

GLOBAL SHOPPING

At a moment of worldwide retail uncertainty, designers and brands are reinventing the ways they connect with consumers

It's not just shopping, it's an experience



The 'hangout' is now as important as what is hanging on the racks

BY ARIEL FOXMAN

In 2018, as many as 12,000 stores are expected to close in the United States, according to Cushman & Wakefield, a commercial real estate firm. Nine thousand storefronts shut down last year.

Yet despite this very real reckoning, countless retailers are not only surviving, but also thriving.

The secret to their adaptive success? Almost anything, it seems, that keeps shoppers on their toes is viable. That includes exclusive merchandise (will this location carry that handbag?), pop-up shops (will this store be here next week?) and experiences (can I eat or drink or post as well as shop?).

Innovations that offer intrigue, if not necessarily inspiration, seem to be winning.

Samantha David, chief operating officer of WS Development, one of the largest retail development firms in the country, has spent the last two years directing the Lazarus-esque revitalization of Palm Beach's Royal Poinciana Plaza. The area was once a destination as prestigious as Palm Beach's Worth Avenue, but it had lost much of its retail glory by the 1990s.

The project — which reopened in 2016 — is now one of four properties in WS Development's Up Markets division that focuses on premier retail opportunities. It features 50 boutiques, including new Hermès and Saint Laurent outposts.

Despite her company's sizable Palm Beach investment, she says she is aware of the crucial retail challenge ahead of her: getting people offline and into her Plaza's boutiques.

"Gone are the days of shopping by necessity, as much of that can be satisfied online," said Ms. David, the daughter of the fashion designer Lisa Perry and the former hedge-fund manager Richard Perry, who also has a majority stake in Barneys. "Today, shopping has to be a part of how I want to spend my day, spend my time, in all aspects."

To get consumers spending their days at Royal Poinciana Plaza, Up Markets is pairing carefully curated retail with a robust schedule of on-site lifestyle programming like the "Backgammon and Bubbles" series (rosé bubbly for adults, a bubbles bar for the children) and the "Wee Royals" arts and culture activities for children.

Indeed, it would appear that the "hangout" is now as important as what is hanging on the racks.

Prabal Gurung, a Nepalese-American fashion designer, a favorite of celebrities like Priyanka Chopra and Kerry Washington, would agree. As he prepares for

his label's 10th anniversary next year, Mr. Gurung has decided that this is the year to debut his first stand-alone store.

He said his just-opened boutique on Bleecker Street in Manhattan's West Village is "not the typical retail space where you just sell clothes." Rather, the store is focused primarily on telling (and experiencing) stories — of the designer's American dream come true, or the story behind the craftsmanship of handmade merchandise. Mr. Gurung intends to host a rotation of live events.

"We are opening our doors to the next generation to come in and experience that luxury doesn't have to be cold and distant," he said.

At the same time, Mr. Gurung has been chosen to be the creative director of "Love, Bleecker," a joint project from Skylight, a fashion event venue development firm, and Brookfield Properties to reimagine beloved but bruised Bleecker Street, a totem of the past decade's retail boom and bust.

"My dream for Bleecker Street is that every store should have a back story that can excite," Mr. Gurung said. Under his recommendation, the "Love, Bleecker" collective showcases small-batch retail shops such as the floral atelier Fleurortica and Bonberi, a vegan and wellness bodega.

While eyes are always on the bottom line, brands like those from the designer Tory Burch are extending the definition of their stores beyond merely pushing new arrivals. Ms. Burch, who has over 100 namesake stores from Azerbaijan to Qatar, said that she wanted her customers to go into one of her stores "and feel like they are going into a home. Where they could hang out, have a drink, have their husband sit on a couch and it would be kid-friendly."

And this season is now inviting those lounging in her Meatpacking District outpost to get hands-on with her other passion, the Tory Burch Foundation, which has given more than \$40 million to causes supporting women entrepreneurs since 2009, including an education fellowship program partnership with Goldman Sachs. "Now that we have had real impact and scale, I am excited to bring it into the store," she said.

Efforts like Ms. Burch's reflect the changing nature — and increasing sophistication — of shoppers.

"Gone are the days when stores told the customers what they were going to buy," said Robert Burke, chairman and chief executive of Robert Burke Associates, a fashion consulting firm with clients like Chloé and Vera Wang. "The customer is now highly educated about the brands. The customer drives the experience and that experience is not entirely transactional."

That sort of hands-on trial activation can be as literal as Canada Goose's Cold Room at the brand's new flagship at the Mall at Short Hills in New Jersey, where customers can try on coats at temperatures as low as minus 13 degrees Fahr-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIEL DOBBS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

enheit. Additional Cold Rooms are set to open in Vancouver and Montreal, where customers could presumably just head outside to check on the efficiency of their purchase.

