



Shopper's paradise: opposite, Milan's Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II shopping arcade; multitasking 10 Corso Como. This page: Tokyo's counterculture hub Shimokitazawa; quirky cat teapots



## Q: 'My other half is a shopaholic. Any great city breaks to give as a birthday present?'

Let our locals show you how to splash that cash in five of our favourite shopping cities

### Milan



**Janna Brancolini has been living la dolce vita in Milan since 2018**

Milan is a city infused with style from top to bottom. Always Europe's fashion capital, in recent years it has mixed classic Italian decadence with a modern concern for the environment. While big spenders and people-watchers flock to the Quadrilatero — the central fashion district — the funkier Navigli, creative Brera and contemporary Garibaldi areas should be on your list too.

#### The area: Quadrilatero della Moda

Neoclassical Via Monte Napoleone is the hub of the world's most famous designer district, featuring Italian heavy hitters such as Ferragamo, Valentino and Prada. Veer off on to the pedestrianised Via della Spiga for more leisurely strolling and window-gazing — if your wallet doesn't quite stretch that far, you'll find discounts at the designer outlets on Via Manzoni and Via Bigli.

#### The grande dame: Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II

It's an Italian icon — a palatial 19th-century shopping arcade that provokes delicious sensory overload, with dozens of ornate sculptures, mosaic floors and a glass-domed ceiling looming over the shops. Opened in 1877 and named after the king of Italy, today it's the spot for high-end boutiques selling haute couture, jewellery, bags, books and paintings.

#### The artisan buy: Il Meneghella

Tarot cards were invented in Milan in the 15th century, when wealthy families commissioned personal decks of *tarocchi*. Osvaldo Menegazzi continues the tradition in his small studio near the Navigli, where he sits at a table cluttered with ink wells, watercolours and oils, hand-painting classic Renaissance designs, as well as more modern decks (£90; [ilmeneghella.it](http://ilmeneghella.it)).

#### The designer: La Double J

JJ Martin originally wanted to sell vintage in Milan, but inspiration struck during a visit

to a textile manufacturer's private archive. Now, she designs clothes using the archive's rich, saturated patterns, creating bold, colourful dresses with clean lines (from £375), as well as tableware and linens ([ladoublej.com](http://ladoublej.com)).

#### The hipster: 10 Corso Como

Step through the looking glass into this art gallery, bookstore, boundary-pushing fashion retail space and garden-café oasis, all rolled into one. A mainstay of the Fashion Week crowd, it's a don't-miss destination for the intersection of art, design and commerce. A bit too pricey? Try a 10 Corso Como phone cover, £49 ([10corsocomo.com](http://10corsocomo.com)).

#### The post-shop drink: Camparino Bar di Passo

Baristas in white tuxedos and black bow ties mix electric-red cocktails here at the original Campari bar, an art nouveau jewel on the ground floor of the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele. Enjoy a *negrone sbagliato* — a 'wrong' negroni made with Campari, vermouth and prosecco

instead of gin — either standing at the bar, adorned with mosaics of tropical birds, or sitting in the glassed-in terrace ([camparino.com/it/sale/bar-di-passo](http://camparino.com/it/sale/bar-di-passo)).

#### The hotel: Hotel Milano Scala

A few blocks from the Quadrilatero, but rather more sustainable, this claims to be the city's first zero-emissions hotel, powered by renewable energy; it ferries guests around by electric car. Unwind on the lush rooftop terrace ([hotelmilanoscala.it](http://hotelmilanoscala.it)); doubles from £175, room only.

### Tokyo



**Selena Takigawa Hoy has lived in Tokyo for 15 years. She can be found in cafés all over the city**

Whether you're after cuisine, couture, or *kawaii* (Japanese for 'cute'), Tokyo has it all. Whizz around the sprawling city by subway to visit fashionable avenues such as Omotesando, quirky neighbourhoods, including Shimokitazawa and traditional areas such as Asakusa. Take an extra suitcase — you'll be stuffing it with Tokyo street style, exquisite stationery and anime-themed gear.

