

# SHOPPING IS GREAT BRITAIN

A guide  
for international media  
Edition 5 – May 2017

Brought to you by



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## Shopping is GREAT - *why?*

Cutting-edge designers and shops ingrained with tradition and history; quirky pop-ups and stores that have been selling their products for centuries. Dip into one of Britain's classic department stores and find anything from a designer handbag to a manicure. Grab a bargain at an outlet store. Discover a tiny boutique tucked away in a small town, or head to the swanky stores that cater for the wives and girlfriends of Britain's millionaire footballers.

Just a few of the reasons why shopping in Britain is such an experience and has something for everyone. You can dress up in 1940s finery for a vintage fair and rummage for bargains at some intriguing markets, or shop where the Royal Family shops. Temptation has no end in Britain and you'll undoubtedly leave with a souvenir that suits your tastes and your budget.

Did you know...

- Kilts come in leather, camouflage and pinstripes, as well as tartan (see page eight)
- You can make and buy a Lego mosaic of yourself in London (see page 11)
- You can buy a Shakespeare-inspired rubber bath duck (see page 17)
- Britain is home to the oldest hat shop in the world (see page 34)
- British shops have sale seasons, when products are reduced in price, throughout the year (see page 36)
- It takes a whole year to create the Christmas window displays for iconic London store Selfridges (see page 38)
- Top British brands such as Mulberry and Barbour often sell hugely-reduced products in outlet centres (see page 48)
- There's a branch of Harrods at London Gatwick Airport (see page 56)
- In Birmingham you can go shopping in a Bullring, Custard Factory, and Mailbox (see page 58)

## Eight of the best: uniquely British shopping experiences

Designing your own Scottish tartan, getting measured up for a bespoke suit on world-famous Savile Row, or stepping back in time at a Victorian gingerbread shop with a secret recipe. Britain is home to an array of shopping experiences that you'll only find on these shores, and we've rounded up eight of the best.



*Hay-on-Wye: heaven for book lovers. Credit: Britain on View*

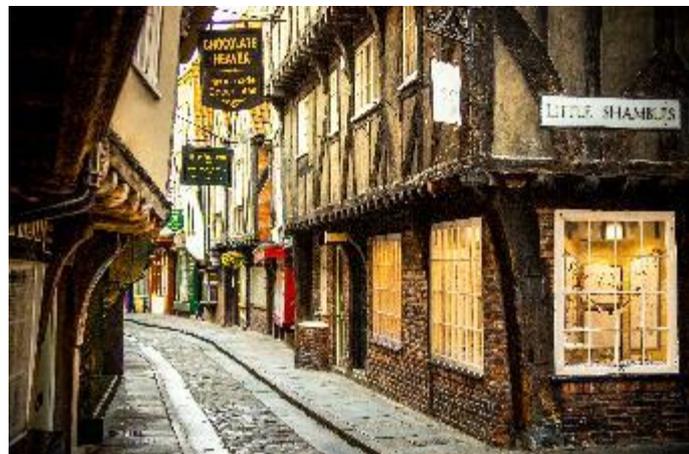
### Search for a prized first edition in Britain's book capital

Next to Brecon Beacons National Park in south Wales is the pretty little town of [Hay-on-Wye](#) - and it's a book lover's dream. Nicknamed 'The Town of Books', its many bookshops are packed with literary finds, including vintage first editions. Check out the town's [handy bookshop map](#) and visit [Richard Booth's Bookshop](#), which also has a café and 48-seater cinema! The annual [Hay Festival of Literature and Arts](#) will take place this year from 25

May - 4 June 2017, and celebrate its 30th anniversary. Once named by Bill Clinton as 'The Woodstock of the mind', this ten-day festival celebrates great writing from poets, scientists, lyricists, comedians and novelists from around the world, coming together to share stories.

### Shop your way along the world's best-preserved medieval street

Stretch out your arms and touch both sides of the narrowest part of [The Shambles](#), a medieval shopping street located in York city centre, northern England. Wind your way along this twisting lane, one of the most picturesque shopping streets in Britain, and discover charming boutiques housed in buildings dating back to the late 14th century, selling gifts, art, books, and knitwear.



*Ambling along The Shambles in York. Credit: VisitBritain / Andrew Pickett*

### Be surrounded by luxury in historical Harrods

Arguably the most iconic and luxurious of Britain's famous department stores, [Harrods](#) opened in Knightsbridge in 1849, and is the biggest in Europe. In the 1960s you could buy a lion cub in store! While the pet department is a little tamer these days, there's still plenty to excite - its seven floors and 330 departments of luxury shopping include exclusive designer collections, plus one of the best food halls in Europe. If you can't decide, don't worry - the store offers a gift concierge service, and payment options include Euros, US dollars and China Union Pay cards.

## Step into a Victorian gingerbread paradise

Britain's regions are home to unique produce that cannot be found anywhere else in the world. Foodie treats make great gifts - especially if it's the world's best gingerbread, which is the well-substantiated claim of the [Grasmere Gingerbread Shop](#).

Located in the Lake District village of Grasmere in north-west England, Sarah Nelson's Grasmere

gingerbread is legendary - its special recipe has been a closely-guarded family secret since 1850. The tiny green shop is like something from a fairy-tale, and only fits a few people inside, including a friendly shop assistant in traditional Victorian dress.



*Grasmere Gingerbread - a taste sensation!*



*Your style is in safe hands at Gieves & Hawkes.  
©VisitBritain / Richard Allen*

## Get measured up for a Savile Row suit

Gentlemen, step this way. For the ultimate in bespoke British style and tailored finesse, head to Savile Row for beautifully made-to-measure shirts, suits, coats and accessories. Founded in 1771, [Gieves & Hawkes](#) holds a Royal Warrant and is one of the most acclaimed historic British tailors, but is equally appealing to the modern gentleman.

## Bag a bargain at Britain's best vintage fairs

Britain has a long-established status as a fashion and design hotspot. Visit one of its top vintage fairs and bag yourself a piece of British design heritage - perhaps an original 1960s Mary Quant dress if you're lucky, or some funky collectable crockery. [Judy's Vintage Fair](#) was founded in 2005 by a former fashion graduate and stylist. Taking place throughout the year in 30 British cities, from Bath in the south-west of England to York in the north, these popular one-day events bring

together vintage traders from all over Britain. [Lou Lou's Vintage Fair](#) covers 42 cities across Britain, with traders spanning the 1920s - 1990s, as well as a vintage tea party, vintage hair salon and live entertainment.



*Learn the art of tea drinking at the historical Twinings Strand store*

### Time for tea

For some quintessential British tea culture, head to the [Twinings' Strand](#) tea shop - it still stands on its original 1706 site at 216 The Strand in central London, and now incorporates a museum. The store is a blend of classic and contemporary, with original architectural features alongside a Pick'n'Mix area and in-store Loose Tea Bar. Take a seat for a specialist tea tasting session with Twinings' experts, who will help you find your favourite tea, and then package it up for you to take home.