Other activations are a bit more grand. This September, Matchesfashion.com, an English on- and offline fashion multi-brand store, introduced its retail residence: 5 Carlos Place. The five-story by-appointment "home" in London's Mayfair allows not only for private on-demand shopping and weekly product curation, but also for entire floors of entertainment. A schedule of panels,

podcasts, master classes, dinner parties and performances is available on the Matches site.

One of the pioneers of the "retail residence" is Ralph Lauren, whose first flagship opened in the 1980s on the corner of 72nd Street and Madison Avenue, in a former French Renaissance revival mansion. Rather than gutting the space, Mr. Lauren embraced, renovated and decorated it — turning it into a destination whose value transcended the clothes inside. The store is still referred to by the company and fashion experts as "the Mansion."

"Ever since Ralph Lauren opened his first store, or shop in shop, he never really thought of retail as just his opportunity to sell clothes," said David Lauren, the designer's middle child and the company's executive vice president of global advertising, marketing and communications. "What he did on Madison Avenue was create a home. You would move through it, sit down and enjoy a coffee or a glass of Champagne."

During its 50 years, the brand has earned a reputation as an early adopter when it comes to technology: embracing everything from online customization to virtual reality and artificial intelligence. That is why it is rather quaint to learn that one of its most successful retail initiatives is Ralph Lauren coffee.

This fall, the brand reintroduced its coffee pop-ups around New York City and it counts the stand-alone Ralph's Coffee in Hong Kong's Harbour City and Ralph's Coffee & Bar in London as bona fide hits. "It's another way to experience the brand," Mr. Lauren said.

Joel Isaacs, whose New York-based Isaacs and Company is a go-to real estate firm for luxury retail clients including Prada, Marc Jacobs and Jil Sander, said that all of the retailers he was talking to now were considering ways to incorporate events and some sort of food and beverage component.

Mr. Isaacs recently worked with the Texas-based fashion boutique Forty Five Ten as it looked for its first New York space. The shop had one caveat: "We did the deal with them at Hudson Yards, and they specifically chose the fifth floor of the project because on the fifth floor you'll have four restaurants and they wanted to be in proximity to food."

Menu or no menu, retailers want you to pull up a chair — or enjoy a performance — and ideally stick around and actually buy something. Even if that means the chairs themselves.

Mr. Gurung said he wanted to be able to highlight the furniture in his store. "We are teaming up with an interior designer," he said. "If someone wants to buy that, they can."

Jumping in
Prabal Gurung, a Nepalese-American fashion designer, far left, debuted his first stand-alone store this year in Manhattan as he prepared for his label's 10th anniversary. It has hand-embroidered T-shirts, above left, and jewelry made by women in Nepal, bottom left.



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TOM JAMBON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Taking a break
Ralph's Coffee & Bar at the Ralph Lauren store on Regent Street in London.

GLOBAL SHOPPING

A keen eye for vintage Brussels bounty

BRUSSELS

Belgium's cross-cultural capital offers a trove of flea-market treasures

BY GINANNE BROWNELL MITIC

Ask many people what comes to mind when they think of Brussels, and chances are they'll say the European Union, NATO, wonderful chocolate shops and arguably the world's best moules et frites. But when Olga Polizzi, deputy chairwoman and director of design at the Rocco Forte Hotels, thinks of the Belgian capital, she thinks of great antiques.

Ms. Polizzi has traveled to the city many times for shopping trips to pick up unique pieces for the hotel group's global properties, including the Hotel Amigo in Brussels. She said the neighborhood of Sablon was the best place to start shopping.

"When I need something for a suite or some bits and pieces of something different, the Sablon is amazing with one little shop after the other with lovely things," she said, adding that because the city is such a geographical and political crossroads, it's a great place to find antiques from all over Europe, Africa and Asia.

"It is that much cheaper than anywhere else in Europe; you can find from the very old to the 1940s and 1950s," she said. "I have found some really good pieces in the past, and there is a bit of everything."

Fans of antiquing are spoiled for choice in Brussels, where French art nouveau, midcentury furniture, ornate chandeliers, Central and West African tribal masks, mirrors, lighting and objects d'art are easily accessible. One of Ms. Polizzi's first stops is Michel Lambrecht, who not only has his main store right in the heart of Sablon, but also an

unmarked shop hidden down a cobblestone alley about 1,000 feet away.

At the main store, look for reupholstered armchairs, side tables and clock lighting, while the other shop is filled with early 20th-century stuffed animal toys, large classic dark-oak dressers and Indian foot stools. Mr. Lambrecht specializes in what he calls "antiques engineering," meaning he recovers and repurposes items like a dark-oak chest that he has bleached and then painted with an imitation marble top, or sections of an old painted banister transformed into chic chumps and sconces.

"I like simple things that have been used all the time, curiosities," he said, as he drew me a map of a few of the streets to hit in Sablon. "Maybe I am collecting too much so I am opening a new warehouse next year."

My next stop was to Alain Naoum Antique African Art, a by-appointment dealer, which has been selling Central and West African tribal art pieces for over two decades. Partially because of Belgium's history as a colonial power in Central Africa, Brussels has some rare examples of 19th- and 20th-century masks and carvings. The city also has experts who have spent years collecting and researching the meanings and symbolism of the pieces they sell.