#### The area: Shimokitazawa

The counterculture hub of Shimokitazawa is crammed with vintage stores, rock clubs

and small cafés. Down a macchiato (£3) at Bear Pond Espresso ([bearpondespresso.roasters.com](http://bearpondespresso.roasters.com)) before record shopping at City Country City ([city-country-city.com](http://city-country-city.com)), picking up freshly made rice crackers (£3.50) at Tamaiya (2 Chome-31-1 Kitazawa), and browsing for retro bargains at Antique Life Jin ([antiquelife-jin.com](http://antiquelife-jin.com)).

#### The grande dame: Nihombashi Mitsukoshi

Rebuilt in 1925 after the Great Kanto earthquake, Nihombashi Mitsukoshi is the flagship of Japan's oldest surviving department-store brand, established in 1673. It retains its luxury reputation with international and Japanese brands and high-end kimonos — yours for just £8,000. There's also a concierge service, art exhibitions and a refined subterranean food hall ([cp.mistore.jp/global/en/nihombashi.html](http://cp.mistore.jp/global/en/nihombashi.html)).

#### The artisan buy: Ameshin

Shinri Tezuka and his *amezaiku* artists create glistening lifelike animal lollies from molten sugar — a centuries-old art form that requires the artisan to knead and tweezer-sculpt their miniature masterpiece in only minutes. Buy one at the Sky Tree location (£4) or join a hands-on workshop (£22; 90min) at its Asakusa shop ([ame-shin.com](http://ame-shin.com)).

#### The designer: Ambush Boutique

Rihanna and Lady Gaga are among the fans of the jewellery and clothes from designer couple

Yoon and Verbal Ahn. Yoon also leads jewellery design for Dior Homme, and her style is bling meets grit — like a chain and padlock necklace made from silver and lapis lazuli (£5,500). Browse their industrial-looking flagship store in Shibuya ([www.ambushdesign.com](http://www.ambushdesign.com)).

#### The hipster: Sou Sou Kyoto

Traditional accessories such as split-toe *tabi* socks (£5) and *furoshiki* wrapping cloths (£14) get an update with modern pop textiles. This vibrant space in Tokyo's fashionable Omotesando neighbourhood is popular with young traditionalists feeling rebellious ([sousou.co.jp](http://sousou.co.jp)).

#### The post-shop drink: the Bellwood

This cosy cocktail bar the Bellwood opened in Shibuya's Udagawacho in June. By day, try frothy lattes with bites such as pork cutlet salad (£6). After dark, sip craft cocktails (£8.50) made by proprietor Atsushi Suzuki — such as the Kuma & Toshi, made from rice *shochu*, tonic and grapefruit (41-31 Udagawacho).

#### The hotel: BnA Hotel

Each room in this boutique hotel is designed by an up-and-coming Japanese artist who gets a share of booking fees. Near geek paradise >

Akihabara, the pop art rooms are the perfect respite after a night of arcades and karaoke (bna-akihabara.com; doubles from £100, room only).

## Marrakech

**A nine-year resident, Mandy Sinclair runs Tasting Marrakech food and cultural tours and hosts Morocco's first travel podcast, Why Morocco**

Lively souks piled high with carpets, wicker baskets, hand-woven blankets and colourful slippers; contemporary design shops; and, between them, artisans, heads down in tiny workshops. All this makes Marrakech an inspiring shopping destination where it's often possible to meet the maker behind the goods.

### The area: Dar El Bacha, Marrakech medina

Dubbed 'the Mayfair of Marrakech', Dar El Bacha is where you'll find fancy antiques shops and swanky local designers lining the route from the former pacha's palace into the heart of the souks. Look out for Laly, Hanout (hanoutboutique.com) and Topolina (topolina.shop) for colourful locally inspired fashions, and Malakut for contemporary designs.

### The grande dame: 33 Rue Majorelle

Get a feel for Marrakech's old-time boho spirit at what was its first concept store, just outside the cactus-filled Majorelle Gardens. It's packed with upcoming contemporary Moroccan designers selling everything from crocheted lanterns and upcycled photo frames to glassware and flowing kaftans (33ruemajorelle.com).

