FREE TRAINING BOOK

Care of Luxury Dresses

Cleaning, storage and repair roads for fine dresses

Standing on the Training Centre of Calipride Nchang

cali.48hourrfprescue.com

About this book

Care of Luxury Dresses is a **free training book** — free to download, free to read, free to share. No charge stands on it, today or later.

A free training book from **48-Hour RFP Rescue** — standing on **Calipride Nchang's Training Centre**. It was written by the house as free teaching for everyone learning the trade of fine dresses; it is **not Calipride's own work**, and nothing in it claims to be. Where her boutique grows, her own lessons may one day stand beside these.

The teaching is general knowledge of the luxury dress trade, written plainly: what makes a dress fine, how to handle and present it, and how to keep it beautiful. Work through it in order and do the exercises — luxury is a standard your hands learn.

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Chapter 1 — Fine dresses die of small neglects

A luxury dress is rarely destroyed by disaster. She is destroyed by the perfume sprayed directly on silk, the wire hanger in a damp cupboard, the stain left 'until later', the hot iron's single second on acetate lining. Care of fine dresses is therefore mostly a list of small things done right — and this book is that list, for silk, satin and lace, with the honest roads for cleaning and repair when home care is not enough.

Chapter 2 — The enemies, named

- **Sunlight** — fades silk, yellows white lace and weakens fine fibres. Display and dry in shade.
- **Damp** — mildew spots silk and lace in weeks in a humid climate; musty cupboards are dress hospitals run badly.
- **Heat** — scorches silk, glazes and melts synthetics, sets stains permanently.
- **Roughness** — snags satin's floated threads and tears lace grounds: jewellery, rough hands, Velcro, unfiled nails.
- **Chemicals** — perfume, deodorant and hair spray sprayed onto silk stain it; acetone dissolves acetate; chlorine bleach destroys silk and wool outright.
- **Time on a stain** — the first hour decides most stains; 'later' is how they become permanent.

Chapter 3 — Cleaning: home roads and professional roads

Deciding the road

Read the label first. Then judge by fibre and construction: a simple silk or lace dress with sturdy seams may be hand-washed by the method below; a structured, beaded, multi-layered or tailored luxury dress belongs to a **professional cleaner who knows fine garments** — say so plainly to the customer, and if you recommend a cleaner, recommend one whose work you have seen. Sending a customer to the right cleaner is part of selling luxury; the dress you save returns wearing your name.

Hand-washing silk and lace, when the label allows

- Cool water, a little mild soap fully dissolved. Never hot, never bleach, never a harsh detergent.
- Lower the dress in whole; press the water through gently. Do not rub, twist or wring — lace grounds tear and silk creases set under violence.
- A final rinse with a spoon of white vinegar in the water helps clear soap from silk and refresh its glow.
- Lift with both hands supporting the full weight — wet lace is heavy and weak.
- Roll in a clean white towel to take the water; reshape; dry flat or padded, in shade with moving air. Never tumble, never sun.

Satin notes

Some satins water-spot: a dried droplet leaves a ring. If a satin dress must be washed, wash the whole garment evenly rather than spot-wetting one place, or take the professional road. Polyester satin is braver than silk satin in water but fears heat equally at the iron.

Chapter 4 — Pressing and steaming fine dresses

Steam is the fine dress's friend: a gentle steamer, held a hand's breadth away, relaxes creases from silk, satin and lace without contact. If you iron: silk cool-to-medium, on the inside or under a pressing cloth, moving steadily; satin on its back side under a cloth to protect the shine; lace under a cloth, never dragged. Acetate linings want the coolest iron of all — or none. When a dress carries beading, embroidery or glued detail, steam only, and keep steam off glued stones. Test every doubtful cloth on an inside seam first: five seconds of patience, or a scar for life — that is the exchange rate of pressing.

Chapter 5 — Storage worthy of the dress

- Store only a **clean and completely dry** dress. Invisible body oils yellow silk in storage; damp invites mildew.
- Hang structured dresses on **padded hangers**; fold heavy lace, beaded and knitted dresses flat with clean tissue in the folds, in a breathable cotton bag — never sealed plastic, which traps damp against the cloth.
- Keep white lace and pale silk away from dark cloth and from bare wood or cardboard, whose acids yellow them; tissue between neighbours.
- Air the storage place regularly; inspect in the rainy season; let each dress breathe out of its bag now and then.
- Moth protection for wool-blend and silk: clean cloth is the first defence; guards wrapped, never touching the dress directly.

For your stock, double every rule: your stored dresses are money asleep — wake them clean, aired and unharmed, or do not be surprised at the loss.

Chapter 6 — Repairs: what hands may do, and what they must not

Safe in skilled hands

- Re-sewing a seam in its original line, with matching fine thread and small stitches.
- Replacing hooks, eyes, press-studs and covered buttons (keep the originals you remove).
- Re-attaching a lace motif that has loosened, with fine, nearly invisible stitches following its own pattern.
- Taking up a hem in the original finish, after measuring with the occasion's shoes.

The professional roads

Send to a skilled tailor or specialist — and tell the customer why — when: lace is torn through its motif; silk has shattered along a fold (old silk sometimes splits like paper — no stitch resurrects it, and honesty requires saying the dress's life is ending); beading must move; a structured bodice needs refitting; a stain has defeated two gentle home attempts. A repair promised beyond skill ruins the dress *and* the name. The luxury trade's deepest rule stands in this chapter too: the honest limit, spoken early, is a service.

Exercises

- List the enemies of fine dresses from memory, with one example each from dresses you have seen.
- Hand-wash one delicate garment by Chapter 3, exactly, and note the time it truly takes.
- Steam one dress and press one inside seam — learn your iron's temper on the hidden cloth first.
- Prepare one dress for storage by Chapter 5, as if for a full rainy season.

Chapter 7 — The workbench: travelling, occasions and the care card

Travelling with a fine dress

Pack the dress inside out, with clean tissue in the folds and sleeves, in a breathable garment bag laid on top of everything else — never beneath shoes or bottles. On arrival, hang her at once in a steamy bathroom while you shower: the gentle steam relaxes travel creases without an iron's risk. For lace, tissue between the motifs keeps the journey from becoming a wrestling match with neighbouring clothes.

The day itself

Teach the customer the day's small laws: perfume and spray go on the skin and dry *before* the dress, never through it; jewellery goes on after dressing, so nothing snags on the way over the head; a dark shawl or wrap over the shoulders at table protects pale silk from the meal's enthusiasm; and if something spills — blot, do not rub, and remember Chapter 6's first hour.

The care card

Every luxury dress you sell should leave with a small card in the parcel, in your clearest words: what the dress is (fibre and weave), how she is cleaned (home road or professional road, named), how she is stored, and where to return for repair counsel. The card takes three minutes to write and works for years — it is found in drawers at the exact moment of need, carrying your boutique's name into the dress's whole life. Keep a model card for each cloth family — silk, satin, lace — and copy it faithfully.

Records of care

In your boutique book, note for each fine dress sold: the cloth, the date, the care card given. When a customer returns years later with the dress still beautiful, you are looking at your own teaching worn in public — greet it as the colleague it is.

Workbench exercise: write the three model care cards — silk, satin, lace — each under forty words, each complete.

Cali's free shelf is complete: *Fine Fabrics*, *Fit and Presentation*, and *Care of Luxury Dresses*. Keep them with the dresses; let them travel with every sale.