Mr. Naoum, a self-described autodidact in his field, explained the carved 19th-century antelope from Mali that was worn as a head adornment during ceremonies and was priced at 45,000 euros, or about \$50,000. Mr. Naoum also offered a smaller 19th-century carved piece in human form with dozens of raised wooden bumps made by the Songye people of what is now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo and meant to ward off smallpox; he was selling it for €30,000.

My interest in African tribal art led me to Patric Claes (93, rue des Minimes; no website), and as I wandered in, Mr. Claes — whose son Didier also runs an eponymous gallery focused on Central African antiques not far away — was meeting with a professor of African art



history from Ohio State University. Mr. Claes had some intriguing pieces, including a black-and-white mbanga (sickness) mask made by the Pende tribe in Congo from the mid-20th century that, with its twisted eyes and lips, depicted a scarred epileptic.

For a completely different aesthetic, I ventured to Chimara, which specializes in 19th-century Vienna bronzes. Their bright objets d'art included two 18th-century wooden-lacquered jewelry boxes from Antwerp that had ivory, Japanese mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell inlay (the bigger one was going for €17,000). I then headed to Via Antica (40, rue Blaes) in the Marolles neighborhood, which houses more than 30 dealers focusing on furniture, lighting and design from the mid- to late 20th century. A pair of Maison Charles brass and bronze corncob lamps from the 1960s that were made in France caught my eye, as did a rather funky stuffed walleye.

Though I had missed the Sablon An-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY COLIN DELBOSSE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

tique Market — it's open only on weekends — I did get a chance to check out Place du feu de Balie Flea Market (no website), which is also in Marolles. Like most flea markets, you have to dig around to find the good stuff. But a few stalls were carrying a handful of pretty, if not necessarily valuable, sets of china along with some quirky figurines.

I suspect that from now on when I think of Brussels I will, like Ms. Polizzi, focus first on antiques before chocolates and bureaucracy.

Something old

The Sablon neighborhood of Brussels, above, is noted for its antiques. One of the shops there is Michel Lambrecht, left and top.

On Bali, varied and vibrant retail



Accessories A clutch, bracelets and cuffs from Namu's collection.

Centuries of craftsmanship meet small-shop flexibility

BY MARK ELLWOOD

Balinese style has been the inspiration for hundreds of coffee table books, thousands of interior design projects and untold numbers of tourist treasure hunts. Now the island has become a hotbed for sophisticated, small-scale international artisans with Balinese-inflected designs and outside visions — and all because of a lucky combination of economics and aesthetics.

The jewelry designer Guy Bedarida calls Bali the ideal back end for any entrepreneur aiming to start a new line. Mr. Bedarida, who worked with the jewelry legend John Hardy, co-owns and runs design for Marina B, and lives part time in Bali.

He explains that because of globalization, factories have proliferated there, as in much of the rest of Asia. But Bali's workshops differ from China's megafactories. While mainland producers will insist on minimum orders that could run into thousands of pieces, Balinese manufacturers will still agree to batches as small as a dozen or less.

"It's the mentality of Bali — nothing is gigantic," Mr. Bedarida said. Smaller runs require smaller financial outlays, enabling smaller, boutique brands to thrive. It's even economically viable for some firms to operate their own standalone workshops, so custom orders are

simpler and affordable to produce. No wonder, then, that Mr. Bedarida manufactures many of Marina B's trickiest custom jewelry pieces there.

Just as important as the flexibility of production is Bali's centuries-old tradition of craftsmanship. The island is renowned for producing beautiful objects since the era (beginning about 1,000 years ago) when it was divided into eight tiny kingdoms, each of whose rulers demanded more sumptuous and elaborate tributes than the other.

"After generations and generations of manufacturing beautiful things, the Balinese have the hands of gods," Mr. Bedarida said. "They can do anything." It results in an irresistible proposition: small workshops filled with highly skilled locals who can produce artisanal quality goods at remarkably low prices.

Like Mr. Bedarida, whose family is from Tuscany, many of the incoming entrepreneurs are Italian. The Genoa-born Paolo Zancanaro spent 15 years working in Europe and Asia for brands like Westwood, Armani and Prada before finally opening her own boutique, Namu, inside an airy white-washed Javanese joglo, or house. Ms. Zancanaro learned to design and sew from her grandmother, and her designs draw inspiration from nature — namu is Korean for tree. She has earned particular accolades for her locally sourced accessories made from the opalescent stingray skin, shagreen.

"The skin we use is hand-pierced directly from Indonesian fishermen, who would ordinarily dispose of it after preparing the meat for sale at local markets," Ms. Zancanaro explained. Namu also stocks a capsule assortment of other local

brands, like the wood- and shell-based accessories from the Cameroonian designer Christian Graciell along with the contemporary batik linens by Quartus.

