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HD All the best for retail therapy

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COVER STORY

Leading Sydney fashion designers open their little black books and let GEORGINA SAFE in on their favourite places to shop.

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Shopping online has become such an integral part of our lives that it can be easy to forget the simple pleasure of a gentle perambulation down the pavement to a bricks-and-mortar boutique. Browsing eclectic stores in your neighbourhood is a lovely way to while away a wintry afternoon, perhaps stopping for cake and coffee or a cheeky glass of vino en route - and you're supporting local retailers.

For your shopping inspiration we asked Sydney's top fashion designers to open their little black books and reveal their secret spots for some retail therapy, ranging from much-loved old favourites to the hippest new hubs on the strip. Whether your passion is cooking, art and design, fashion or furniture, our insider guide is packed with unique destinations in which to find highly desirable items.

BIANCA SPENDER

I love the Sydney Antique Centre because it feels like a market without the wet-weather worries. From zinc-plated dining tables to old toys and trinkets, it's wonderful to uncover the past. Down the road on Reservoir Street [in Surry Hills], Published Art is a must. I can delve into books and am sure to discover an artist I have never heard of before, even if I only have five minutes. The owner hand-picks all the books and knows the story behind every inspiring creative mind; it reminds me of the world before online shopping.

A few doors down the road I window-shop at Hub, where I have found the best wooden blocks and crayons for my kids while looking longingly at furniture for my future home. Around the corner, the Fabric Store on Cooper Street has limitless fabric options to create my menswear label, exclusively for my partner, Sam! Chalk Horse gallery on William Street in Darlinghurst is great for a dynamic insight into what is going on in the Australian art scene, and I love the store at the Museum of Contemporary Art as well

DEBORAH SAMS AND MARY LOU RYAN

Bassike

Accoutrement in Mosman has been part of the Mosman village landscape for decades. Their cookware, particularly the selection of **copper** pots and Le Creuset, is fantastic. They also run some incredible cooking classes with the likes of Giovanni Pilu (of Pilu), Lorraine Godsmark (Lorraine's Patisserie), Ben Greeno (Momofuko) and Rodney Dunn (the Agrarian Kitchen).

Koskela in Rosebery is the ultimate hangout - the expansive showroom of furniture, the children's space, Kitchen by Mike for a bite to eat, rotating exhibitions and a homewares and book selection is a slice of retail paradise. La Banette is a French patisserie in the heart of Avalon village with the most incredible

creations to satisfy the sweetest of teeth. You'll always find a generous plateful of their signature pastries on our boardroom table during **company** meetings. Small Spaces in Redfern is a neat and nicely curated homewares and furniture store with a cool, classic vibe. We love the modern yet handcrafted aesthetic of the porcelain collection of Mud Australia in Woollahra. The brand also has a great approach to ethical practices and supporting the local industry, which resonates with our own business philosophy. Salt Meats Cheese in Alexandria is an amazing providore offering the yummiest of meats, cheeses, condiments and ingredients; and they make a mean hamper!

For clothing, Poepke in Paddington has Sydney's best selection of Dries Van Noten, and Harrold's at Westfield Sydney has a selection of Givenchy, Margiela, Comme des Garcons and Raf Simons that is always worth checking out. Their customer service is remarkable and something everyone should experience. Organic Avenues at Bilgola Plateau is a mecca for fresh organic produce. They source grass-fed beef and line-caught fish and are huge advocates for locally sourced produce.

JENNY KEE

For fashion I love Pretty Dog in Newtown because Tanya the owner has the best eye and she is a great supporter of Australian designers. You can find wonderful recycled designer clothing at Blue Spinach in Darlinghurst, and Cash Palace Emporium in Leichardt is the best for Indian cloth and clothes. The Museum of Contemporary Art store in The Rocks is a great place for gifts, and I also love Rox Jewellery and Dinosaur Designs in the Strand Arcade in the city. Harlequin Market in Double Bay is incredibly eclectic and has wonderful vintage Bakelite jewellery.

I do my book shopping at Kinokuniya in the city for art, design, architecture and fashion books, and I also love Gleebooks and the second-hand book section of Berkelouw in Paddington. Redeye Records in the city will find anything for you, because they have such great customer service. Chefs' Warehouse in Surry Hills has been an institution for all kinds of cooking equipment for more than 40 years, and for Asian cookware I explore Market City in **Chinatown**.