### Design and wear your own family tartan

[Kinloch Anderson](#) was founded in Scotland in 1868 and is renowned for its Highland Dress, including tartans and kilts. It holds three Royal Warrants as tailors and kiltmakers to the Queen, Duke of Edinburgh, and the Prince of Wales, and manufactures the royal family's Balmoral Tartan, which can only be worn with the Queen's permission. Visit the [Edinburgh shop](#) and buy an item in your family's tartan, or if your clan doesn't have one, design your own! Staff will work with you at every step of the process, and your final design will be listed on the Scottish Register of Tartans.



*Design your own tartan and wear it with pride!*

## Shopping: for her

From Mary Quant's miniskirts, to Vivienne Westwood's punk designs, Britain has always been a trendsetter in the world of women's fashion. From jewellery, to handbag and fashion, here are some of the brands and boutiques to look out for.



*Lulu Guinness is one of Britain's most iconic women's accessories designers @Visit Britain/Juliet White*

### Lulu Guinness, London

A handbag designed to look like a bunch of flowers, a clutch bag in the shape of a giant pair of lips. [Lulu Guinness'](#) intensely feminine handbag designs are instantly recognisable, always witty, and often reminiscent of the 1920s and 30s. Her bags are in the Victoria & Albert's museum permanent collection, and have been carried by popstar Katy Perry. Make a trip to her trademark flagship store in Knightsbridge, or the colourful shop in Covent Garden's Piazza.

### The Hambleton, Winchester, southern England

With its Elizabethan and Regency architecture, a trip to Winchester is like taking a step back in time. Potter around its quaint streets, pop into the famous [Winchester Cathedral](#) and explore the city's great shops, all within an hour's train ride of London. A locals' secret shopping tip is to head for [The Hambeldon](#); split over three levels, it's packed with homewares, stationary and books in its Tudor rooms, and also has an incredible selection of British beauty products such as [Miller Harris](#), [Sister & Co.](#), or [Green & Spring](#), whose products are inspired entirely by the British countryside.

### The Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham, central England

If you're looking for jewellery then go to Birmingham and its famous [Jewellery Quarter](#). The city's 250-year-old jewellery and metalworking industry is still thriving - almost a third of all British jewellery is made within a mile radius of Birmingham, which is under one hour 30 minutes by train from London. With more than 100 specialist jewellery makers, there's plenty to choose from - take a break from shopping at the [Museum of the Jewellery Quarter](#), aptly housed within an old jewellery factory.



*Pick up some jewels at Birmingham Jewellery Quarter @Visit Britain/Howard Sayer*

### Cricket, Liverpool, north-west England

Liverpool's most famous women's clothing shop, [Cricket](#), is not just a boutique - it's a super boutique. Cricket has been dressing Liverpool's most stylish figures for more than two decades, and offers a brilliant edit of some of the world's top designers and megabrands - browse labels such as Stella McCartney, Saint Laurent and Givenchy. Liverpool has its own international airport, or is an hour by road from Manchester.

### The House of Temperley, London

For a real slice of British style, [Alice Temperley](#) is the queen of whimsical, ethereal designs. Alice says being British represents 'being able to be individual, eccentric and not taking yourself too seriously', all of which shines through in her work. Her flagship store is an experience in itself, located in a six-floor Grade II listed Georgian building in Mayfair. Help will be on hand to navigate the floors and styles with a personal shopper, while the Notting Hill store is home to Temperley's gorgeous collection of bridal wear.



*Try on dresses for your big day at Temperley's Bridal Salon in Notting Hill ©The House of Temperley*

### Browns, London

Another London stalwart to sate your fashion appetite is [Browns](#). It was started in 1970 by the unstoppable Joan Burstein (she's now nearly 90), takes up five connected shops on South Molton Street, and stocks an impressive collection of more than 150 different labels. Joan, with her impeccable eye for style, is credited with bringing everyone from Giorgio Armani to Donna Karan to Calvin Klein to London. If you want to know what's on trend this season, it'll be here.



*Pick up some traditional pottery at Emma Bridgewater ©Visit England/Diana Jarvis*

### Emma Bridgewater, Stoke-on-Trent, central England

[Emma Bridgewater's](#) pottery firm was founded in 1985, when Emma couldn't find the perfect birthday gift she was looking for. Based in Stoke-on-Trent's world renowned potteries, it is known for its bright and playful designs, offered on everything from mugs to bedding. Tour the factory to see how some of the products are made, and pick up the latest designs at the gift shop, or older bargains at the factory outlet.

## Rigby & Peller, London

With a Royal Warrant as the corsetieres to the Queen (and formerly Princess Diana, Princess Margaret and now the Duchess of Cambridge), [Rigby & Peller](#) has been making its iconic lingerie for more than 75 years. Browse its products in one of its five London stores, or book an appointment for a complete lingerie styling. If you're after something extra special, the Knightsbridge store offers a made-to-measure service.



*Rigby & Peller is the favourite lingerie brand for the Royals  
©Visit Britain/Britain on View*

## Shopping: for him

Synonymous with class and prestige, British menswear brands have dressed the likes of Winston Churchill, Prince Charles, and even James Bond. But the modern male shopper will find an eclectic mix of cutting-edge design alongside classic British tailoring, and discover why real men wear 21<sup>st</sup> Century Kilts! Gentlemen, step this way...



*Look dapper with a beautiful Lock & Co. hat ©Lock & Co.*

### Lock & Co, London

[Lock & Co](#) has got some serious history under its hat. Established in 1676, it's not only the oldest milliner in the world, and a Royal Warrant holder. The shop, a stone's throw from St. James' Palace, is a 17th century former townhouse. With its products finished to the highest quality, Lock & Co. is the place to go for bowlers, panamas, fedoras and trilbies, all of which can be individually fitted.

### Traditional Shaving Company, Leeds, northern England

Tucked away in the 1897-built Grade II listed Grand Arcade in Leeds, what the [Traditional Shaving Company](#) doesn't know about the art of getting a clean cut shave isn't worth knowing. The shop's collection includes everything from shaving creams and soaps to aftershave balms and gels. Once you've stocked up on products to try out back home, pop next door to resident barber Byron at [Lord's Barbering](#), he's hailed as the 'one of the best beard



*Keep beards under control at Traditional Shaving Company ©Traditional Shaving Company*

whisperers in the business' and will give you everything from a beard trim to a close-cut wet shave. Leeds is around an hour away from Manchester, either by road or train.

### Drakes, London

Every man needs a few excellent ties in their wardrobe, and picking them up from [Drakes](#) in London will certainly give you the edge. Founded in East London in 1977, Drakes is one of the last bespoke tie makers in the country. Staff will talk you through the whole process, from picking a fabric, to selecting the correct width, length and tipping. Be ahead of the fashion pack with a raw silk knitted tie, or hark back to a bygone era with an elegant silk pocket square.

## 21st Century Kilts, Edinburgh, Scotland

[21st Century Kilts](#) is not your average kilt makers. Started more than 20 years ago, the brand is the brainchild of Scotsman Howie Nicholsby, and is a total shakeup on traditional kilt styles. Thrown into the mix - alongside a lot of tartan, of course - are fabrics including leather, camouflage and pinstripes. The Thistle Street store in Edinburgh is a veritable feast of Scottish culture and very popular, so make sure you make an appointment before you go.