Then there's Biasa, run by Susanna Perini, with seven stores in Bali and Jakarta. Its Bali flagship in bustling Kuta is an explosion of color, the clothes both boxy and feminine, while two doors down there's Biasa+, a sprawling concept store-like setup showcasing the capsule men's wear collection, jewelry, housewares and a gallery, ArtSpace. Ms. Perini, who was born in Rome, has streamlined her aesthetic over almost 25 years of living in Bali — biasa means ordinary in Indonesian — and she is keen to stress the deliberate lack of showiness of the clothes she produces in Biasa's 300-person factory in Bali.

"Bali allows for a less regimented, more lighthearted and natural approach," Ms. Perini said. "We can explore techniques and break boundaries, and produce small numbers of the most complex pieces made with a lot of hand work."

Magali Pascal, a Parisian, started her fashion line in Bali after visiting on vacation in 2001 and vowing to move to the island full time. Heavy on lace, silks and layers, it has a Stevie Nicks in Tahiti vibe; the fall/winter collection, Une Femme, channels the French New Wave. She now owns and runs four stores there as well as a satellite shop in Sydney, Australia.

It isn't just Europeans who are developing retail concepts in Bali. Local entrepreneurs have also started successful lines. At his store, Johnny Ramli specializes in accessories with a relaxed, rock-star-ish edge that made Brad Pitt a fan. Think oversized, aged-pregg exactly, and long slim chains with quirky pendants (once, inspired by a visit to the dentist, he fashioned a jagged tooth).

My inspiration comes from what I see around me in Bali," Mr. Ramli said. "It's a good place to have a small workshop for high-end products."

Nihul Djelantik, a cobbler, agrees. Her flagship boutique stands out on the congested streets of Seminyak, Bali's upscale beach resort. It is splashed with a 12-foot-high silhouette of a giant red stiletto. Such showy signage is a tip-off to the glamorous shoes inside. Except for an over-stuffed golden sofa, the entire store is painted charcoal, an ideal backdrop to showcase her glittery, ornate designs; both Uma Thurman and Gisele Bündchen are fans. Every shoe is made on the island in Ms. Djelantik's own 15,000-square-foot, 28-person workshop; her staff takes such pride in craftsmanship that one cobbler is notorious for noting and recording exactly which pair of shoes he makes. Another bonus of craftsmen on call, Bali-style: Most shoes are repaired for free, including new leathers, as many times as a customer needs it, and bespoke styles can easily be produced per a customer's specifications.

Not a bad stop for vacation shopping.

Ceramics for collecting



NATURALE MARQUEZ COURTESY

Candy colors

Mugs with colorful glazes from Laura Magahy's four-year-old Arran Street East studio, on Little Green Street in Dublin.

Handcrafted pottery from Ireland makes for pretty, practical keepsakes

BY KERRY HANNON

You may not think you can capture the wind, the sea and the stark raw beauty of a mystical land with a chunk of clay and glaze. But you can. Just ask an Irish potter.

When I travel to Ireland, I can't resist picking up a piece of local pottery to bring home with me. I'm not alone. "There's a buzz about Irish ceramics; it has that link to nature," said Karen Hennessy, chief executive of the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland. "They're made from a place of practicality to be used as household pieces, not just to put on a shelf to adorn."

To map your own Irish pottery trail, or window shop online, visit the ceramics section of Design Ireland, a website created by the council. There is also a shopping site, which showcases ceramists from other Irish artisans from wood carvers to weavers). Meanwhile, the

Ceramics and shopping sites and online maps can help you create your own Irish pottery trail.

Irish Craft Studio Experience provides a map of studios open to visitors, craft galleries and retail shops.

Once in Ireland, I like to visit Nicholas Mosse's pottery shop and studio tucked alongside the River Nore in Bennettsbridge in County Kilkenny. For more than four decades, Mr. Mosse himself has produced pottery from within a restored mill that dates from 1503. His wife, Susan, an American botanical artist, designs a new pattern, in simple spongeware style, each year. Mr. Mosse and his team then transmute her delicate designs into hand-painted pieces via a 20-step process. A handcrafted jug might sell for 47 euros (about \$54) and a large rectangle plate decorated with sage-green clovers for €52.

Judy Greene opened her workshop on

Kirwans Lane in Galway in 1982 with a focus on hand-thrown terra-cotta clay evoking the wild Connemara terrain just north of town. Her collections range from dinnerware to flower pots. A seven-inch bluebell-pattern vase might sell for around €50.

A favorite stop for a bowl of steaming homemade soup and a keepsake is Louisa Mulcahy. The cafe and pottery studio is nestled along a steep cliffside on the twisty, 30-mile coastal Sea Head Drive in County Kerry near the town of Dingle. Mr. Mulcahy has made his own glazes and thrown pottery for nearly 50 years; his 10-inch-wide denim-hued bowl is a favorite.

