

C'est magnifique

Sarah Assenti heads to Paris to sample some of the world's finest luxury shopping

Audrey Hepburn once said, "Paris is always a good idea." We couldn't agree more, particularly in spring, when seasonable temperatures and cherry blossom-filled parks and gardens make the City of Light a joy to stroll through, and shop in.

As the home of haute couture, Paris has inspired designers for centuries. Many of the design houses that were recognised by the couture regulatory commission, Le Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture, in the early 20th century still hold the prestigious label today, including Givenchy, Chanel and Christian Dior.

BOULEVARD HAUSSMANN

Department stores played major roles in establishing Paris as a centre for fashion in the late 1800s, and Boulevard Haussmann, running through the

8th and 9th arrondissements, is home to some of the greatest, including Printemps Haussmann and Galeries Lafayette Paris Haussmann. With terraces overlooking the city and an extravagant Art Deco cupola respectively, both stores are a testament to French architecture as well as a home to global fashion brands. From Alexander Wang to Hermès, treat yourself to hours of chic shopping, all under one roof.

RUE ST HONORÉ

For cosmetics or fragrance, make like Angelina Jolie and head to French heritage brand, Guerlain; the actress was mobbed by fans after leaving the brand's Champs-Élysées store earlier this year. For a slightly quieter shopping experience, seek out Guerlain's boutique on Rue St Honoré. Located in the city's

Pictured: Springtime in Paris creates the perfect environment for the finest of luxury shopping





Above: Paris-founded Louis Vuitton at Maison Champs Élysées Below: Rue Saint Honoré's Hermès – also founded in Paris

1st arrondissement, here you'll find two kilometres of retail therapy awaiting you, including luxury flagship stores for Gucci, Alexander McQueen and Chloé.

Be sure to take a detour near the beautiful Jardin des Tuileries, along Rue Cambon, the site of Coco Chanel's first ever boutique.

Karl Lagerfeld and his team still work in the studio above 31 Rue Cambon today, and once you're done shopping the S/S18 and Pre-fall collections downstairs, treat yourself to a tour of Madame Chanel's apartment on the floor above, by special reservation only.

AVENUE MONTAIGNE

If you only have a short time to shop, head to Avenue Montaigne. What it lacks in length (the avenue is little more than half a kilometre long) it more than makes up for in luxury, with an international roster of designers lining the bustling

pavements; Dior, Prada, Jil Sander and Valentino can all be found here. Stop for a light *déjeuner* at L'Avenue, a restaurant favoured by Parisians and celebrities alike, including Kate Moss, Kanye West and Beyoncé.

AVENUE DES CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES

Stretching from the Arc de Triomphe to the Place de la Concorde, 'the most beautiful avenue in the world' is perhaps Paris' most popular shopping destination. Home to esteemed

museums and views of iconic monuments, independent boutiques and luxury flagships alongside global retail stores – Champs Élysées has it all. Add an extra sparkle with a stop at Cartier, Mauboussin or Tiffany & Co. for fine jewellery.

For those with a sweet tooth, or seeking a to take home a taste of France, a visit to Ladurée yields powder pink boxes filled with delicate macarons, flavoured with rose, violet and orange blossom.

Springtime shopping in Paris? So chic, c'est magnifique. ■

WHERE FASHIONS MEETS CULTURE

The Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent unveiled a new museum on Avenue Marceau, dedicated to the work of Saint Laurent, at the end of 2017 and its inaugural display focuses on the late designer's haute couture work. Make reservations for an intimate tour of the atelier de restauration, where conservators present and discuss pieces from the collection not on display. Currently on display at The Musée du Louvre is 'Delacroix (1798-1863)' an exhibition dedicated to leader of the Romantic movement, Eugène Delacroix, on view through to 23 July 2018. The sublime Neo-Renaissance Palais Galliera, located in Avenue Pierre 1er de Serbie's 16th arrondissement, houses temporary fashion exhibitions and is due to be the first permanent fashion museum in France after the House of Chanel became an exclusive sponsor earlier this year. Don't miss 'MARGIELA / GALLIERA, 1989-2009', the first Paris retrospective dedicated to man of mystery, designer Martin Margiela, showing through to July 15th. parisinfo.com