ANNA PLUNKETT AND LUKE SALES

Romance Was Born

We love Parlour X in Paddington. The owner, Eva Galambos, has a unique eye and buys well from the international collections, and [we] also love the more personalised shopping experience of trying on pieces in store and dressing up, rather than buying online.

Title for books and music in Surry Hills is relaxing to browse in and they have an interesting selection, so it's a good one for gifts, too. P.A.M. in Darlinghurst is super-chilled, they play good tunes and the clothes are awesome. The Chanel store is great to visit to see the new collections and pick up that irresistible piece every now and then. The shoes and accessories are also great to finish off a look.

The David Jones food hall is a nice change from a normal supermarket and it saves time because you can go to a few different specialty shops all under one roof. The lolly counter is a great place to pick up some treats if you are visiting a friend.

KYM ELLERY

Ellery

For skincare, it's hard to go past Aesop. The staff are super-knowledgeable about all skin types and I can always rely on them to help me find what I am looking for. Parlour X in Paddington is a one-stop shop for all of my favourite international designers such as Balenciaga, Comme des Garcons, Valentino and Azzedine Alaia. I always ensure to stop by before I go overseas for some inspiration and never leave empty-handed.

Mitchell Road Antique and Design Centre is a treasure trove for one-offs and special, antique pieces. When I'm looking for unique homewares I'll head here to pick up one-of-a-kind furniture, furnishings and homewares. Another personal favourite pop-in for homewares is Table Tonic in Avalon. This beachside boutique is filled to the brim with internationally sourced eclectic homewares. When I'm looking to add a burst of colour or texture to my home, I'll head here to pick up vibrant patterned textiles and soft furnishing. Close to home, Bassike Avalon is my one-stop-shop for luxury cotton basics and easy beach-ready separates.

JACQUELINE HUNT AND LISA DEMPSEY Jac + Jack

Shopping at the Strand Arcade is such a unique experience because of being in a heritage building with a modern offering. There's a mix of very interesting stores and services, from hat shops and shoe-shine to Haigh's chocolate and Dinosaur Designs.

Gould Street in Bondi Beach is an emerging shopping precinct with a very relaxed feel and shops including TUCHUZY and Mee and Moo, with some nice men's options, too. The Standard Store on Crown Street in Surry Hills has a good mix of men's and women's pieces, and MCM House and ici et la are just around the corner on Devonshire Street. Pond on Military Road in Mosman and duckeggBLUE in Balmain are also good for clothes, and Busatti in Double Bay has wonderful cashmere slippers.

DION LEE

Bondi Wholefoods is a regular stop for me because it has fresh, healthy and locally sourced produce - and a great espresso smoothie to start the day. Published Art in Surry Hills is an old favourite that has recently relocated to an even smaller, hard-to-find location. They have the best new-book releases covering art, design and architecture, and it's a great source of inspiration. Gould's Book Arcade in Newtown is an institution with the most incredible archive of used books that time forgot. I could spend hours in there. One Point Seven Four in Paddington is a perfect addition to Glenmore Road with a great selection of sun and optical lenses, both of which I'm always on the lookout for.

Feit in Surry Hills has minimal, handcrafted trainers designed by Australian brothers Tull and Josh Price. Their shoes are stocked at the likes of Dover Street Market overseas and can only be found in Sydney at this tiny flagship store in Darlinghurst. Tokyo Bike in Surry Hill is a little independent bicycle **company** originally founded in Yanaka, Tokyo, and the store is filled with urban bikes and bike toys. R. M. Williams in the city is an Australian classic with the best boots around, in my opinion; so much so that I used them for my New York Fashion Week show in February.

ALEXANDRA AND GENEVIEVE SMART Ginger & Smart

Our studio is in Rosebery and nearby is Black Star Pastry, which sells a selection of mouth-watering pastries, cakes and treats. Our favourite is the watermelon cake.

Published Art is an old favourite for inspiration from an amazing range of books and magazines from typography to art and architecture. We've spent many hours here noseying into all sorts of creative worlds. Ken from Seasonal Concepts has an amazing store for inspiration for store interiors and windows and other creative concepts. From flowers to taxidermy and furniture, he has a great eye for the unexpected. It's a little bit like Alice in Wonderland falling down a rabbit hole - you could get lost in his store for hours on end and leave laden with things you never knew existed.