Although these potteries are well established, there is a rising tide of Irish ceramists exploring new shapes and techniques from Dublin to Dingle to Donegal. In Dublin, visit Laura Magahy's four-year-old Arran Street East studio, on Little Green Street. Ms. Magahy's shapely hand-thrown goods glow with glaze palettes named after the various fruit and vegetables sold wholesale at the produce market that is its home. There are sturdy jugs made of stoneware in a glaze "inspired" by a pink grapefruit or pomegranate, or simple bowls in a bright lemon-hued glaze — to name a few of the myriad colors available.

Ruth Power named her three-year-old Dublin-based pottery business, Danu Ceramics, after the ancient Celtic goddess of earth and creativity. Her handiwork is available online, but is also sold at several Dublin shops, including the Kilkenny Shop, Jam Art Factory and the Arnotts department store. Tiny dipping bowls glazed in indigo and adorned with hand-painted 22-karat gold luster sell for around €15. Her rustic Turquoise Planters glazed in a dappled copper patina are priced at €28.

Also in Dublin is the Irish Design Shop at 41 Drury Street, which features some of Ireland's hottest crafters including Rebecca Killen, who is known for her handmade ceramic milk bottles painted in white and cobalt with hints of gold luster that evoke the antique bottles she has collected over the years.

Discerning shoppers with bigger budgets should consider the clay-based objects d'art at SO Fine Art Editions in the Powerscourt Townhouse Center, Beyond Dublin, Mill Cove Galleries specializes in Irish ceramics, operating a gallery in Kenmare and another on the Beara Peninsula with four acres of sculpture gardens.

For serious collectors who might not make it to Ireland, the Portfolio website spotlights more than 140 Irish artists, including ceramists such as Graime Watts, Adam Frew, Alison Kay and Mike Byrne. The site also provides detailed information about where to track down their one-of-a-kind artworks, which can run from €100 to more than €1,000.

"The lovely thing about buying Irish ceramics is there is a piece for every pocket," Ms. Hennessy said.

Preserving history in the face of change

LISBON

Lisbon works to save the old, distinctive stores that help make the city special

BY TRISH LORENZ

With its cobbled lanes, vintage trams and ancient castle, Lisbon oozes history. Its shops, too, offer a glimpse back in time. According to the city council, Lisbon has at least 50 stores that have been serving customers for a century or more. From the same venue for more than 100 years, stores that were open and trading when horses were more common than cars and electric lighting was still a new-fangled concept.

Among the oldest is the candle shop *Caza das Velas Loreto*, which opened in 1789. It's a tiny affair, just a bit over 43 square feet, with colorful candles displayed in dark wood cabinets. Alongside regular local patrons, the shop has a growing British, French and American clientele. Margarida Sa Pereira has been working at the store for 30 years. The staff of five makes "95 percent of the candles here," she said.

The longevity of *Caza das Velas* belies the fact that Lisbon's retail landscape has changed drastically in the last five years. The global financial crisis left deep scars in Portugal: Almost 5 percent of the population, more than 485,000 people, left the country between 2011 and 2014. This was followed by a tsunami of tourism: a 168 percent increase from 2010 to 2016. Tourism has fueled international property speculation, leading to skyrocketing rents, and many stores — particularly those serving the local market — are struggling or have closed.

Catarina Portas is the founder of *A Vida Portuguesa*, a small chain selling traditional Portuguese products, such as handwoven rugs, decorative ceramics and handmade notebooks. "You find these same stores in every city around the world and it's not interesting," Ms. Portas said. "Our small historic stores are unique, they are part of Lisbon's charm, so in 2016 we started lobbying the local council to do something to help them to keep trading."

In response, the council began *Lojas com História* (Shops With History), which identifies culturally significant stores and offers them both protection from eviction and access to a city council fund to assist with maintenance and restoration.

The program covers about 90 stores, including the hat maker *Chapelarias Azevedo Rua*, which has been trading for 132 years and is run by Pedro Fonseca, the great-great-grandson of the founder. The store overflows with hats, including regional Portuguese styles, bowlers and a wide selection of Panamas. "Panamas are our best-selling range," said an assistant. "We don't sell many women's hats anymore because women also prefer the men's styles."

The glove maker *Luvária Ulisses* opened in 1925. Protected by the program, this 21-square-foot shop attracts customers from as far afield as Japan and the United States, who wait patiently in the street for their turn at the



counter. The store is renowned for its bespoke glove-making service: You can choose between modern or classic styles and customize elements such as the lining (cashmere is worth the investment) or by adding contrast stitching.

Another shop committed to traditional tailoring is the shoe store *Sapataria do Carmo*. Founded in 1904, the store's leather shoes are entirely handmade in Portugal and the fitting service is pleasingly traditional, too: As in the annual school shoe fittings of childhood, staff members take their time ensuring a perfect fit in both width and length.

