



Le shopping à Paris

From designer sunglasses to bespoke perfumes, **ALICE WASLEY** discovers where locals shop in the French capital.

PHOTOGRAPHY HUGO CLAIR TORREGROSA (SHAKESPEARE AND COMPANY) & MYR MURATET (GALERIES LAFAYETTE).



Parisians care about the details. This means when you buy almost anything in Paris, from a pastry to a new handbag, there are plenty of opinions about whether it's a good purchase and why. Make no mistake: shopping here is a serious pursuit. This isn't an exhaustive guide to shopping in Paris, merely somewhere to start before you, hopefully, fall down the rabbit hole.

THE REIGN OF THE DEPARTMENT STORE

To quote the renowned shopaholic Dylan Thomas, Parisian department stores will not go gentle into that good night. Instead, they're flourishing, and hark back to a golden age of shopping.

Galleries Lafayette in the 9th arrondissement is famous for its spectacular 1912 Art Nouveau glass dome. Along with an extensive range of products to browse, there's always something happening. Book into a macaron-making workshop, a guided shopping experience, or head up to the rooftop terrace to restaurant Balcon, which opened in May. Chef Julien Sebbag's menu is inspired by the neighbourhood bistros, but, unlike most of those, Balcon comes with a side of panoramic views from the Eiffel Tower to Montmartre.

Not to be outdone, Le Bon Marché on the Left Bank is one of the oldest department stores in the world – founded in the 1850s. Elegant and understated, it's

known for its range of high-end fashion and the legendary food hall La Grande Epicerie de Paris.

A personal styling session in the luxurious private apartments of the Samaritaine (owned by LVMH) in the 1st arrondissement saves time – just not money. There's also Printemps in the 9th arrondissement with its 1920s stained-glass dome and BHV Marais, known for its homewares and DIY products.

For an edgier vibe, hit the streets of Haut Marais. There, you'll find constantly changing pop-ups, rather than the flagship-flecked South Marais. The three-storey Merci concept store is a wonderland of curated homewares, fashion, beauty and furniture. (Merci #2 just opened up, across town near the Louvre.)

Nearby – and also hot right now – is the Ukrainian-run Items, with its focus on emerging international designers. A great place to get out of any fashion rut.

HAUTE HOPPING

As the home of haute couture, Paris is fashion. Of course, these days you can shop the big French houses from the comfort of your home, but there's nothing like a visit to a flagship store to immerse yourself in the lore of an iconic brand.

Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel's carefully preserved 31 Rue Cambon apartment sits above the Chanel boutique and



Clockwise from top left: Landline's shopfront and owner Caroline Morrison; ceramic egg cups and bowls at Landline; La Galerie Dior's exhibition features a scenographic narrative of the house. Opposite: couture at La Galerie Dior's exhibition. PREVIOUS PAGES Left: floor-to-ceiling bookshelves at Shakespeare and Company's reading library. Right: Galeries Lafayette's exquisite glass dome.



haute couture salons. Though, it's sadly not open to the public (you can see images of the interior online), its existence qualifies a visit to the boutique as a pilgrimage, adding meaning and a sense of occasion to your purchase of an iconic quilted leather Classic 11.12 handbag.

Dior's haute couture collections have been created at the 30 Avenue Montaigne flagship since Christian Dior's revolutionary 1947 debut, New Look. Originally built in 1865 by Count Walewski – Napoleon I's son – as a *hôtel particulier*, or urban mansion, the home of Dior is set on more than 10,000 square metres. Here you can explore every facet of the brand, past and present. In June, La Galerie Dior launched an exhibition of 150 creations (from the founding couturier and each of his successors, up to and including today's Jonathan Anderson) alongside original sketches, archival documents and photographs. There's also Restaurant Monsieur Dior, a pâtisserie and a café. So, if you decide not to pull the trigger on a pair of sequined trousers, you can always channel Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and window-shop, croissant in hand.

At the Art Deco Louis Vuitton flagship on the Champs-Élysées, you can have your LV leather goods personalised with its hot stamping service. Online chatter suggests (though LV hasn't officially confirmed) that if

you're lucky, the highly sought after, exclusive to Paris, Louis Vuitton Eiffel Tower motif might be available. Meanwhile, across town near Pont Neuf, *LV Dream* is an immersive exhibition of more than 300 heritage objects and rare archives illustrating the house's ties to the Art Deco movement. There's also a café, chocolaterie and a gift store selling collectible objects.

