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# BEST GLOBAL BOUTIQUES

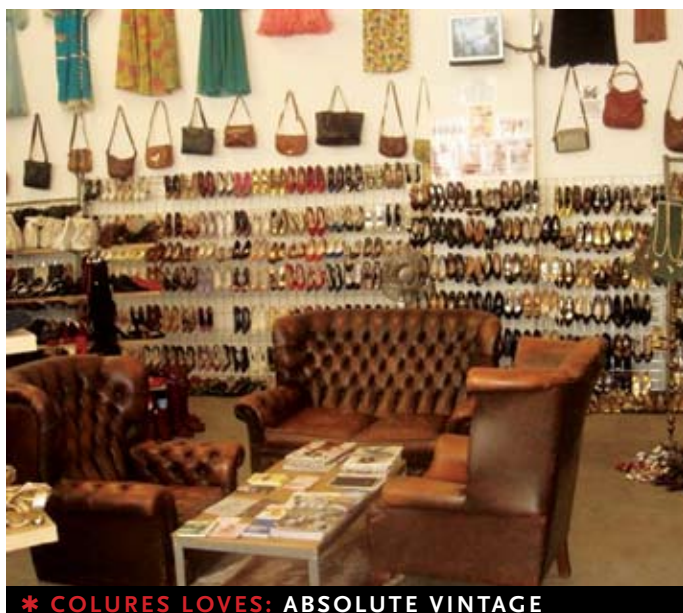
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OUR GUIDE TO THE COOLEST BOUTIQUES AROUND THE GLOBE

– COMPILED BY MB AKINYEMI –

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\* COLURES LOVES: ABSOLUTE VINTAGE

## ABSOLUTE VINTAGE

Remember the sheer excitement on your first visit to a large toy store as a child, and you might understand the reverie that one of the largest and hippest vintage stores in London evokes. A feast for the eyes, a collection of eye-catching vintage bags, belts, dresses, sunglasses and jewellery, sourced from Canada and Europe, are creatively spread around a capacious one-storey warehouse. Look down and peep-toe shoes in neon colours, frilly cowboy boots in distressed leather and stiletto heels from the days of disco, sex, love and rock n' roll hurdle around in coteries on the floor, not too far from where funky travel and work bags from the likes of Adidas stand armed to vie for your attention. Cast your eyes a little higher and an array of colourful leather bags, clutches and the like adorn the walls where

glass cases holding the funkiest sunglasses and jewellery lie. Gentlemen are not left out of the fun either, with a trendy collection of trench coats, vintage jeans and sturdy leather shoes to choose from. But for those who would rather relax while their girlfriends shop, there are cozy leather chairs in the centre of the shop facing a table with stacks of the latest fashion and lifestyle magazines. The store boasts a legion of celebrity fans that include the likes of funkadelic musician Kelis, and has won a number of awards and accolades including *Instyle Magazine's Best Vintage Shop in London 2008 Award*.

15 Hanbury St, Spitalfields,  
London, E1 6QR  
+44 (0)207 247 3883  
Mon - Sat 12pm - 7pm, &  
Sun 11am - 7pm  
[www.absolutevintage.co.uk](http://www.absolutevintage.co.uk)

## KAIGHT

Unfortunately many people still associate Green fashion with boring, washed out designs for hemp-smoking, organic food-eating, tie-dye loving hippies. But this is very far from the truth as Kate McGregory, owner of New York's trendy eco-boutique, Kaight, has shown. With its range of fun, trendy and versatile clothing and accessories from the hottest up-and-coming green designers in the UK and US, the store shows that being a socially responsible consumer does not have to mean a sloppy dresser. Labels available in the leavy and inviting store include footwear by the British brand Beyond Skin's Sui Generis who use no animal products, and Stewart

+ Brown who utilise only organic cotton with many designs made from Mongolian cashmere.