An unexpected consequence of the *Lojas com História* program has been a resurgence of interest in Portuguese

tradition among young entrepreneurs. The grocery and wine store *Prado Mercaria* opened in March. On a recent morning, the store manager, Carlos Duarte, was chatting with a regular customer who popped in to ask a favor — could he leave his house keys at the store so a plumber could pick them up later? — and a local farmer, Adolfo Henriques, was delivering a box of freshly picked figs, so ripe that drops of honey-like nectar were oozing from them.

"Gentrification is a double-edged sword," Mr. Duarte said. "It's great that people are investing in the city and repairing buildings, but a lot of local shops have disappeared forever."

Companhia Portuguesa do Chá is in a

former shoe shop in the Santos district, and its vintage fittings have been restored and repurposed to hold bespoke tea blends. Standouts include a special Lisbon breakfast mix of Azores White and Ceylon teas along with an Earl Gray made with bergamot from rural Portugal. *Burel Mountain Originals* uses locally sourced, traditionally woven burel wool and works with emerging designers to create shoes, boots, throws and bags. At *Cortico & Netos* you'll find a large selection of colorful 20th-century Portuguese *azulejos* (tiles) salvaged from former manufacturers. Buy just one as a memento or by the meter for a distinctive interior project.

The Portuguese soap brand *Claus*



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIEL RODRIGUES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Porto has operated since 1887 but opened its first store in Lisbon only in 2016 in Chiado. On the ground floor, you'll find hand-wrapped soaps, perfumes and scented candles; downstairs hosts the men's grooming range *Musco Euro* and a classic barber shop: Spend 50 euros and receive a free hot shave from a master barber, Salvador Rodrigues.

The hourlong experience can be the perfect way to end a long shopping day. "I don't talk when I'm shaving, I don't want to disturb the person's relaxation," Mr. Rodrigues says. "Normally when the hot towel goes on, guys lie back and turn off and they only snap out of it when I apply the cold towel 45 minutes later."

Bountiful
Clockwise from top left: *Caza das Velas Loreto*, which has sold candles since 1789; Panama hats at *Chapelarias Azevedo Rua*; the grocery and wine store *Prado Mercaria*; soaps at *Claus Porto*; and bespoke tea blends at *Companhia Portuguesa do Chá*.

Tradition and innovation in the South

Growing populations and thriving businesses give boutiques a reason to stay

BY ELIZABETH HUTCHISON

In Nashville, everyone in line behind you at *Hattie B's*, famous for its "hot chicken," will tell you about the "100 people" who are moving to town every day. On the South Carolina coast, Charleston locals praise the bustling Boeing airplane plant and the new Volvo auto factory as proof of the city's vitality. And once-sleepy Savannah, Ga., now owns the title of fastest-growing city in the Peach State. With an influx of newcomers, design-minded businesses are staying put in the South instead of decamping to New York or Los Angeles.

CHARLESTON, S.C.

"We have one shot to create a great experience — to introduce the customer to a place that's like nowhere else," said Kathleen Hay Hagood, who together with her sister, Mariana Hay, is helping to shepherd the family's 111-year-old Charleston jewelry store, *Croghan's Jewel Box*, into the 21st century. Mariana now designs two in-house lines — the *Goldbug Collection* and a new floral series, *Bloom Where You're Planted*.

The nearby boutique *Ibu* is like wandering into a bright Moroccan souk or a Mexican mercado. The actress Ali MacGraw is an ambassador for the brand, which sells clothing and home goods made by women in more than 30 developing nations, providing them with a platform for economic self-sufficiency.

On Cannon Street, Charleston's new creative corridor, duck under the candy-striped awning at the postage-stamp-size stationer *Mac and Murphy* for dreamy paper goods, or pop into *J. Stark*, the leatherworker Erik Holmberg's workshop and showroom to pick up weekenders, backpacks and totes in rusty earth tones.

Also on Cannon is *Indigo and Cotton*, where the owner, Brett Carron, dresses Charleston's cool kids with his offering of independent American men's brands such as *Raleigh Denim* and *Shuron* eyewear. "There is the real opportunity to grow here; to try something new," said Carron. "It's exciting to see a student-preneur like Fritz Porter in the revamped Cigar Factory on East Bay Street. The interiors emporium (possibly Charleston's prettiest shop) stocks fabric by the yard, lighting, custom furniture and rugs."

SAVANNAH, GA.

Just over 100 miles south, there's new energy in the languid Savannah air. And it's impossible to talk about this change without mentioning the Savannah College of Art and Design, or SCAD. The powerhouse art school alumni are filling city storefronts with world-class boutiques, showrooms and studios. To get a small taste of the talent the school is turning out, visit *ShopSCAD* on Bull Street, where colorful cubist-inspired, block-print silk scarves are just a sampling of the student- and alumni-created offerings.

When the Elizabeth Seeger Jolly, a leatherworker whose sleek python clutches and tasseled bucket bags used to occupy shell space at *ShopSCAD*, left school, she didn't go far. *Satchel*, her studio and showroom, is just a few blocks



down Bull Street.