For keen (and stylish) equestrians, Hermès is a must-visit. In 1880 Charles-Émile Hermès moved his father's harness-making workshop to 24 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré and opened a store where these were made to measure, adding saddles to the offering. To this day, the workshop remains part of the Hermès flagship and you can purchase a saddle crafted over 30 hours by a single artisan, each of which has been numbered since 1900. Part of the service requires a Hermès saddle expert to measure the rider while seated on their horse, so logistics could be an issue for travellers. A bridle or riding helmet might be more feasible, when visiting from Australia.

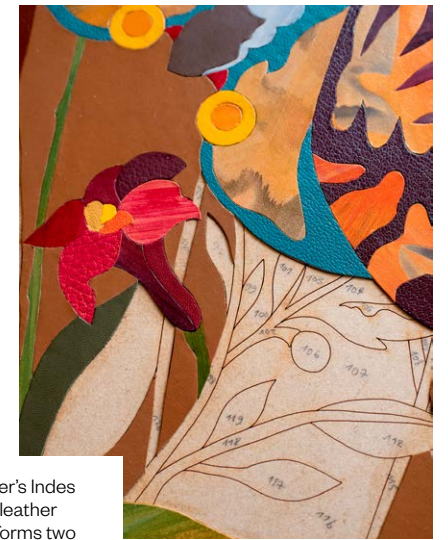
Another location steeped in history is the six-floor Cartier flagship boutique at 13 rue de la Paix, open since 1899. It underwent painstaking renovations, involving hordes of architects, designers and artisans, and reopened in 2022. Here, in two of the historic salons that have



PHOTOGRAPHY ADRIEN DIRAND (DIOR) & PIERRE PROSPERO (LANDLINE).



PHOTOGRAPHY FABRICE FOUILLET (CARTIER) & CHARLY HO (MAISON BONNET).



Clockwise from top left: Cartier's Indes Salon in its flagship boutique; leather marquetry by Baqué Molinié forms two marquetry panels in Cartier's atrium; Maison Bonnet's workshop; an illustration of Maison Bonnet's work. Opposite: the luxurious atrium at Cartier.



been carefully restored, you can view Cartier treasures, such as Jean Cocteau's jewelled 1955 ceremonial sword from the Académie Française, in the salon dedicated to the poet, and a collection of rare books and archives in the library of the Louis Cartier Salon.

HONING A CRAFT

One does not just pop out and pick up a new pair of glasses in Paris. One makes an appointment at the Maison Bonnet boutique and workshop near the Palais Royal – which is where Jackie Onassis's oversized tortoiseshell sunglasses were designed and made by hand (the style is still available). The Bonnet family are still making glasses here. First, they take measurements of your face, then you choose the materials. Two months later you return for a fitting and they make modifications. Fortunately, they also offer a range of ready-to-fit frames that only require a one-hour fitting and is more suitable for travellers.

NOTABLE MENTIONS

Landline general store in the 11th arrondissement – everything here is plastic-free, thoughtfully curated and made in Europe. Pick up everything from terracotta

tableware, handmade by Katherine Oh at her atelier in Paris, to baby llama wool scarves and blankets made in Provence by the 8th-generation Brun de Vian-Tiran.

Sabre, run by husband and wife Francis and Pascale Gelb, for its collection of brightly coloured cutlery.

Left Bank English-language bookshop, and literary institution, Shakespeare and Company is a bookworm's paradise. Many hours can be happily whiled away here at the bookshop and café. And the shop's tote is essential for book lugging and general flaunting back home.

Parapluies Simon has been making and selling artisanal umbrellas at its shop in the 6th arrondissement since 1897. They also offer a repair service.

Given how Parisians feel about their dogs, it makes sense that they would be well catered for. A visit to Pet So Chic in the 6th will ensure your best friend dominates in the style department at the dog park on your return.

Henry Jacques the haute parfumerie at 2 Avenue Montaigne has an expert perfumer. Behind a secret door is a VIP room where they conduct bespoke consultations and will create a fragrance just for you, for a price. If you prefer the thrill of the chase, the Marais is filled with independent perfume boutiques where you can source hard-to-get and bespoke fragrances. ●