Choose between a contemporary kilt and sporran from the ready-to-wear collection, or your own bespoke creation. Edinburgh has its own international airport.



*For a slice of Scottish quirky style, go for 21st Century Kilts © 21st Century Kilts*

## Crockett & Jones, various locations

Any gentleman worth his salt knows that an excellent pair of shoes maketh the man and that's where [Crockett & Jones](#) can help. Starting life in Northamptonshire (well-known to be the 'shoemaking capital of England'), the British heritage brand has been dressing the feet of the most stylish men since 1879. Among the many places you can pick up your own slice of impeccable British craftsmanship from Crockett & Jones are Birmingham's Burlington Arcade, the brand's factory shop in Northampton, and its London stores in Burlington Arcade, Knightsbridge, and Jermyn Street.



*James Smith & Sons make the very best brollies in town ©James Smith & Sons Umbrellas*

## James Smith & Sons Umbrellas, London

For a smart umbrella, [James Smith & Sons](#) is the place to go. The firm was founded in 1830 by James Smith, and was originally based just off the famous Regent Street in a shop so small you couldn't actually open an umbrella inside! The store has since moved to its current home on New Oxford Street. There's plenty to choose from, but you can't beat its classic black umbrella with a red bark cherry handle.

## Gresham Blake, Brighton, south-east England

If contemporary British is your style of choice then [Gresham Blake](#) in Brighton's North Laine is your place. Launched in 2000 by Gresham himself, the company offers a ready to wear collection, and bespoke tailoring. All of the bespoke pieces are made using fabric from British mills, or from material designed and woven in-house.

## Sunspel, London

[Sunspel](#) has been an innovator and pioneer since its launch in 1860 - it brought the boxer short to Britain, and also played a pivotal role in the birth of a t-shirt as a universal wardrobe staple. It offers a full range of men's products, including a collection of boxer and swim shorts incorporating colourful prints from iconic London department store Liberty. It has a number of shops in the capital, including Soho and Shoreditch.



*Sunspel has been dressing men stylishly since 1860 ©Sunspel*

## Shopping: for children

Britain is brilliant at catering for children. Whether its clothes, toys, or even a little bit of magic, you'll be spoilt for choice.



*From tube carriages to telephone boxes London's landmarks have been created in Lego ©Visit Britain*

### Lego shop, London

Technically [Lego](#) isn't British (it was actually developed in Denmark in the 1930s), but nonetheless, it's been a staple in the British child's playbox for decades. Take a trip down memory lane in Leicester Square at the Lego megastore. And a mega store it is - spread across 914 square meters on two floors, it's the biggest in the world. Within its walls, London's landmarks have been created out of the colourful bricks, including a replica of Big Ben, a telephone box, a post box, plus, an entire London tube carriage. You can even get a Lego replica of yourself by stepping inside

the Mosaic Maker passport photo booth. It'll take your snapshot, then convert the image into Lego pixels.

### Seven Stories, Newcastle, north-east England

If it's children's books you're after, then the [National Centre for Children's Books](#) is your place. All seven storeys of the Victorian warehouse are packed with Britain's best-loved authors and illustrators. In its archive the centre has a collection of more than 35,000 rare or unique books. The centre also offers a brilliant insight into how a children's book is made, with editor's notes, drafts, manuscripts and proofs all on show. Plus, there's a brilliant shop with limited editions on sale and a regularly-changing roster of touring and digital exhibitions. Newcastle is a three-hour train journey from London.



*Children's books are brought to life at Newcastle's National Centre for Children's Books ©Visit England/Newcastle Gateshead*

### Pollock's Toy Museum and Shop, London

Tucked away on a leafy corner of central London's Fitzrovia is the rather lovely Pollock's Toy Museum and Shop. Behind its colourful façade is a wonderful selection of vintage toys and dolls. The museum's artefacts include some very sought after pieces, including the world's oldest surviving teddy bear, early Monopoly sets and Victorian dolls' houses. It's named after Benjamin Pollock, who was famed for making toy theatres in the late 19th

century. While there's a small shop at the museum itself, you can also head for the [Benjamin Pollock's Toyshop](#) in Covent Garden, a 20-minute walk away. It sells traditional toys including paper theatres, Jack-in-the-boxes, and zoetropes - an old fashioned pre-film animation device.



*Iconic Hamley's has been running for over 250 years @Visit Britain*

### Hamleys, London

Given that [Hamleys](#) (which spreads over seven floors) is the largest and oldest toyshop in the world, a visit whether you're with children or not, is a must. The Regent Street flagship store offers everything from lollypop-making masterclasses to a whole floor of stuffed toys.

### Frugi, Cornwall, south-west England

Delve into the world of colourful, organic children's clothes with one of Cornwall's best-loved, home-grown

brands - [Frugi](#). What started at a kitchen table back in 2004 has expanded into a mini empire. The entire range is made from organic cotton, with designs from everyone from newborn babies to 10-year-olds. The clothes are stocked across Cornwall, but to snap up the best bargains, head for the Frugi Outlet Store in the town of Helston - a four-hour drive from the historic city of Bath.

### Rachel Riley, London

[Rachel Riley's](#) luxurious childrenswear is hot property, having been worn by Prince George, the son of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. Harking back to the 40s, 50s and 60s, all the clothes have a traditional tailored feel with a modern twist. Known for hand embroidery and hand smocking, the brand is most famous for its typically British hand-smocked soldier dungarees and button strap slippers - see these and more at one of two London stores.



*An example of one of Rachel Riley's beautiful creations @Visit Britain*

### Official Harry Potter shop, Hertfordshire, south-east England

The Warner Bros Studio Tour is a magnet for fans of the world's most famous wizard, featuring scores of props, sets and costumes used in the Harry Potter films. After immersing yourself in the wizard's world, apperate over to the [studio shop](#), where you can buy every conceivable type of Harry Potter merchandise. High up on your potential shopping list could be a knitted Gryffindor quidditch jumper, a sorting hat puppet,

a collectable wand and a 'build your own' Hogwarts Express train. The studio is in Leavesden, Hertfordshire, an hour away from central London by train.



*For those with a sweet tooth the Oldest Sweet Shop in England is a dream come true © VisitBritain*

### Oldest Sweet Shop in England, North Yorkshire, northern England

Who doesn't love an old fashioned sweet shop? Particularly when it's the [Oldest Sweet Shop in England](#), which, established in 1827, is exactly as its name suggests. Stepping inside is like taking a journey down memory lane, through the history of British sweets. Located in the picturesque market town of Pateley Bridge in North Yorkshire, its walls are lined with glass jars stuffed full of rhubarb and custards, pear drops, sherbet lemons, aniseed balls, barley twists and apple

bon bons. Sink your teeth into the Yorkshire favourite Bonfire Toffee - it's made from dark treacle and even comes with its own toffee hammer. Pateley Bridge is a two hour drive from Manchester.

### Davenport's Magic Shop, London

[Davenport's Magic Shop](#) in the Charing Cross Underground Arcade knows every trick in the book - and you'd hope so, seeing as it's been there since 1898. It even holds a Guinness World record for the 'oldest continuously-owned magic shop in the world'. There's not much about magic that this place doesn't know and burgeoning magicians will be sorted with a huge range of beginner's magic kits. Try some sponge ball magic, or some good, old-fashioned, Victorian card tricks.