### The artisan buy: Ennahda Co-operative

Amid the souvenir shops of the souks is the labyrinthine Ennahda, stacked with goods made by weavers on the outskirts of the city. You'll find the works, from soft woollen blankets and scarves to striped and brightly patterned wraps, rugs, cushions and bathmats — all handwoven, from £10 (47 Souk Stailia).

### The designer: Maison ARTC

Wander through the art deco doorway in trendy Guéliz to find vintage fabrics in vibrant colours and heavy patterns featuring in Israeli-Moroccan Artsi Ifrach's outré collection — think loud-printed coats, trousers and caps, from about £300 (maisonartc.com).

### The hipster: SOME Slow Concept

Morocco's bright young things flock to this art deco-house-turned-showroom for everything from hand-beaten copper and brass trays

to argan oil and amlou nut butter, all made by local artisans. Stop by the basket bar to order a customised bag, from £25, and wait for it with a coffee under the lemon tree in the garden (someslowconcept.com).

### The post-shop drink: +61

Next to Maison ARTC and just as chichi, +61 sits you round a marble table beneath retro brass lamps and hands you a cocktail stuffed with in-season fruits such as watermelon and pomegranate. Try a tamatini (£7.50) — vodka, fresh lychee and house-made ginger syrup (plus61.com).

### The hotel: El Fenn

Owned by Vanessa Branson, this sprawling riad has it all: rooms blending Moroccan zellige tile work and riotously colourful carpets with 1950s-era furniture and eclectic flea-market finds; rooftop dining with a view over the medina; and even a shop selling the interiors, if you want to recreate your room at home (el-fenn.com; doubles from £225, B&B).

## New York

**Jennifer Flowers has lived in New York City for two decades, swapping childhood stays at Manhattan's iconic Plaza Hotel for a home in Queens**

Navigating the options in the world's most famous retail hub is enough to overwhelm even the most intrepid of shoppers. Knowing where to go can be half the battle — for a well-stuffed shopping bag, you'll want world-class designers in Manhattan as well as lesser-known creative voices in Brooklyn.

### The area: Williamsburg

Brooklyn's epicentre of cool is chokka with shops, restaurants and A-grade people-watching. Fashionistas flock to Bird (birdbrooklyn.com) for independent fashion — look for handmade silver hoop earrings (£160) by local artist Fay Andrada. Nearby, Leif (leifshop.com) is good for interiors; pick up a monochrome woodblock print from Seattle artist Jennifer Ament (her aquatic plants are almost Hockney-like) or a handloomed Paraguayan cotton blanket for winter nights.

### The grande dame: Bergdorf Goodman

The crown jewel of Manhattan's department stores is as much a Beaux Arts landmark as it is a shopping essential. Original arched doorways and swish moulded ceilings make a suitably grand setting for the creations of all the fanciest fashion houses, from Dior to Jimmy Choo (bergdorfgoodman.com). >



Red hot: photo display at Marrakech riad El Fenn



**The artisan buy: Jono Pandolfi**

Been to NYC's hottest restaurants? Chances are you'll have eaten off Jono Pandolfi's cool-coloured ceramics. Test drive his creations over dinner (try hotspots such as Lilia or Gramercy Tavern), and then invest in, say, a set of four birch-hued, square-sided salad plates (£127). Bonus: there's no bricks-and-mortar store, so you can order online and have them shipped straight home (jonopandolfi.com).

**The designer: Roman and Williams Guild**

Co-founders Robin Standefer and Stephen Alesch kitted out cult NYC places such as the Ace Hotel and Le Coucou restaurant before opening this store in SoHo in 2017. It's a dreamy homage to interior design, where they've collated pieces

by their favourite artisans from around the world — such as Yoshihiro Nishiyama's mottled glasses and pitchers, from £170 (rwguild.com).

**The hipster: Café con Libros**

NYC's literati come for book clubs and readings in this community-centric bookshop and café in Brooklyn's Crown Heights. Owner Kalima DeSuze calls it a 'feminist bookstore for everyone' — and her carefully vetted tomes on race and gender are usually discounted too (cafeconlibrosbk.com).

