

Client: Oberoi Hotels Yellow News
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It's not as cheap as it used to be, but getting a quick shot of retail therapy in this city still inspires the heady, reckless feeling which comes with the certainty that no one back home will own anything as exotic, colourful or distinctive. Although all the big international brands are here, the stores and markets are brimming with quirky treasures, and the real excitement comes with browsing roadside stalls selling gilded slippers and sparkly bracelets, or admiring the delicate work of local designers such as Abraham & Thakore, whose brocades and silks have been displayed at the V&A. The art of sexy concealment has been perfected in Mumbai, alongside the vibrant and the unashamedly gorgeous. By Daisy Finer



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COOLEST NOOKS

BUNGALOW 8 It's not the New York nightclub, nor is there anything bungalow-like about the moody concrete mansion block that houses this three-floored lifestyle store. But it is brilliantly set up as if you are visiting a dusky vintage home crammed with clever finds and clean-lined Asian homewares. Long tables laid for a smart dinner party showcase linen tablecloths, gold antique picture frames are hung in clusters on the wall and wooden chests are crammed with knick-knacks and 1930s-style headbands (spotted in Fenwick for double the price). There's an in-house fashion label, The Bungalow, by former YSL and Lanvin designer Mathieu Gugumus Léguillon – sharp menswear is particularly popular. *Grants Building, 17 Arthur Bunder Road, Colaba (+91 22 2281 9880; www.bungaloweight.com)*

LE MILL The Mumbai version of Paris's Colette is in a 1930s former rice mill in the docklands. It was opened by three young fashion-forward women (one helped set up *Indian Vogue*, another created the windows at Hermès). It may seem odd to come all this way for Isabel

Marant high-tops, Acne jeans and Raquel Allegra T-shirts, but there are also the prettiest candles, colourful dhurries from Jaipur, super-fine shawls from Kashmir, table linens, childrenswear, clutches and arm cuffs – as well as a florist and a café serving mango-and-rice salad and crumbly homemade banana loaf. A second branch recently opened in Breach Candy. *17–25 Nandlal Jani Road, Wadi Bunder East, Masjid Bunder (+91 22 2374 2415; www.lemillindia.com)*

BOMBAY ELECTRIC

This trendy white space, just around the corner from the Taj Mahal Palace hotel, oozes with glamour, edge and

eccentricity, and new collections land nearly twice a month. Accessories are displayed on old sewing machines topped with glass, walls are decorated with modern Indian art. You'll

find fashion by established designers such as Manish Arora and Rajesh Pratap Singh, up-and-coming Indian labels and a sprinkling of international brands.

Highlights include boxes of retro Bollywood posters and eye-popping jewellery. *1 Reay Road, Best Marg, Colaba (+91 22 2287 6276; www.bombayelectric.in)*

ENSEMBLE At this extravagant multi-designer showroom, the home-grown names far outshine more subdued international designers. Owner Tarun Tahiliani is a master at combining European silhouettes) and counts Jemima Khan and Naomi Campbell among his customers, as well as locals Kareena Kapoor and Shilpa Shetty. His couture pieces, with glorious details and feel-me fabrics, are a hit with brides and sit alongside clothes by high-profile

designers Manish Malhotra and Monisha Jaising. *Great Western Building, 130–132 Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Colaba (+91 22 2284 3227; www.ensembleindia.com)*

SABYASACHI You won't find this under-the-radar store unless someone has told you about it. Here old clocks, mirrors, tiles, sepia photographs and mismatched vintage plates jostle for space on the walls, and there are painted shoes, art, jewellery and antiques from all over India. Rose oil scents the air, an effect that is reminiscent of the Kolkata bungalow where owner and designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee grew



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up. You might recognise his name from Browns London, which has sold his collections. He is renowned for his heavy, ornate saris, dresses and exquisite bridal wear with a vibrant palette and textures inspired by gypsies. *Ador House, 6K Dubash Marg, Kala Ghoda (+91 22 2204 4777; www.sabyasachi.com)*

AHILAYA The smartest and best-made *kurtas* – loose, collarless tunics – are sold here. Soft, dainty and hand-embellished, they come in a rainbow of colours from peacock blue to candy pink. Modern cuts are a new twist on the traditional Lucknow

chikankari (wear them layered over skinny jeans), but remain romantic with trails of white flowers around the neckline and billowing Victorian sleeves or empire lines. The owners, a trio of sisters (Farha, Nagma and Sana Ansari), are behind New York label Leaves of Grass, which sells on Net-a-Porter. This is their flagship, with crystal chandeliers and marble floors, but there are also stores in Santa Cruz and Bandra. *Shop No 2 and 3, Ram nemi Building, Mandlik Road, Colaba (+91 22 2202 3788)*

NEEMRANA CHIKANKARI This brilliant boho find on the ground floor of the Opera House is known for its exquisite embroidery. Cottons from Lucknow, chiffon blouses and robes are laid out in gigantic piles on wooden tables; before you know it you'll be up to your knees in *kurtas* – some with sequin detailing, some sleeveless, some flowery. They make the perfect beach cover-up or sweet summer dress. *Shop No 6, Purshotham Building, New Queen's Road (+91 22 2367 7780)*