83 Orchard Street  
New York, NY 10006  
+1 212 680 5630  
Mon-Sat 11 am-8 pm; Sun 11  
am-6 pm  
[www.kaightnyc.com](http://www.kaightnyc.com)



## KOH SAMUI

Take a pinch of luxury, add a dose of femininity and sprinkle a little, no make that a spoonful of beauty and you have got the cutting-edge, eclectic and dreamy Covent Garden boutique Koh Samui. Stocking old school stalwarts such as

Chloe, Marc by Marc Jacobs, Dries van Noten, Balenciaga and Missoni in inspiring and dreamlike interiors, the store also provides talented new designers with a platform to showcase their wares. Set up in 1994 by Paul Sexton and Talita Zoë, the store's vintage collection is culled from around the world and includes gems for the 20's, 30's and 40's. Aside from the wonderfully diverse collection and interiors, another major unique selling point is the store's staff, who are helpful and well-informed about the shop.

65-67 Monmouth St  
London, WC2H 9DG  
+44 (0) 20 72404280  
Mon & Sat 10am-6.30pm; Tue,  
Wed & Fri 10.30am-6.30pm; Thu;  
10.30am-7pm; Sun 11.30am-6pm.



## LE GALLINELLE

It's no wonder that Italians are hailed as style icons the world over with a store like this. The quaint small boutique in Rome's bohemian Monti district, Le Gallinelle, does what fashion should when at its best: seamlessly combine the charm of the old with the mystery of the new. Stocking vintage- think old-school psychedelic Pucci dresses and majestic Yves Saint Laurent gowns- with new clothing and accessories. Owner-designer Vilma Silvestri and her daughter Giorgia are known for their classic linen suits and their one-off numbers from vintage materials - in an electric, welcoming and magical manner that lives up to its name- Italian for hens. Le Gallinelle makes reference to a Greek legend where seven sisters were turned into doves and then stars that now wonder the galaxy in a formation that resembles a hen.

*Le Gallinelle*

*Via del Boschetto 76, Monti  
+39 06 488 1017*

*Mon 4pm-8pm; Tue-Sat 10am-  
1.30pm. Closed 3wks Aug.  
www.legallinelle.it*



## THE DRESSING ROOM

There aren't many boutiques where you can rummage through a selection of vintage and designer duds, bob along with the hottest DJs in town, enjoy a cocktail or two, browse the internet for free, cozy up to a movie, or get the latest fashion news from the trendiest fashion zines..... Needless to say, the Dressing Room is not your ordinary garden-variety shopping emporium.

The brainchild of stylist and designer Nikki Fontanella, the Lower East Side boutique-cum-bar is spread out over two floors, where the upper level holds the causally quirky cocktail lounge and boutique area. The lounge, with a dark oak bar and banquettes lit with antique chandeliers and vintage mirrors, hosts many fun non-fashion related events including movie screenings and the like. Push through a cloudy glass parting made from reconstructed doors and the boutique area with its ornamental iron counter, spotlights and light wooden floors awaits you. Courtesy of up-and-coming designers, rotation of names change every four months.



Down a flight of stairs, a paradise for vintage lovers awaits: beautiful vintage dresses, accessories in soft leather, funky shoes...the list goes on. Sewing machines and cutting tables in plain view provide an authentic feel. And should you ever feel the need to purge your wardrobe of ghosts of fashion seasons past then The Dressing Room will be more than willing to help, as they buy and trade clothing and accessories, from, to, and with the public, on a walk-in basis.

*75a Orchard Street  
New York, NY 10002, USA  
+1 212-966-7330  
Sun, Tue, Wed 1pm-12am;  
Thu-Sat 1pm-2am  
www.thedressingroomnyc.com*

## BALENCIAGA

When in Paris there is a list of things a girl should try and make time for: taking in some art at the Louvre, enjoying a cup of coffee at a charming patisserie, followed by perhaps a little flirting with the handsome waiter and, of course, SHOPPING! As it is Paris, there are many quaint boutiques to choose from .... But one which makes our hearts flutter beyond belief is undoubtedly the Balenciaga Boutique. In the Champs-Elysées district of Paris, the store offers a gateway into another world. On this planet natural stones, artificial lava and an array of exotic plants adorn the grounds where women in futuristic asymmetric bobs fit right at home. The exquisite store reflects the Balenciaga image championed by Nicolas Ghesquière since 1996; from the tiles to the store's curved design, exotic plants, and beautiful clothes.

*Balenciaga*

*10 avenue George V  
75008 Paris*

*France*

*Tel : 33 1 47 20 21 11*

*Fax : 33 1 47 20 33 41*