For art, the Watters Gallery in East Sydney and Olsen Irwin Gallery in Paddington are always inspiring for their mix of contemporary artists and lively events. Collectika in Enmore is a treasure trove of beautiful vintage restored furniture and contemporary designs. We particularly love the mix of mid-century pieces.

LEONA EDMISTON

I love all the small independent stores in Paddington, Double Bay and Woollahra. Transvaal Avenue in Double Bay is where I go when I am looking for homewares, and I also love Harlequin Market nearby in Cross Street Arcade. Each piece in Harlequin Market is carefully selected by the owner and many are one-of-a-kind and cannot be found anywhere else. Queen Street is a mecca for the unique and unusual, from the Napoleon Perdis Life. Style store to the longstanding antique stores of Anne Schofield and Isherwood, where it is easy to lose yourself in the past on a lazy Sunday afternoon.

Lesley McKay's Bookshop is also a much-loved institution and a great place to pick up a little piece of history to take home at the end of the day. I also enjoy exploring the smaller boutiques and vintage stores on William Street in Paddington, where I can spend an entire day wandering around. When I need to recharge, I always pop into Alimentari, which is an authentic deli with delicious cheese and smallgoods.

BECKY COOPER AND BRIDGET YORSTON

Bec & Bridge

We are both a little obsessed with interiors and frequently end up shopping for our homes over our wardrobes. On the weekends you can find us at MCM House in Surry Hills - you could furnish your whole house from there! They also sell some great framed prints by local photographers, which are on our "to purchase" list.

Just around the corner in Surry Hills is ici et la - a treasure chest for all things chic and French. We also love Les Interieurs in Paddington; Pamela Makin sources gorgeous one-off pieces from around the globe. Not too far away in Alexandria, Matt Blatt is good for great-priced furniture and accent pieces. We also love everything at Country Trader in Danks Street in Waterloo, although a lot of the antique pieces are slightly out of our price range. But they do stock gorgeous cheese boards and other affordable accessories.

TOP OF THE SHOPS

Inner west

Gourmet goodies: Salt Meats Cheese, 41 Bourke Road, Alexandria; 9690 2406, saltmeatscheese.com.au

Have-to-have homewares: Koskela, 1/85 Dunning Avenue, Roseberry; 9280 0999, koskela.com.au

Edgy independent designers: Pretty Dog, 5 Brown Street, Newtown; 9519 7839, prettydog.com.au

Vintage finds: Mitchell Road Antique and Design Centre, 16 O'Riordan Street, Alexandria; 9698 0907, mitchellroad.wordpress.com

Covetable clothing: duckeggBLUE, 489 Darling Street, Balmain; duckeggblue.com.au, 9810 8855

Inner east

Treasure trove: Sydney Antique Centre (closing June 30), 531 South Dowling Street, Surry Hills; 9361 3244, sydantcent.com.au

A cook's delight: Chefs' Warehouse, 111-115 Albion Street, Surry Hills; 9211 4555, chefswarehouse.com.au

Super-cool specs: One Point Seven Four, 5 Glenmore Road, Paddington; 9357 7778, onepointsevenfour.com

Designer destination: Poepke, 47 William Street, Paddington; 9380 7611, poepke.com

Furnish your flat: Small Spaces, 674 Bourke Street, Redfern; 8399 3144,

small-spaces.com.au

North shore

Foodie heaven: Accoutrement, 611 Military Road, Mosman; 9969 4911, accoutrement.com.au

Beautiful basics: Bassike, 11-13 Macmillan Court, Avalon Parade, Avalon; 8457 6881, bassike.com

Sweet treats: La Banette, 28 Avalon Parade, Avalon; 9918 2948

Unique fashion and homewares: Pond, 583 Military Road, Mosman; 9960 3797,

pond-pond.com

Beef and fish: Organic Avenues, Shop 2/1 Bilambee Avenue, Bilgola; 8919 0279, organicavenues.com.au

Sydney CBD

Eclectic retail mix: The Strand Arcade, 412-414 George Street, city; 9232 4199, strandarcade.com.au

Best books: Kinokuniya, level 2, The Galeries, 500 George Street, city; 9262 7996, kinokuniya.com.au

Art and design overload: Museum of Contemporary Art store, 140 George Street, The Rocks; 9245 2458, store.mca.com.au

Asian cookware megamart: Market City, 9-13 Hay Street, Haymarket; 9288 8900, marketcity.com.au

Music experts: Red Eye Records, 143 York Street, city; 9267 7440, redeye.com.au

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