*Try out some new tricks at Davenport's Magic Shop © VisitBritain*

## Eight of the best: essential British brands

Take a British icon home- and no, we don't mean the London Eye or the Angel of the North! From fashion to food, Britain's biggest brands create some of the world's best-loved products. Here are eight to take home. But first, you'll need to make sure you lay your hands on the right suitcase...



*Globetrotter luggage has been used by The Queen*

### Globe-Trotter

As well as transporting Winston Churchill's political papers in 1924 and The Queen's honeymoon wardrobe in 1947, [Globe-Trotter](#) luggage was used by explorers Captain Robert Falcon Scott and Sir Edmund Hilary and appeared on-screen as James Bond's suitcase of choice in *Spectre*. The brand's uniquely strong yet lightweight travel gear is handcrafted in Hertfordshire, southern England, using manufacturing methods that date back to the Victorian era. The London flagship store is in Mayfair; Globe-Trotter is also stocked in Harrods, Selfridges and stylish menswear store Peggs and Son in Brighton, south-east England.

### Burberry

Despite being one of Britain's oldest brands - dating back to 1856 - Burberry remains one of the most forward-thinking, coveted fashion labels in business today. Its advertising campaigns, featuring British stars such as Sienna Miller and Romeo Beckham, have become as iconic as its classic trench coat, lined with the trademark Burberry check. The [largest Burberry store](#) in the world can be found on Regent Street, London: as well as stocking the full fashion range, it offers an in-store monogramming service, beauty appointments, and even occasional live concerts.



*The Burberry brand dates back to 1856 © VisitBritain/ Joanna Henderson*

### Marks & Spencer

You can't come to Britain and miss a trip to [Marks & Spencer](#)! Experience a local favourite, which stocks everything from cashmere jumpers to luxury hampers, all guaranteed good quality and at affordable prices. Marks & Spencer began life in Leeds, northern England, as a market stall where every item cost a penny. Find stores all over the country to pick up a foodie gift to take home, or treat a loved one to Britain's favourite underwear! Shop at the

M&S store in Leeds, northern England, and you can pop into the ['Marks in Time' exhibition](#) at Leeds University, which tells the fascinating story of the brand.

### Barbour

Ideal for bracing walks in the British countryside - and super-Instagrammable pictures to boot - [Barbour's](#) classic wax jackets are still manufactured by hand in South Shields, the north-east England town where the Barbour story began. Branching out from its original repertoire of jackets and coats, the Barbour range spans 5,000 products for men, women and children. Head to South Shields to pick up Barbour bargains - the Factory Outlet stocks products from previous seasons at discounted prices.



*Barbour is known for its wax jackets, but offers a huge range of clothing*



*Laura Ashley is one of Britain's biggest homeware and fashion brands*

### Laura Ashley

From humble beginnings, [Laura Ashley](#) grew into one of Britain's biggest homeware and fashion brands. Laura Ashley began designing headscarves, tea towels and napkins at her London home, with her husband Bernard printing them on a machine he designed. The scarves were wildly popular and the Ashleys opened their first shop in Machynlleth, mid Wales, going on to become a global brand synonymous with cheerful, floral prints. Find Laura Ashley stores across Britain, including at [Westfield Shepherd's Bush](#), in west London.

### Topshop

[Topshop](#) is a fashion phenomenon and high street stalwart, always ahead of the curve when it comes to style and offering a dazzling range to cater to every fashionista. The brand collaborates cleverly with designers and fashion icons - famously including Kate Moss - to create covetable pieces, and the ever-changing range and weekly product launches mean you can pick something up and it's unlikely anyone back home will have the same thing. Find Topshop stores all over Britain.

### Mulberry

Roger Saul founded [Mulberry](#) in 1971 with £500 backing from his mother, naming his brand after the type of tree he used to pass every day on the way to school. It began with belts and the iconic bags followed, as well as womenswear, all of which adhered to a quintessentially British 'town and country' aesthetic Saul described as 'between Somerset

serenity and London pace'. For luxury at enticingly discounted prices head to the Mulberry Factory Shop at [Kilver Court Designer Village](#), in Somerset, south-west England, which also stocks other big Brit brands including Jack Wills and Toast.

### **Walkers Shortbread**

[Walkers](#), which offers shortbread in eye-catching tartan packaging, began as a bakery in Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1858. In 1910, founder Joseph Walker moved his bakery to Aberlour, around an hour and 30 minutes by road from Aberdeen, and opened a shop on the high street that still stands today. Head to the store as part of a delicious tour of the Scottish Highlands - the Aberlour Distillery is a short walk away. Your family and friends back home won't forgive you if you forget to bring some for them - thankfully, most British airports stock Walkers shortbread!

## Fabulously British souvenirs and gifts

Shoppers are spoilt for choice in Britain when it comes to good quality souvenirs and gifts. Museum gift shops, craft markets, designer stores - you'll find something for every taste and budget, from a Shakespeare bath duck to the Duchess of Cambridge's Aspal of London clutch bag. Take home a little bit of Britain with one of these uniquely British souvenirs and gifts.

### London calling, to your sofa

If you love Britain's capital city, why not have it on your sofa? Homeware designer [Charlene Mullen's](#) contemporary London Calling range features iconic images of London in her distinctive black and white hand-embroidered illustrations. Tower Bridge, the London Eye, and the red flash of a double decker bus decorate her wares, from cushions to crockery. Pay a visit to Charlene's store and workshop and you might even catch the designer at work.

**Where to buy it:** The Charlene Mullen store is located at 7 Calvert Avenue in Shoreditch, east London.



*Charlene Mullen's London designs. Credit: Sarah Runnacles*



*Bath time with the Bard. Credit: Shakespeare Birthplace Trust*

### To quack or not to quack...

Surprisingly, there's more than one Shakespeare-inspired rubber bath duck on the market to choose from! The [Shakespeare CelebriDuck](#) is the choice of the Royal Shakespeare Company's gift shop, while the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust gift shop has gone for a classic yellow number, [Shakespeare Duck](#), complete with a mini scroll quoting that famous phrase: 'To quack or not to quack...'

**Where to buy it:** Stratford-upon-Avon, central England, under an hour from Birmingham by either train or car.

### Time for tea

Recreate the magic of British afternoon tea at home and add a touch of British spirit to your kitchen with this [Union Jack tea towel](#)! It's just one of the practical and pretty British-themed products you can find at beloved British department store, John Lewis.

**Where to buy it:** John Lewis, Oxford Street, central London.



*Take British teatime home with a Union Jack tea towel.*



*Enjoy your own taste of Scotland at home*

### **Bespoke whisky, crafted by you**

Glengoyne Distillery has matured Highland single malt whisky in the Scottish Lowlands since 1833. Take its Master Blender course and you'll spend the day nosing, swirling, tasting, and then creating your own one-off single malt. Presented to you in a branded Glengoyne bottle, it's a personalised, drinkable memory of Scotland!

**Where to buy it:** Glengoyne Distillery, Banffshire, Scotland. The number 10 bus departs from Buchanan Bus

Station in Glasgow and stops right at Glengoyne's gates.

