize relaxed, slim fits. As **Burton** Chief Creative Officer **Greg Dacyshyn** explains, “In general, the 2014 collection is longer, leaner, and cleaner.” In addition to looking good, these longer jackets provide additional protection from the elements. And although pants continue to focus on slim fits, they also aim to maximize mobility.

The renewed focus on fit is especially evident in women’s outerwear. As **The North Face** Product Director for Action Sports **Jasmin Ghaffarian** asserts, “Women’s fit is the most important trend to be looked at.” Brands are developing a range of signature cuts, each ergonomically shaped with features like curved hems, darted knees, and contoured, adjustable waistbands. **Erin Height**, founder of **Anakie**, says, “Women’s outerwear is becoming sophisticated, and offering just a baggy or slim fit will not do anymore.”

Yet the inspiration for these cuts doesn’t always come from the runway. As more and more riders are venturing into the backcountry, “Fits are more relaxed, with a focus on articulation and movement when riding or bootpacking,” explains **Patagonia** Business Unit Director for Snowsports **Tyler LaMotte**. Brands are tapping into technical fabrics that stretch and offer enhanced temperature control, especially breathability. They are also carefully positioning pockets and vents to avoid interfering with packs.

Increasingly, riders are looking for apparel that can handle both handrails and barstools. Consequently, brands are applying waterproof treatments and technical fabrics to traditional streetwear like flannels, hoodies, and lightweight jackets. “Dual-purpose pieces are taking over the sales floor,” says **Volcom** North American Sales Director **Brad**

Alband. Regardless of the terrain they tackle, riders are searching for garments capable of pulling double duty.

Brands continue to find inspiration for their collections in workwear, woodsmen, and vintage outdoor equipment. With an emphasis on subtle style, the resulting outerwear tends to incorporate textured fabrics like denim, twill, tweed, and canvas. As **O’Neill** Product Manager **Juliet Korver** explains, “Texture and surface interest in fabrics have taken over.”

And despite having roots in the past, the resulting collections often provide “new takes on old-school styles,” according to **Westbeach** Head Designer **Laura Bentley**. At times, these new approaches fuse diverse aesthetics. For part of its men’s collection, says Dacyshyn, Burton will focus “on bright colors inspired by camping equipment from the 1970s, tempered with traditional workwear colors.” These contemporary approaches to the classics also tap into interesting accents like contrast yokes and piping, as well as knee and butt patches.

Perhaps to balance out these subtle flavors, brands are also infusing outerwear with powerful pop through the use of rich, saturated colors, simple prints, and color blocking. As Height of Anakie explains, “Bright, bold color blocking is here to stay, but we are seeing less fluorescent and a lot more jewel tones.” Plus, brace yourself for colors like purple, acid green, and chili red. Next season will also bring “the comeback of prints,” says **Jesse Grandkoski**, co-founder of **Airblaster**. “Simple, clean prints are bringing some new life to textiles.” These prints are often based around floral, ethnic, tie-dye, and fictitious animal patterns.

As **Bonfire** Design Director **Kate Darnall** sums up, there’s “a split in the appearance of outerwear—either it is wild style, brightly colored, and an obvious snowboard jacket, or it is understated and street-inspired.” Luckily, riders can drop in anywhere on this spectrum and find garments that will keep them warm, dry, and looking good.

— Michael Sudmeier

When it comes to outerwear, brands are focused on the fit. Expect jackets with longer cuts and pants with slim, relaxed fits.



▲ L1 Premium Skinny Denims



▲ Volcom Astrid Jacket and Hurricane Pant



▲ Airblaster Sassy L3 Pullover

Early-Season Sales

“Since we had a cooler fall in our area, I’ve seen a good amount of beanies, hoodies, and flannels moving better than they did a year ago.”

— Ben Olson, owner, Damage Boardshop, Duluth, Minn.

Looking Good

“The outdoor and woodsman look seems to be trending around here. We also have a strong demand for the collegiate and university look.”

— Phil Grisé, owner, Empire snowboard shops, Quebec

What to Watch at SIA

“Overall, I will be watching the strength of brands through demand and sell-through.”

— Dennis Nazari, owner, Salty Peaks snowboard shop, Salt Lake City