**The post-shop drink: the Spaniard**

Energetic and sophisticated without being sceney, the Spaniard is within easy staggering distance of the West Village's shops. Perch on the rainbow velvet stools at the art deco-ish bar for a hipster-trad cocktail — such as a Pimm's ranguon (Pimm's, gin, strawberry, cucumber and ginger) or a watermelon mule (vodka, lime, ginger and watermelon) — or one of its 100+ whiskeys. Drinks from £9 (thespaniardnyc.com).

**The hotel: Wythe Hotel**

Brooklyn's beautiful people congregate in the bar of the Wythe, a former factory on the waterfront among Williamsburg's best shops. Upstairs, you're in industrial, loft-style rooms with blue nouveau-toile wallpaper and ceilings clad in reclaimed wood (wythehotel.com; doubles from £255, room only).

**Berlin**

**Barbara Woolsey has lived in Berlin for seven years. You'll find her browsing the second-hand book and clothes shops around Neukölln**

As Europe's bullseye for artsy types, Berlin does a fine line in independent design — often inspired by sustainability and club culture. But there's all kinds of shopping here. The city's Sunday flea markets, such as Boxhagener Platz and Mauerpark, are the place to pick up handmade trinkets and art, while the Mitte and Kreuzberg neighbourhoods are home to impeccably curated vintage stores.

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**The area: Graefekiez**

Part of trendy Kreuzberg, this lively neighbourhood is wall-to-wall boutiques and coffee stops. Highlights include ethical fashion shops Moeon and Asthetika (think hemp trousers and sustainable sneakers), Galerie Mamoo, a modern-art gallery doubling as a shop for all things alpaca (from knitted caps to jumpers), and antique bookstore Umbras. Fuel up on squishy meat-laced noodles at hip Japanese restaurant Cocolo Ramen (kuchi.de; mains about £9).

**The grande dame: KaDeWe**

With its hulking neoclassical façade it could be a turn-of-century train station, but the Kaufhaus des Westens (Department Store of the West) is Europe's largest department store after Harrods — and stocks the same mix of 'everything you could want, as long as it's luxury'. Opened in 1907 in Schöneberg, it was rebuilt after being destroyed in the Second World War. Don't miss the gourmet food hall for local take-homes such as Berlin's posh

Candide pralines or Germany's finest riesling. Hit the oyster bar, or craft beer and rotisserie chicken stand while you're at it (kadewe.de).

**The artisan buy: Captn-Crop**

Behind the vine-covered shop front, modern-day mad hatters craft one-of-a-kind caps and bags from materials they've found and recycled, cutting and sewing around the displays of bucket hats (£44) and bum bags (£53). They can do custom designs on request (captn-crop.com).

**The designer: UVR Connected**

This Berlin-based label sells its own comfy-but-colourful, fair-trade clothes, plus other brands, including German ventures such as Arnedangels, whose organic cotton clothes are lockdown-appropriate, but far more stylish. There are three locations, but the one in Schöneberg is best (uvr-connected.de).

**The hipster: UY Studio**

This genderless clothing brand is influenced by local nightlife — think flowy fits, vegan

leather and linen, and lots of black. It sprang to fame via Instagram, becoming so popular in Berlin that the designer opened a sleek showroom in Kreuzkölln. Everything's made out the back, and alterations are available on the spot (uy-studio.com).

**The post-shop drink: Geist im Glas**

A dark, cosy lair around the corner from Graefekiez and UY Studio, Geist im Glas is famous for its boozy weekend brunch, with rich pancakes and waffles, mimosas and all kinds of bloody marys. If the sun's out, grab a takeaway guava margarita and drink it by the Landwehr Canal nearby (geistimglas.de).

**The hotel: Orania.Berlin**

The first luxury hotel in this part of Kreuzberg, Orania.Berlin sits in a charming early 20th-century building, with some rooms sporting balconies overlooking Oranienplatz square, where locals kick back under the shade (orania.berlin; doubles from £225, B&B). ■