### **A romantic Welsh lovespoon**

These intricate wooden lovespoons are traditionally romantic gifts that were given to ladies by their suitors, and designed to showcase the man's carving skills. The spoons are designed to be more decorative than practical, with elaborate and meaningful patterns and symbols incorporated into the designs.

**Where to buy it:** Lovespoons are sold all over Wales, including [The Lovespoon Gallery](#) in Mumbles, Swansea; [Welsh Gifts](#) on Cross St in Abergavenny; and the Welsh Lovespoon Gallery at [Castle Welsh Crafts](#) Ltd on Cardiff's Castle Street.



*Say I love you with a Welsh lovespoon...*

### **A piece of Harris Tweed heritage**

For a wearable piece of handwoven Scottish heritage, look no further than [Harris Tweed](#). Made from pure virgin wool dyed and spun in Scotland's Outer Hebrides by Isle of Harris islanders, Harris Tweed has been kept alive by four generations of tweed weavers. Designer brands such as J. Crew, Hugo Boss and Paul Smith have the fabrics in their garments, but if you're not in the market for a traditional tweed jacket or don't have the luggage space, these beautiful cloths grace a range of accessories, such as Harris Tweed purses sold by the [Scottish Kilt Company](#), adorned with a metal Highland cattle motif.

**Where to buy it:** Harris Tweed is sold in many outlets around Britain. In Edinburgh, head to [The Edinburgh Wool Mill](#) on Princes Street, or Edinburgh Clothing Company on Southbridge - the retail store of [The Scottish Kilt Company](#).



*Mr Darcy fans - rejoice! Profess your love and carry one of these canvas bags with pride*

Head home with Mr Darcy on your arm  
Literary-themed gifts are a great idea for friends or family who love a particular British author or novelist. [The Jane Austen Shop](#) in the city of Bath - where the author once lived - sells a wide range of gifts in all price brackets, from I Love Mr Darcy canvas bags to first editions of her books, Edwardian-style clothing, and even a [Jane Austen action figure](#)! Meanwhile, Harry Potter fans should head to platform 9 3/4 on London's Kings Cross station, where the [Harry Potter Shop](#) sells everything from keyrings to Gryffindor crest jumpers.  
**Where to buy it:** Bath is in south-west England. The Harry Potter Shop is located

at Kings Cross station in north London.

### Best of British china

Britain has long been famous as a producer of beautiful ceramics and china. [Wedgwood](#) is one of its most iconic brands, making dinnerware, candlesticks, bathroom accessories and more. One of the most fashionable contemporary British ceramics designers is [Emma Bridgewater](#), creating tableware in a range of designs, including London and Union Jack-themed motifs.

**Where to buy it:** The Emma Bridgewater factory is in Stoke-on-Trent, West Midlands, and she has London stores in Marylebone or Fulham. Stoke-on-Trent is also home to the [World of Wedgwood](#) pottery centre.



*Drink to Will and Kate from an Emma Bridgewater mug*



*Go for Fortnum & Mason's Burlington Hamper - or choose your own selection of goodies*

A hamper of Fortnum & Mason goodies [Fortnum & Mason](#) has been a fixture in London's West End since 1707, and specialises in high-quality, traditional British food - even supplying groceries to the Queen. One of its best-known products is its hampers - packed with teas, sweet treats and fine preserves from a huge collection. Choose from one of the pre-packaged hampers, or pick your own selection in-store, which will be encased in a traditional wicker basket and can be shipped internationally.

**Where to buy it:** Fortnum & Mason, Piccadilly Street, London.

### Bag a royal accessory

Another souvenir or gift option is something with a Royal connection. [Aspinal of London](#) is a favourite of the Duchess of Cambridge for its beautiful luxury leather handbags, purses and clutches. Kate is regularly spotted with the Eaton clutch at glamorous events. The bag has been reincarnated for the current season as the Mini Eaton (seen here), which is currently available in store.



*Fit for a duchess: Aspinal of London's Mini Eaton clutch bag*

**Where to buy it:** Aspinal of London has London stores on Brooks Street (with a personalisation service in store), Marylebone High Street, St Pancras International station, Covent Garden, Harrods, and Selfridges Oxford Street. There are also stores in Edinburgh, at Selfridges Manchester, Selfridges Birmingham, House of Fraser in Belfast, and Gatwick Airport departure lounge.



*Carry a piece of Britain home with you with this quirky iPhone cover Credit: Lulu Guinness*

### Lulu Guinness red telephone box iPhone cover

Hold the phone! Protect your smartphone - and all the Instagram-worthy photos taken during your trip to Britain - with a funky phone cover. Combine practicality and an iconic piece of Britain with this fun [Lulu Guinness](#) red telephone box iPhone cover. The British accessories designer is famous for her fun, quirky and colourful pieces.

**Where to buy it:** The Lulu Guinness store is located in London's Covent Garden. There are also concessions in [House of Fraser](#) department stores around Britain, including Oxford Street in London, Cardiff in Wales, Bristol in south-west England, Manchester in north-west England, and Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland.

## Eight of the best: make-your-own experiences

Be it whiskey-blending, pottery-baking or mosaic-making, these courses and workshops allow you return from Britain with a special, personally-created souvenir.

### **Make Wedgwood pottery, Staffordshire, central England**

Beloved around the world, Wedgwood's fine porcelain and china is made from a factory in the village of Barlaston in Stafford. At the on-site [Master Craft Studio](#), visitors can enjoy free 'Play with Clay' sessions, or take a tutored lesson in throwing a pot or ornamenting using 250-year-old techniques. You'll get to take home your (carefully-wrapped!) creation, but take a look around the Wedgwood Museum before you go.

**Getting there:** Stoke-on-Trent's station is 90 minutes by train from London Euston, and 45 minutes from Manchester Piccadilly. The World of Wedgwood is a 15-minute taxi ride.



*Create your own pottery masterpiece at Wedgwood's Master Craft Studio*

### **Blend a bespoke whisky, Edinburgh, Scotland**

While most of Scotland's malt whisky tourists are content to tour and taste at distilleries, it's also possible to design your own. At

Edinburgh's [Scotch Whisky Training School](#), one-day courses include a 'blend your own' session, after which each participant leaves with a small bottle - not to mention a certificate of expertise. Suitable for all levels, the hands-on class also covers production and tasting.

**Getting there:** Edinburgh has an international airport. Direct trains between Edinburgh Waverley and London King's Cross take four hours and 30 minutes.



*Discover the art of jewellery making in the Meon Valley*

### **Craft your own jewellery, Hampshire, southern England**

Located at the South Downs hills' northern tip, the Meon Valley is a quiet, bucolic place of wisteria-clad cottages and flinty Norman churches. It's also home to the [Meon Valley Studio](#), from which Olivia Lowe gives short jewellery and silversmith courses - she even helps couples make their own wedding rings.

**Getting there:** It's easiest to drive to the village of Warnford, found 50 miles south west of London, with the journey taking about two hours.

