

BY MARY JO MATSUMOTO



Here's the skinny on how to look and feel your best in a bathing suit — even if "skinny" is not a word that describes you.

Everything you ever wanted to know about buying a bathing suit *but were afraid to ask...*



Grin and pear it

If your hips are wider than your shoulders, you have a triangular shape — otherwise known as a "pear-shaped" body. Believe it or not, even thin and petite women can have this issue. You'll want to emphasize the upper portion of your body by wearing a brighter and lighter color or pattern up top and darker on the bottom if possible. Halter tops are a good choice because they'll give you a more balanced look. La Blanca V-Neck Halter Suit in sizes 6–16. \$90 at www.spiegel.com.



What to do about a tummy

A tankini is the kiss of death for anyone with a tummy issue. It might feel like it's giving you more coverage, but it actually squishes your belly out and draws attention to the one sliver of flesh that you'd most like to hide. (As a lifelong poochy-tummy battler, I can vouch for the truth in this!) If slimming your tummy is really an issue, find a one-piece that fits you like a dream and has some built-in tummy control. The Miraclesuit Twist-Front Maillot guarantees you will look 10 pounds thinner; Sizes 8–16. \$122 at www.spiegel.com.



More for less

Those lucky girls who are thin and worried about not having enough curves can go for prints, patterns, ruffles and bright colors. Union Square bikini by She She New York. \$90 for the set; more information at www.sheshenewyork.com.

* Do away with unwanted hair

Worried about unsightly bikini lines or any sensitive hair removal spots? Try Moom, a great product that is all natural, chemical free with the benefits of chamomile and lemon — putting you in harmony with nature, as well as with your skin. This product nourishes skin while removing unwanted hair. **\$19.95, www.moom.com**



SPEND MORE TIME AND MONEY

Don't grab the first thing that fits. Figure out before you hit the stores what your body type is, what your best assets are, and what you'd like to minimize. Then take into consideration what kind of cut and color will look best on you. Since 85 percent of all bathing suits never hit the water, invest in one that's going to make you look and feel great at any swank and swinging pool party.

