Style not size, the TikTok trend for body positivity – www.brut.media

Mercedes :I like to choose outfits that they say that bigger women shouldn't wear, you know, just to kind of prove a point, you know? They see that bigger woman shouldn't wear crop tops, but I'm going to get a crop top. They say bigger women shouldn't wear a bikini. I'm going to get this tiniest bikini I find and I'm going to put it on. [laughs]

Denise Mercedes and Maria Castellanos created the hashtag #StyleNotSize on TikTok.
It all began with this photo posted on Instagram in 2019.

Mercedes : I had came up with this idea of Maria and I taking a swimsuit photo together, being that she and I have the complete opposite body type. And I thought that it would be a really good visual representation for people to see. And a lot of people were just, you know, we received so many amazing feedback. And it was just for fun.

Maria : Yeah, it was just for fun.

Mercedes : At first it was just for fun, it was just like, hey, let's take a picture together wearing the same swimsuit.

Maria : And it's funny because I remember clearly that me being the like, the "ideal body type". I was just so like, insecure and I was like, No, I don't know, like, I don't wanna, you know, I was just feeling that way. And she, you know, being the plus-size model was like, "Girl, what are you talking about? Like, you know, we're all beautiful." So she actually inspired me, the "ideal body type" to, you know, wear a swimsuit and not feel embarrassed like at a public beach. Once TikTok came out, like the platform itself, then we started thinking that instead of just taking a flat picture, to take it a little bit more further, where people can see us move and stuff like that.

Mercedes : We weren't even wearing the same thing. We were just wearing the same style.

Maria : It was like a similar top, similar jeans

Mercedes : Right. And so we were kind of just like, you know, let's kind of do like a BFF look, but you know, we're different sizes and you know, whatever, let's just try to have some fun with TikTok and then it received 1.5 million views. And then the second time I said, "Okay, maybe let's actually take it to a whole other level, that's where the exact same thing, like literally"

Maria : Like earrings, everything!

Mercedes : Everything has to be the same and then that was our second video and that got 12 million views and then that's when we heard ...

Maria : That's when we started thinking like that this is actually something that people actually want to see.

Mercedes : Maria and I are very precise when we're picking out our looks because we feel like okay, so we need to try to have, we need to try to get something that goes up to, you know, a certain size.

Maria : All the sizes

Mercedes : All sizes so that everybody can shop to look.

Maria : Yeah, and that's something that, like, we're trying to see if we can achieve in the future. We're like all the brands can see #StyleNotSize and they can be like, "Oh my god, there's more women out there that have, like, different bodies." Yeah, so that you know, really good brands like Zara or like you know that you actually walk into a mall and you have the store there that they would have like all the sizes.

Mercedes : Maria and I are doing something positive. You know we're, we're just two friends that are showcasing two different body types and that's two different bodies, you know, me being plus size and her being, you know, a standard size, that we can both fill up really pretty in our own way. And so if we get criticism from that, I mean,

Maria : I feel like but I feel like we feed off of that bad criticism because we're like, "Oh, you shouldn't be wearing like this type of crop top," and then on the next video we wear the crop top like even smaller, and we're like "No!" . [laughs] So I feel like that negativity actually helps us like, see what people are actually thinking. And then we're like, "How do we how do we change that? How do we change it? How do we like approach it and turn it into a thing?"

Mercedes : You know, I feel like fashion plays a big part of me feeling confident because, you know, I wear a particular outfit and that often makes you feel amazing. And then you know you post a photo of you feeling amazing in an outfit and then you have all these people saying, "Oh my god, you look amazing and you're you're making me feel inspired, now I want to wear that." And it's like that and then that helps as well. So it's just like, it's so many things I feel like a lot of it has to do with women just supporting each other and uplifting each other.

Today, they have a message.

Maria : I feel like social media is like the biggest bully, the biggest bully like I spend countless hours on my phone just looking at these like amazing pictures and I'm just like, "Oh, why?" , but then I catch myself doing that and I'm like, I shouldn't be you know, judging myself. Like I should just be happy for these women that are doing amazing.

Mercedes : Definitely unfollow women who don't make you feel beautiful. You know, I was just following [inspiration] more inspirational women and more women who make you feel happy about yourself. That's the best thing to do [Definitely] and definitely not compare yourself to other women.

Maria : We all shine differently. And you know you shouldn't, you shouldn't be judging yourself for it.

Mercedes : And wear what you want.

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