Try not to get lost in the labyrinth-like confines of the beloved *Paris Market and Brocante*. Part *Old World* department store, part Southern-accented European flea market, the deceptively well-edited shop is stuffed to its Victorian-era rafters with everything from sturdy kitchen gear to French-milled soaps. If you're searching for a slice of John Berendt's *Savannah*, it's still here, at *Alex Raskin Antiques*, chockablock with secretaries, chests and sideboards.

NASHVILLE

The bulk of Nashville's most interesting retailers are cropping up in the neighborhoods ringing downtown, but *Keep*



PHOTOGRAPHS BY REBECCA WOOD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Shop, a tiny boutique in the bottom of the new *Noelle* hotel, is a sign of good things to come for downtown. Opened by the Tennessee native *Libby Calloway*, a former *New York Post* fashion editor, the gallery-like shop specializes in exclusive collaborations with Nashville designers such as the handbag maker *Ceri Hoover* (A *Keep Shop* sister store opened this month in Savannah).

Across the Cumberland River in East Nashville, the country artist *Nikki Lane* chooses the wide range of heritage pieces at *High Class Hillbilly*; the singer-songwriter's shop is famous for its vintage denim. At *Lemon Laine*, wellness and natural beauty shop, you can rent out the in-house "oil bar" to create

customized, professional-level facial oils. In historic Germantown, visit *Josh and Ivy Elrod's* breezy home goods outpost *Wilder* for watercolor-patterned textiles and geometric wallpaper.

North Nashville, near Germantown, is undergoing a creative awakening with a wave of small businesses anchored around *Buchanan Street*. The designers at *Nisolo* are reimagining Nashville's boot-making tradition with their line of ethically made, classic-meets-contemporary shoes and sides produced with responsibly sourced leather. Next door, at *Emil Erwin*, *Emil Congdon* constructs stylish, sturdy leather bags that have drawn the attention of major retailers like *J. Crew*.

GLOBAL SHOPPING

Rooftop gardens add new shopping discoveries

PARIS

Organic retail farming is popping up in cities around the world

BY DOREEN CARVAJAL

It's a swift ride by elevator from Galeries Lafayette's perfume section to the grand department store's 10th-floor luxury farm with its signature scent of sage, rosemary and compost.

The rooftop garden, lush with climbing plants, tomatoes, marigolds and strawberries, is part of a plan to transform city farming into a deluxe shopping attraction for customers yearning for an exclusive green refuge — and perhaps a taste of beer brewed from the store's homegrown hops.

For now, only select customers can experience this haute farm on the Right Bank with weekly reserved tours. Eventually, Galeries Lafayette intends to expand to other roof sections to host larger events and fashion shows among leafy, vertical walls of plants with a panoramic view of the Eiffel Tower and the city's opera house.

This concept of organic retail farming is cropping up in other major cities — in a proposed Melbourne shopping development in Australia and Designoff Center, a Tel Aviv mall. In France, the trend is accelerating with support from the city government, which started a 2016 campaign, *Particuliers*, with the goal of covering city rooftops and walls with almost 250 acres of vegetation by 2020.

"It's a new model for consumers," said Damien Pellé, director of corporate social responsibility for Galeries Lafayette, which started its garden three years ago. "The grand department stores want to offer an exceptional experience, to give people new discoveries. It's easy for people to order something to buy from their couch, but they can come here and visit an enchanted garden."

The store's hometown rival, Le Bon Marché, has also developed a private



DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

community rooftop garden for its employees. But Galeries Lafayette is hosting a working farm with more than 18,000 plants that has its own label, Farmhouse, for products from herb crackers and strawberry nougats to sage-flavored vodka.

The garden also supplies delicate aromatic plants to more than 80 chefs in Paris who seek exclusive, hard-to-find varieties of herbs.

It is raising an even bigger urban farm on the rooftop of another department store, BHV in the Marais district near Paris City Hall. The garden, installed last year at a cost of more than \$300,000, also is on limited display with regular tours organized through Airbnb.

Galeries Lafayette has sought to experiment with new gardening techniques in partnership with a pioneering urban agricultural start-up, *Sous les Fraises* or Under the Strawberries, which developed and maintains the rooftops. The immense garden is equipped with automatic watering tubes controlled remotely by computer and scaffolding draped with blankets of sheep's wool and hemp.

Seeds and plants are stuffed into the pockets of the thick fabric and nourished with compost juice. The result is a sunlit, green labyrinth of walls divided by narrow, wood passageways.

"It's really a productive site," said Yohan Hubert, chief executive of *Sous les Fraises*, who pointed out two active beehives that have thrived in the garden. "We harvest almost every day."

For jaded Parisian inhabitants, there is something magical and primeval about retreating to the silence of a tran-

quil rooftop garden. Other agricultural start-ups are emerging, such as *Topager* or *Peas and Love*, with another business model to create community gardens that are tended by professional gardeners and rented to clients who harvest their own fresh produce.

"It's incredible to be on the rooftop," said Pascal Barbot, a chef who has toured the BHV farm. "It's unbelievable, the quantity of vegetables and plants they can produce in that space. It's sunny and very hot, and there are birds and bees and insects. You can feel that nature is present."

