

Best Boutiques

When I first happened upon California boutique Kate Daniels, I was in a panic. I had an important event to attend the next day and literally nothing to wear. But from the moment I stepped over the KD threshold, I knew I was in good hands. The racks were filled with clothes I just had to have, including a brilliant Paul Smith blazer that solved my clothing dilemma. I spent way too much money that day but I am still sporting my finds. Whenever I need a nice pick-me-up, I head over there—sometimes just to browse and other times to pile up outfits in the dressing room.

Finding a good local boutique is like having a friend who lives down the street. Like your best friend, the store knows your style and is happy to see you, even if you don't throw your money around.

That's why we at metro.pop compiled our annual list of our favorite boutiques throughout the United States and Canada. These independent fashion emporiums deserve your business and support. Tell 'em metro.pop sent you and pick up something fabulous for Saturday night.

-Rebecca Paiement

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do something good for a change: shop. And then shop some more. Each year Preloved, an über-chic boutique you can find in Toronto,

Montreal and Vancouver, recycles over 50,000 pieces of vintage clothing to create unique one-of-a-kind items for the fashion- and environment-conscious. Although the owners admit Preloved is a "love baby" brought into the world by the pure admiration of fashion and all things fashion, it doesn't hurt that they are doing something positive for the typically "material-obsessed, greedy and consumptious" fashion industry. You see, being an international model was a lot of work for owner Julia Grieve, who found herself redesigning her clothes from one casting call to the next in order to keep up with the pressures of looking good.

Somewhere between fashion shoots and castings, Julia joined forces with designer Peter Friesen to bring Canadians the same fun, stylish and impromptu recycled pieces she enjoyed. They opened their first store in Toronto on Queen Street West, running the production out of the back room. Ten years later, they have a giant production site, two more stores of their own and at least 65 retail locations around the world. Peter designs two collections a year, each with 40 to 50 different styles, all one-of-a-kind and made almost entirely of vintage. The best part is the price, which is comparable to something churned out at the Gap or Banana Republic, but the clothing is as individual as shoppers' moods. The fabrics are handpicked from only the softest, prettiest and most luxurious "preloved" vintage, paired with matching counterparts, and brought back to life by selfless hands. So next time you're in a rut, go to the mall and recycle.

preloved

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