### Design mosaic masterpieces, Hove, south-east England

At first glance, [The Art House](#) is merely a lovely, Victorian-villa guesthouse in the seaside town of Hove, next to Brighton, with eclectic, colourful bedrooms. But the clue's in the name, because at the bottom of the garden is owner Liz Tiranti's studio, where she creates mosaic art to satisfy nationwide commissions. Liz also runs [one and two-day courses](#) - with all materials provided - after which you can check out with an unusual piece of mosaic art. One-on-one classes are possible, too.

**Getting there:** Hove's train station can be reached directly from London Victoria in just over an hour.



*Craft your own mosaic creation at The Art House*

### Blend aromatherapy oils, Windsor, south-east England

Neal's Yard Remedies is one of Britain's best-loved health-and-beauty chains, renowned for its strict adherence to organic products. It runs various [introductory courses](#) at certain stores, including twice-yearly aromatherapy experiences in Windsor, close to the beautiful royal castle. You'll get to swot up on ten popular essential oils, learn to give hand massages and, best of all, concoct an oil blend tailored to your own healthcare needs.

**Getting there:** Trains run from London Paddington to Windsor & Eton Central station via Slough, taking 30 minutes in total.



*Improve your needlework skills at Low Sutton*

**Boost your knitting skills, north Yorkshire**  
[Low Sutton](#) is a smallholding and B&B near to the beautiful Yorkshire Dales, surrounded by steam railways and rivers. It's also the base of needlecraft whizz Judi Smith, who produces wool yarns and knitting kits courtesy of her own sheep flock. On advance request, Judi will provide bespoke tuition in crocheting for staying guests. Bring something to work on, and take it home new and improved. After class, enjoy an Aga-cooked dinner and admire marvellously-starry skies.

**Getting there:** Low Sutton is 30 miles north of Leeds in northern England, near the town of Masham. It takes three hours by train to nearby Harrogate station from

London's King Cross, or under four and a half hours' drive from London.

### Make your own couture chocolate, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

Award-winning Northern Irish chocolatier [Co Couture](#) uses entirely raw ingredients, and

only makes its chocolates in small batches. You can do the same in its fun, three-hour masterclasses, generally held in-shop on the first Saturday of each month. They sell out months in advance; [email](#) for forthcoming availability, and to register. You'll emerge with 25-30 truffles to take home - or to eat immediately yourself!

**Getting there:** Co Couture's shop is situated in Northern Ireland's capital city, Belfast. There are daily direct flights from English airports including London Heathrow and Manchester.

### Create leather bags, west Wales

Situated scenically below the Preseli Hills in Pembrokeshire, west Wales, the simply-named Leather Courses Britain runs acclaimed bag-making workshops from a 19th-century village chapel. One, two, three or five-day versions are available, with [two-day beginners' weekends](#) the most popular. You'll learn how to cut, stitch and hand-sew a tote, messenger or satchel using vegetable-tanned leather - and then get to sling it on your shoulder when you're finished!



*Design and make your dream bag with Leather Courses Britain*

**Getting there:** The courses take place in the small village of Penffordd. Trains run from Cardiff to Clunderwen, just five miles east, or it's a two-hour drive.

## Eight of the best: edible British souvenirs

From certified blue cheeses to award-winning sparkling wines, Britain abounds with tasty treats ready to take home - just make sure to leave room in your suitcase!

### Fine chocolates

London excels at fine chocolatiers. William Curley, Rococo and, most notably, [Paul A. Young](#), are all based in the capital. A winner of multiple awards, Young's most famous creations include sea-salted caramel - which may be commonplace now, but was once wholly pioneering. Recent concoctions by Young have incorporated ingredients from paprika to passionfruit.

**Where to buy:** Paul A. Young has three London stores - including his original shop on cobbled Camden Passage near Angel tube station.



*Savour a box (or two) of fine Paul A. Young chocolates*

### Rock

Rock is a cylindrical stick of hard-boiled sugar, often brightly coloured and mint-flavoured. Smaller 'slices of rock' are also available. Synonymous with the British coast, this sweet treat has been available at the seaside for decades. Particularly specialist is Blackpool, a resort town in north-west England renowned for its theme park-like promenade.

**Where to buy:** Founded in 1922, [Coronation Rock Company](#) exports around the world. Visitors can tour its factory near Blackpool Airport, or visit the town-centre shop by Blackpool Tower. Blackpool is 80 minutes north of Manchester by train, and three hours from London Euston.



*Taste and purchase award-winning English sparkling wine at Rathfinny Estate*

### Sparkling wine

Only an experimental scene a few decades ago, Britain's sparkling wine industry now wins regular awards and routinely trumps legendary champagnes in blind taste tests. Most vines are found in southern England, benefitting from chalk hills and a milder climate.

**Where to buy:** Found close to the East Sussex coast, 245-hectare (600-acre) [Rathfinny Estate](#) ranks among Britain's largest vineyards. Visitors can taste and purchase fizz - with sparkling wines made by a Moët &

Chandon-trained winemaker available from 2018 - then walk across the poppy-dotted valley and enjoy afternoon tea.

## Marmalade

Husband-and-wife team Brian and Carol Horwich run [Pant Glas Bach Preserves](#), a Welsh company whose inventions won two gold and two silver awards at 2016's World's Original Marmalade Awards. In total, Pant Glas Bach make around 70 preserves, jams and chutneys using home-grown fruits.

**Where to buy:** The farm doesn't have a shop, but there are [15 stockists](#) around north Wales, including [Hawarden Estate Farm Shop](#) near Chester, just 12 miles south of Liverpool's international airport.



*Take home award-winning Welsh marmalades of various flavours from Pant Glas Bach Preserves*

## Scotch whisky

Both Scotland and Ireland produce whisky - or whiskey, as it is spelt in the latter - with distinct complexions. Scottish malt whiskies (scotch) hail from five separate regions. Malts from Speyside will taste quite fruity, while up in Islay, an island west of Glasgow, they typically have a peaty, smokier flavour.

**Where to buy:** Most distilleries offer tours, tastings and a shop, all of it often set amid wondrous scenery. Try [Glenlivet](#) on Speyside - 100 miles, and a two-hour drive, north of Edinburgh - where vintage single malts are available.



*Take home a bottle of Bushmill's Irish whiskey*

## Irish whiskey

Ireland claims to have been making whiskey long before its now-more-famous neighbour - but that's a hotly disputed claim. What's certainly true is that few Irish distilleries remain, but those that do are faring rather well, with talk of expansion. In Northern Ireland, the big-hitter is Bushmills, of Old Bushmills Distillery, which has been in business since 1608. It makes single and grained malts, while the luxurious Bushmills 21 uses Madeira casks to deliver a rich, chocolatey taste.

**Where to buy:** [The Old Bushmills](#)

[Distillery](#) has a superb shop, and also runs tours and tastings. From Belfast, get a 90-minute train to Coleraine, then ride bus 172 for 15 minutes towards Portballintrae.

## Cider

Apples are the classic, flavoursome ingredient for this fermented beverage - or pears when it comes to perry (pear cider). Where mainstream bottled brands like Magnum's and Bulmer's are relatively sweet, the proper stuff tends to be less sugared - and much stronger!

