

BY THE NUMBERS

A Hot Time To Celebrate Underwear

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The timing couldn't be more appropriate. An effort to make today National Underwear Day comes at a time when the stifling, sticky weather makes us wish we could go out wearing only our scanties. Donning layers of clothing during this summer of heat waves and humid clampdowns makes as much sense as a recall election with nearly 200 candidates.

Today, as temperatures are expected to reach 87 degrees and air is nice and sticky, 20 underwear models will be canvassing New York City hotspots asking for signatures on a petition to make Aug. 13 National Underwear Day. The models are being sponsored by Freshpair.com, a leading intimate apparel retailer interested in focusing attention on the importance of underwear. According to Freshpair.com, Americans spend more than \$12 billion a year on underwear. That's a lot of fresh pairs of boxers, briefs and panties.

Underwear has certainly grown up. Today, unmentionables are highly visible. A 10-story billboard of a Calvin Klein model in tight briefs or a Victoria's Secret angel spilling from her bra may turn heads but is hardly shocking in our culture, which has seen underwear becoming outerwear.

That's why the Freshpair.com models today will be wearing "seeables" (their name for underwear that begs to be seen, not hidden?) when they collect their petitions for National Underwear Day. Not in Gotham today? You, too, can sign the electronic petition on www.freshpair.com.

So excited is the retailer about promoting a day to celebrate our bras and boxers that it has compiled a list of statistics about underwear in our lives. Here's the skinny on skivvies and such:

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