BEST FOR FABRICS

KALA NIKETAN This cavern is filled with rows and rows of gorgeous, glistening

material, including plain silks, satins and embroidered brocades. A painted sign urges: 'Woman, you always looked good in saree!' There are metres and metres of ribbons too – far cheaper than VV Rouleaux in London and perfect for wrapping up presents (although they are meant to trim saris). *95 Queen's Road (+91 22 2200 5001; www.kalaniketangroup.com)*

BEST FOR JEWELLERY

AMRAPALI At this shop loved by Hollywood and Bollywood stars alike ancient meets ethnic, meets wearable, meets special occasion. Beautiful, fine, yellow-gold pendant earrings with polka diamonds from the Mughal Collection sit alongside antique-silver necklaces and contemporary drop earrings. *Shop No 28 and 29, Oberoi Shopping Centre, The Oberoi Hotel, Nariman Point (+91 22 2284 3687; www.amrapalijewels.com)*

BEST FOR HOMEWARES

GOOD EARTH A destination mega-store for home trinkets, including coloured-glass vases, neon-pink candles, silk cushions and quilted bedspreads. Come here for a ➤

➤ great range of children's towels and bedding, lotus-shaped soap dishes, incense sticks, tea sets, trays and lanterns – all chic, colourful and funky. There's also an art-book section, and a restaurant and bakery selling passion-fruit macaroons. Look out for Good Earth's other small outlet beside the Taj Mahal Palace hotel. *Raghuvanshi Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (+91 22 2495 1954; www.goodearth.in)*

CONTEMPORARY ARTS & CRAFTS

Everything in this store, including the



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wooden salad servers, pashminas and wall hangings (perfect for a little girl's bedroom) is sourced in India. And shopping here supports hundreds of craft workers. The cotton blankets, lamps, mother-of-pearl-inlaid boxes and scented soaps make fabulous gifts. *210 Taj Building, DN Road, Fort (+91 22 6657 6069; www.cac.co.in)*

ANOKHI This place has been going strong for years and the vegetable-dyed, hand-block-printed cotton fabrics in lovely patterns, covering ready-made curtains, sarongs, crushed skirts and tablecloths, are still popular. But it's the soft, deep, quilted bedspreads you'll covet the most. *Rasik Niwas, Metro Motors Lane, Dr AR Rangnekar Marg, Chowpatty (+91 22 2368 5761)*

FILTER Come here for prints, stationery, graphic-design books, magazines and maps. The shop's look is all-white, a bit like an art gallery. There are one-off framed posters, notebooks made from recycled dictionaries and designs by Bombay Duck artist Sameer Kulavoor,

including his limited-edition *100% Zine* and *The Ghoda Cycle Project*, a fun, screen-printed and illustrated look at Indian bicycles. *43 VB Gandhi Marg, Kala Ghoda, behind Rhythm House, Fort (+91 22 2288 7070; www.filtershop.co.in)*



BEST TAILORS

GOLDEN BOUTIQUE The amazing Avinash Punjabi has tailored suits for *Vogue India's* fashion director and Bollywood star Imran Khan. Choose from hundreds of rolls of fabric, give him your specifications (he can work from magazine cuttings or sketches) and measurements, and one of his nimble-fingered team will replicate your favourite designer dress or pin-sharp suit overnight. *4 Mandlik Road, Colaba Causeway (+98 2202 8327)*

BURLINGTON'S A great place to get made-to-measure clothes (they run up a mighty-fine silk dressing gown), or bring

your favourite item to be copied, which they will send to you in the post. When it arrives, beautifully packaged in layers of tissue paper interspersed with sequins, it's the best pass-the-parcel ever – worth the wait just for the excitement. *The Taj Mahal Palace, Apollo Bunder, Colaba (+91 22 2202 5593; www.burlingtons.in)*

BEST HOTEL SHOPS

Some of the most interesting stores are in the Oberoi and Taj shopping arcades. At the former, look out for Shawlsons: this is pashmina central and you'll soon be




buried in the most exquisite styles – plain, embroidered, double thickness – in every colour. At the Taj, Maharaja sells excellent, good-value linen shirts. *60 New Oberoi Shopping Centre (+91 22 2284 5736). The Taj Mahal Palace (+91 22 2202 8452)*

BEST MARKETS

For antique bargains head to Chor Bazaar (Thieves' Market), where finds include crystal chandeliers and elephant seats. Dealers from New York and London come here to buy in bulk before adding an extortionate mark-up. It's great fun to visit. The Colaba Causeway street market has an exotic array of clothing. Haggle hard.

BEST PERSONAL SHOPPER

Monica Vaziralli understands that shopping in Mumbai is not just a pastime, it's the main event. An interior-designer-turned-personal-shopper, she knows everybody, is impossibly glamorous and exudes such an imposing presence that no hawkers come near. She is a brilliant companion and guide, tracking down everything you desire and, dangerously, much more. Book her through Greaves India. 

GETTING THERE

Greaves India (+44 20 7487 9111; www.greavesindia.co.uk) offers four nights from £1,495 per person B&B, including two nights at the Taj Mahal Palace and two nights at The Oberoi, Virgin Atlantic flights,



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private transfers and sightseeing, and a
personal shopper in Mumbai



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SHORT BREAK



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