**Where to buy:** Although cider is produced across Britain, it's most readily associated with the south-western county of Somerset. Visitors to [Torre Cider Farm](#) can taste limited-

edition blends before buying bottles, then tour the orchards and the old pressing room. Taunton, 15 miles south-west of the farm, has direct train services to London Paddington.

### **Blue Stilton**

Only six British dairies - all located in the central England counties of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire - are licensed to produce blue stilton, the so-called "king of English cheeses." This strong-tasting delicacy has enjoyed legal protection courtesy of a certification trademark since 1966; the only British cheese to boast this status. As cheeses go, stilton travels particularly well.

**Where to buy:** One of those six dairies is [Cropwell Bishop](#), a family-run firm located in an eponymous village within the sublime Vale of Belvoir. Made with traditional methods, its acclaimed blue stilton is sold in a Cheesemaker's Shop beside the creamery.

## Take home products fit for royalty

One of the marks of a quality British shopping establishment is a [Royal Warrant](#). These are currently issued by the three most senior members of Britain's royal family: the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales, to firms they have been using for at least five years. Shop with one of the following, and know you're buying products fit for royalty.

### Clothes

[Barbour](#) is rare in that it holds three warrants - one for each of the members of the royal family capable of issuing them. An English brand founded in 1894, it's famous for its wax jackets and outerwear. Its flagship store is in London's Covent Garden, one of the city's busiest shopping areas.



*Barbour holds three royal warrants © VisitBritain/  
Richard Allen*

Another firm holding three warrants is [DAKS](#) in Old Bond Street. Founded in 1894, it's a quintessentially British luxury label, specialising in fine tailoring and accessories for men and women.

If it's a kilt you're after, Kinloch Anderson is another triple warrant holder. Founded in Scotland in 1868, it manufactures the royal family's Balmoral Tartan, which can only be worn with the Queen's permission. Visit its [Edinburgh shop](#) and buy an item in your family's tartan, or if your clan doesn't have one, you can design your own.



*Selfridges is a Royal Warrant holder itself and stocks luxury products - including Corgi socks ©VisitBritain/ Britain on View*

### Socks

The Prince of Wales granted [Corgi](#) a Royal Warrant in 1989 for its delightful luxury socks. Made in Wales since 1892, the company is still family-run, and based in the Carmarthenshire town in which it was originally established. The company's designs come in cotton or fine cashmere. Pick up a pair in London's Selfridges store - a Royal Warrant holder itself.

### Gloves

[Cornelia James](#) has been making the Queen's gloves since she was a princess - the very first royal pair was commissioned in 1947. The company is now led by Cornelia's daughter Genevieve, and its industrious client-list continues to grow - as well as the Queen, the firm's designs have been sported by the Duchess of Cambridge, Rihanna, Taylor Swift and Madonna. Collections include cotton, ski and opera gloves, and can be found in House of Fraser department stores. The Prince of

Wales and Duke of Edinburgh, meanwhile, have both issued warrants to [Dents](#), which started manufacturing fine leather gloves in 1777. Buy them at stores including Selfridges, Harrods and House of Fraser.

### Handbags

The Queen is never without a handbag and they nearly always come from Launer; she is said to have scores of [Launer](#) bags to choose from in her wardrobe. Still made entirely by hand in Walsall, a small town near the Midlands city of Birmingham, all the handbags are lined in suede with gold-plated fastenings. Luxurious but never flashy, you'll also find wallets and iPhone cases in its collection of leather goods, stocked by shops such as Fortnum & Mason in London.

### Wellington boots

Started in 1856 by an American entrepreneur Henry Lee Norris, [Hunter](#) boots were developed to help British soldiers deal with the trenches in the first world war. Now a staple piece of equipment for the summer festival circuit, it's still the Queen's and Duke of Edinburgh's Wellington boot of choice and now comes in every colour - although traditionalists prefer the original Hunter Green. Buy them at Harrods, Selfridges and Office stores around Britain.



*A range of Hunter wellies © VisitBritain/ Britain on View*

### Hats

[Rachel Trevor-Morgan](#) holds a Royal Warrant for millinery, the art of hat-making, and has been making the Queen's headwear since 2006. The firm is run by Rachel, its founder, and offers seasonal collections, bridal couture and private commissions from its base in London's St James's. Each hat is handmade to size, and can also be dyed to match individual outfits. The Prince of Wales and Duke of Edinburgh meanwhile both buy their hats at [Lock & Co](#) - the oldest hat shop in the world. Established in 1676, the firm's other customers have included Sir Winston Churchill, Charlie Chaplin and Admiral Lord Nelson. It offers complimentary private appointments from its 17th century townhouse in St James's Street, London.

### Umbrellas

The Queen gets her umbrellas from [Fulton](#) - a family-run firm started in the 1950s. It offers umbrellas of every shape, size, and for every occasion, and partners with designers such as Cath Kidston and William Morris to produce quirky, patterned ranges. It also offers a bespoke service from its factory in London's East End, where it can either create a one-of-a-kind design for you, or take your design and adapt it for an umbrella.

## Eight of the best: Britain's hottest fashion designers

When it comes to fashion, Britain's designers lead the way. Take a piece of British style home by seeking out these hot designers.

### **Vivienne Westwood**

[Vivienne Westwood](#) has been at the forefront of fashion ever since she brought punk into the mainstream in the 1970s. Then, she made clothes for Sex Pistols' manager Malcolm McLaren's store on the King's Road in Chelsea which, scandalously for some, became simply known as 'SEX'. Never one to shy away from public attention, Westwood has used her fashion lines to convey messages linked to the political causes she is passionate about, including climate change. SEX took on a variety of different guises and is now World's End, where Westwood still sells her clothing today.

She also has stores in Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Leeds, Glasgow and Cardiff.



*The Vivienne Westwood store in Liverpool. Credit: Sarah Runnacles*

### **Sarah Burton**

Sarah Burton became Creative Director of the [Alexander McQueen](#) brand after Lee Alexander McQueen's untimely death in 2010. She went on to become a global fashion icon when the Duchess of Cambridge emerged from her Rolls Royce wedding car in 2011 wearing a sumptuous Sarah Burton-designed wedding dress. Burton has spent her entire fashion career at Alexander McQueen and was inspired by a trip to south-west England's Cornwall for her Autumn/Winter 2017 collection. Find Alexander McQueen stores in London and at Bicester Village in Oxfordshire, south-east England - a haven for bargain hunters with up to 70 per cent off designer brands.



*Colour, witty slogans and jazzy prints are all Henry Holland trademarks. Credit: David Titlow*

### **Henry Holland**

Henry Holland is one of Britain's most exciting designers and his [House of Holland](#) label belies an irresistible sense of why fashion is, above all, about having fun. The 1980s-inspired t-shirts he created in the early 2000s featured slogans such as 'I'll tell you who's boss, Kate Moss', gaining him attention led to collaborations with high-street store Debenhams and the ice-cream company Magnum, for whom he designed a cracked-chocolate inspired dress! Find House of Holland x Habitat at one of Britain's favourite furniture stores,

[Habitat](#), and pick up flamboyant cushions or throws to brighten up your home.

