

Retail REVIVAL

From exquisite, one-off boutiques to the internationally renowned names of fashion and design, Paris lives up to its reputation as a paradise for shoppers. **Amanda MacKenzie** gives you a low-down of some of the hottest, new shopping pleasures that await you in the City of Light.

BARBARA BUI

35 rue de Grenelle (7th) 01.45.44.85.14

Barbara Bui exploded onto the Paris fashion scene in 1988 when she opened her first store on rue Etienne Marcel in 1988. Since then, her city-savvy, seductive styling has gone from strength to strength. Last year saw a new boutique devoted to luxury accessories open in the heart of St Germain des Prés. Not for the bashful, Bui's summer collection features gladiator sandals with ankle-caressing straps and vertiginous heels. You'll also find chic snakeskin flats and leather peep toes in a choice of high-octane colours and gold. Bui does pastels, too - but always with attitude, like her sexy, lace-up boots, one of summer's must-haves. Don't forget to check out the bags, too. Side by side with the popular Portobello, the original "BB" has been restyled for the first time since it made its first appearance.



Barbara Bui's "not for the bashful" boutique

BLUMARINE

56 ave Montaigne (8th) 01.45.61.33.22

There's something faintly nostalgic about the Italian fashion house's new Paris flagship, which opened its doors in the Golden Triangle last October. Perhaps it's the petal-pink, bevelled glass that is such a feature of the boutique's airy décor. Or perhaps it's the floaty lines and delicious colours of this year's summer offerings. Anna Molinari's playful, sexy, ultra-feminine designs retail in Saks Fifth Avenue, Milan and beyond, but it's only here in Paris that you can savour the whole Blumarine collection, taking you from day to evening. Be tempted by sensuous fabrics, strappy, "gem"-encrusted sandals, belts and bags. And don't be surprised to find to see life seems a little more rose-tinted when you leave.



Audemars Piguet's St Honoré boutique

AUDEMARS PIGUET

380 rue St Honoré (1st) 01.40.20.45.45

It was in 1875 when two brilliant young men first joined their talents to manufacture complex timepieces in the village of Le Brassus in the Swiss Jura. Ever since then, the family-owned company has continued to build its reputation on a blend of cutting-edge innovation and traditional values. In December last year, the firm finally unveiled its first exclusive Paris boutique. For the man who has everything, the Royal Oak Offshore St-Honoré is an obvious choice; this steel chronograph watch is one of a limited edition of 100 produced to commemorate the store's inauguration. Alternatively, let the attentive, multi-lingual staff help you choose from Audemars Piguet's full collection. With classic and contemporary men and women's watches, plus a range of superbly crafted diamond jewellery, you're sure to find something to make you tick.

HEIMSTONE

23 rue du Cherche Midi (6th) 01.45.49.11.73

You won't miss Heimstone. With its mushroom-coloured, wrought iron façade, it's one of the prettiest boutiques on the street. How appropriate, then, that it's a temple to the little (though not necessarily black) dress. Behind this up-and-coming niche label are Delphine Delafon and Alix Petit, two young designers who met while working at Michel Klein. Their collaboration brings an unexpectedly rock 'n' roll twist to the short frock. In silk, satin, jersey and more, the diminutive dresses are joined by sundry other essentials, such as cute, leather jackets, punky belts and retro, knitted gilets. Though Heimstone's creators admit they originally conceived their designs for women in their 20s and early 30s, their gamine formula is already proving to have far wider appeal.



Heimstone's signature looks

AUDEMARS PIGUET PHOTO © JOERG LEHMANN

KENZO

3 place des Victoires (1st) 01.40.39.72.03
27 blvd de la Madeleine (8th) 01.42.61.04.14

Much change is afoot in the Kingdom of Kenzo. First came the unveiling of a new emblematic new image at the label's much-enlarged flagship at Place des Victoires. Dazzling stucco peonies grace the walls; daylight streams in from the bay windows onto a dark antique parquet inlaid with brass. Kenzo's artistic director,



Kenzo's Place des Victoires boutique

Antonio Barras conceived this dreamy backdrop to let the bold, butterfly colours in his collection speak for themselves. Last September, it was the turn of the bustling Madeleine store to get the full treatment. With men's and women's ready-to-wear displayed expansively on a thicket of flexible hangers, you can inspect the impeccable cut and drape from every angle, before heading upstairs to feast your eyes on the latest adorables from Kenzo Kids. Finally, this month sees the re-opening of Kenzo's spacious store at 60 rue de Rennes (01.45.44.27.88), dedicating some 2600 square feet entirely to you, ladies.



KIPLING

Level 2, Centre Commercial Les 4 Temps, La Défense 01.47.76.11.71

A few minutes' ride west on Métro line 1 or RER A, the business district of La Défense has just gotten even better for shopping with the arrival of

Kipling on the scene. Named after Rudyard (of Mogli and Baloo fame), the much-loved Belgian luggage retailer offers a satisfying range of needful objects, from keyrings and umbrellas, to purses, handbags and suitcases. It's still more reassuring to know this bright, new, 860 square feet store stocks a rainbow of fashion colours and styles, including the latest, relaxed vintage leather line. After all, it's a jungle out there.

NORIE

374 rue Saint-Honoré (1st) 01.42.96.46.30

Step beyond the black wooden doorway, and the play of light and colour, the contemporary (raw granite flooring) and the traditional



The tranquil and refined Noriem concept store

(tatami mats) instantly sets the tone. Tranquil, refined and ever so slightly enigmatic, Noriem is the new concept store of Senso Unico, the company founded by Norihisa Matsuo in 1994. Among the store's several distinct fashion lines, the sophisticated micro-pleated dresses verge on the sculptural. You'll also discover casual cotton ensembles, funky, felted stoles and contemporary enamel jewellery that are as striking as Haiku. Gently resonating to a soundtrack all of its own, the store showcases precious handcrafted objects such as traditional gold leaf ceramic vases. Impeccable Japanese service completes the sensory experience.

ESPACE ROLEX

56 rue de Rennes (6th) 01.53.63.00.50

Walls of Florida leather, sycamore furniture and green marble from Guatemala. The new boutique's contemporary styling isn't just a mere matter of elegance; it also conjures up the signature colours



Espace Rolex, Europe's first boutique exclusively dedicated to the iconic luxury brand

of the celebrated Swiss timepiece. Located a stroll away from the church of St Germain des Prés, the two-floor Espace Rolex is the first boutique in Europe exclusively dedicated to the iconic luxury brand. The Oyster with its chic new dials will have purists swooning, while the latest GMTII model in yellow gold set with diamonds and sapphires speaks for itself. Together with the Daytona, Explorer, Submariner, it all adds up to Rolex heaven, for both him and her. [W](#)

THE EYES HAVE IT

ALAIN MIKLI SHOP

4 rue Bachaumont (2nd) 01.44.82.08.42

At first glance, the dark, wood-framed photo gallery at the back of the boutique looks like a line-up of celebrities. In fact, it's a random sample of Alain Mikli's customers. Added proof, should you happen to need any, that everyone gets the star treatment when they visit this chic eye apparel emporium. Located just off the trendy rue Montorgueil, the boutique is coming up to its third year but with its combination of seductive styles, innovative technology and superb craftsmanship, it more than merits a place on our 'hot' list. For a sophisticated, urban statement, frame up in swirls of red, grey and yellow, or please your Inner Power-Dresser with the latest funky checkerboard designs, recalling the 1980s. A fabulous range of models from the Alain Mikli, Mikli and Starck Eyes brands ensures you'll clap eyes on something that reflects your own, individual style.



Try the 80s-inspired new designs for size