Mr. Barbot presides over *Astrance*, a celebrated Parisian restaurant with three Michelin stars that serves dishes spiced with rooftop herbs or made with Galeries Lafayette's edible flowers. He said that he was initially worried

about whether city pollution could affect the harvest. It is a concern addressed by the agricultural start-ups, which make the case that the rainwater is the same that falls in country fields and that university tests show the worst urban pollution is concentrated around tunnels and high traffic areas, far from the rooftops.

In the end, Mr. Barbot decided that a rooftop garden was the best place to obtain unique sage varieties grown rapidly to his specifications or rare, edible yellow day lilies that remain fresh for one day. The question of cost is not critical to the chef whose changing, daily dinner menu starts at almost \$300.

"Is a garden like this good for health? Is it good for the environment? Is it good for the generations to come?" he said. "Those are the questions I pose."

A garden's view
Oeta Dancu, 24, a gardener, works at the Galeries Lafayette department store rooftop in Paris.

Global cool in Tel Aviv



Best face forward
In Jaffa's historic flea market, SAGA sells African-inspired laser-cut masks made by a local design label, Umasqu. SAGA focuses on design items made in Israel.

Shopping in the Israeli city is a mash-up of local crafts and exotic imports

BY REBECCA STADLEN AMIR

Tel Aviv's melting pot of cultures, cuisines and traditions has created a local shopping scene filled with unexpected discoveries.

Independent designers and shop owners curate unique treasures from both the Middle East and the world alongside local Israeli designs. And just like the country's growing food culture, the result is an innovative mash-up of Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and European influences.

Located near the Jaffa hotel in the ancient district of the same name, *Rezort* is for shoppers looking for the cultural experience of a "shuk" (a traditional Israeli market) without the traditional haggling. *Rezort* stocks one-of-a-kind furniture, rugs, art and jewelry from Morocco, Uzbekistan, Tunisia and Turkey.

Serving as "a platform for independent designers and artisans all over the world" is the brand's mission, says the founder Barak Nachmani, though *Rezort* also showcases a range of local talent. *Rezort's* "Blue and White Label" collection is 100 percent Israeli-made and includes small runs of handcrafted furniture and accessories from young Tel Aviv designers such as Leelou Home and DJ Darya.

A short stroll away in Jaffa's historic flea market is the gallery-meets-retail space SAGA, which focuses on Israeli de-

sign pieces. On one wall are funky, African-inspired laser-cut masks shaped by the local label Umasqu (738 shekels, about \$200). The newest additions to the mask collection are an evil eye, hamsa and fish, all symbols with protective powers in Moroccan culture. SAGA also recently added charcoal black ceramic espresso cups by a local artisan, Odaka.

North of Jaffa is Tel Aviv's Neve Tzedek neighborhood, one of the city's oldest quarters. Popular with Europeans, Neve Tzedek features stylish cafes and restaurants, along with world-class gelato at Anita on Shabazi Street. Just across the road is Agas and Tamar, an Israeli jeweler known for designs like delicate handcrafted pendant necklaces featuring ancient coins and gold rings made with antique Afghan gemstones (from 2,900 shekels).

While many local designers are influenced by Israel's Middle Eastern and North African roots, Tel Aviv is experiencing a wave of Francophilia.

Israeli Abou's by-appointment boutique, for instance, is set in an apartment building on a Neve Tzedek side street and sells an expertly curated selection of high-end men's wear and home accessories from French brands like Homecore, Anatomica, Astier de Villatte and La Boite Concept. You can also find original workwear pieces starting around 600 shekels for shirts — along with a small "guest house" operated by the owners a short stroll away.

When she's not in Paris presenting her collection, Maya Reik, creative director and designer behind *Marei 1998*, takes customers by appointment in her studio down in the Jaffa Port. Stepping into the space is like entering another era, with antique furniture and rows of silk dresses (from 1,450 shekels) and faux fur-trimmed robe coats.

In the heart of Tel Aviv's Bauhaus-filled "White City" close to two of the city's most luxurious boutique properties, the Hotel Montefiore and the Norman, there's *TRES*, home to the T-shirt that's become Tel Aviv's unofficial "cool girl" souvenir. Printed with Mediterranean-inspired patterns and catchphrases in French like "Le Club Tel Aviv" and "La Mer," the shirts (150 shekels) were born of the notion that Tel Aviv could one day become a "Riviera-esque" resort destination like St-Tropez or Nice.

For Mediterranean-inspired men's goods, head to *Barberia*, a hipster barber shop selling grooming products from the husband-and-husband design duo behind *Maaplilm*. The brand, which recently arrived in the United States at Neiman Marcus, creates handcrafted soaps, lotions and bath products using natural ingredients from the Mediterranean Sea. Their *All Purpose Oil* contains jojoba oil from Israel, sweet almond oil from Italy, and Scotch pine oil from France.