

# DESIGNER GEMS

Life is beautiful for these LAKE region fashion designers.

BY **ASHLEY BROWN**

## TIMELESS TREASURES

LAURIE WILDMAN / CHICAGO AND  
TRAVERSE CITY, MICH.

"I'm inspired by my own, vintage coat collection," says Wildman, who has been hoarding cool, old coats since college. Now this Traverse City designer

has brought her eye for the past to her own fashion line of chic coats and sexy Victorian blouses. As a Midwesterner, the 39-year-old knows that coats set the fashion tone in winter. "It's our first statement walking into a room," she says. Wildman's collection, which made a smashing debut at Chicago Fashion Week 2006, flaunts femininity with its exaggerated collars, belted

waists, scrunched sleeves and tailored-to-the-body Victorian fit. Fashionistas make a bold statement by pairing this romantic line with a dress and pumps or a cool pair of jeans.

**Hot Alert:** The Pelisse coat – a floor-length, angora and wool beauty (right) – is branded with the designer's trademark "L" and turquoise-silk lining. "It's so powerful," says Wildman, "you'll want to yank it out of the closet winter after winter."

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Photo by AMANDA TEMPLE



"There's nothing more sophisticated, seductive and elegant than a long, floor-sweeping coat on a woman."