### Solange Azagury-Partridge

British jewellery designer [Solange Azagury-Partridge](#) taught herself to design jewellery, beginning with her own engagement ring in 1987; she went on to create pieces that have been acquired for the Victoria and Albert Museum's permanent collection, and a ring that was worn by Charlize Theron as the Evil Queen in *Snow White and the Huntsman*. Forget images of white-only diamonds and classical designs, and think rainbow earrings featuring purple and pink sapphires, rings in the shape of pouting lips and a hallucinatory range of 'unwearable jewels'. Find her store in Paddington, west London.



*One of Solange Azagury-Partridge's distinctive designs*

### Julien Macdonald

Welsh designer [Julien Macdonald](#) was introduced to knitting by his mother at a young age, a skill that he built on with a degree in knitwear at The University of Brighton, going on to create knitwear for none other than Chanel and Alexander McQueen. It wasn't all about wool for Macdonald though, and he launched his own label in 1998 with a 'Mermaids' collection, kicking off his reputation as a leading British fashion designer. His super-feminine designs have been worn by Madonna, Kim Kardashian and Taylor Swift, as well as the crew of airline British Airways, for whom he designed the uniforms worn today! Julien Macdonald's 'Star' range is sold at high-street store Debenhams.



*Kathryn Sargent provides a luxury tailoring service*

### Kathryn Sargent

The first woman to set up a shop on Savile Row, the street synonymous with men's tailoring, [Kathryn Sargent](#) had a 15-year career at the illustrious Gieves & Hawkes, becoming the first female Head Cutter at the company. She went on to set up her own label and provides a luxury, bespoke tailoring service to discerning gentlemen - and, refreshingly, to stylish women too.

### Paul Smith

Nottingham-born designer [Paul Smith](#) is a menswear favourite, whose refreshing use of colour marries a focus on excellent tailoring and adorns the bodies of the best-dressed British gents. So influential he had an entire exhibition devoted to his career at London's Design Museum, Smith's collections are designed in Nottingham, as well as London, and stocked in stores throughout Britain. Aged 15, Smith was an errand boy in a Nottingham clothing warehouse, and today his flagship store can be found in his home city, at the five-floor, Grade II-listed building, Willoughby House.

## Eight of the best: Britain's emerging brands and designers

Coming to Britain and shopping for your favourite well-known British brands is fun, but what could be more exciting than discovering new, emerging fashion talents on your travels? Keep your eye out for these up-and-coming designers and get your hands on their products to be one step ahead of the fashion curve.

### **Alice Archer**

With a growing reputation as one of Britain's most exciting emerging designers, [Alice Archer](#) is definitely one to watch. She boasts a solid fashion background, having graduated from the prestigious art school, Central Saint Martins in London, and as a student used her expertise in the delicate art of embroidery to work with the artist Tracey Emin on her creations. Archer's collections feature intricate needlework and striking prints, and her pieces are made using luxurious fabrics from chiffon to silk. Snap them up at high-fashion boutiques across London including Browns Fashion, The Place, Alex Eagle and Fortnum & Mason.



*One of Alice Archer's embroidered creations  
Credit: Alice Archer at The Place London*

### **Shauna Fay**

[Shauna Fay](#) has become a go-to designer for women who want to dazzle, be it at a party, the races, a wedding or even on the red carpet (in the past, Fay has been given just 12 days to make a BAFTA-worthy frock - and succeeded!). Her designs are elegant and beautifully structured, best accompanied with a fabulous hat and a glass of champagne. Find her store in central Belfast, Northern Ireland.



*Hiut Denim - breathing life back into classic jeans*

### **Hiut Denim**

For three decades, 400 people used to make 35,000 pairs of jeans a week in the west Wales town of Cardigan, which (despite its name) was synonymous with jeans at the time. The work was then outsourced overseas and the industry died out, depriving a tenth of the town's population of their jobs. Fast-forward to today and [Hiut Denim](#) is bringing denim back to Cardigan, to use the skills of so many of the locals and to breathe new life into the town. 'Do one thing well' is their motto, so it's just jeans - but, boy, are these good jeans. Find them stocked at [31 The Store](#) in Morgan's Arcade, Cardiff, and other shops across Britain.



*Jazz up any outfit with one of Bella Singleton's colourful silk scarves*

### Bella Singleton

[Bella Singleton's](#) luxurious silk scarves provide instant glamour to any outfit. After studying Printed Textiles at Leeds College of Art in northern England, 'illustrator at heart' Bella Singleton set up her eye-catching accessories brand in 2015. Her pieces have intriguing names, such as 'Believe in Me' and 'The Secret Garden', and each is designed in Norfolk and individually printed in Sussex on fine crepe de chine. Find them at Tate Modern, the British Library and [Marianna Boutique](#) in Ipswich, east England.

### Sophia Webster

[Sophia Webster](#) founded her eponymous label in 2012, and has already won a host of accolades for her fabulous footwear. Webster injects fun into footwear with her gloriously quirky designs that incorporate wings, flamingos and colourful slogans with elegant stilettos, trainers and flats. Her

flagship store opened in Mount Street in Mayfair in 2016 and you can also find her shoes at Harrods in London, Harvey Nichols in Birmingham and Selfridges in Manchester.

### Bobby Abley

Menswear designer [Bobby Abley's](#) clothes are guaranteed to make you smile. The London-based designer launched his own label in 2012 and was featured on the prestigious MAN catwalk for the inaugural London Collections: Men in the capital. Abley riffs on contemporary culture to create colourful, comfortable, cartoon-inspired clothing, taking Mickey Mouse, Aladdin, Power Rangers and Storm Troopers as his various muses. Pick up his quirky designs at Selfridges and Dover Street Market in London.

### &DAUGHTER

Buffy Reid is the 'daughter' in this luxury knitwear brand's name. She learned her craft from her father Columba before the pair went on to establish their company in London in 2013. Made in Hawick, in the Scottish Borders, as well as in Ireland, [&DAUGHTER's](#) sumptuous jumpers and accessories are crafted from fine natural yarns. As appropriate for a bracing countryside walk as a shopping trip in the city, &DAUGHTER combines fashion-forward designs with practical



*Stand out from the crowd with Bobby Abley's bold designs. Copyright: Gio Staiano*

touches, such as roomy pockets. Find their products across Britain, at Selfridges, The Conran Shop and Envoy of Belfast.

### **Justine Tabak**

For a true flavour of Britain, discover [Justine Tabak](#), whose beautiful clothing is 'inspired, fashioned and made in the British Isles'. For her first collection, she drew on her roots in northern and southern Britain, with Lancashire mill girls and East London 'pearly queens' threading their way through her work. The finest fabrics and most unique prints combine to make for timeless pieces, from beautifully-cut dresses to gorgeous silk-satin scarves. Keep an eye on Justine's social media channels for details of regular pop-up shops in London to lay your hands on her covetable wares.

## Britain's oldest brands and stores

Some of Britain's stores are older than some countries! Pick up a piece of history on your visit: from the world's oldest record store to the world's oldest logo, here are eight great British brands and shops that have stood the test of time.



*Bettys has been in existence since 1919*

**Bettys, Yorkshire, northern England**  
Tea is nothing without cake, and [Bettys](#) has been making that since 1919. It was Swiss baker and confectioner Frederick Belmont who opened the first Bettys Tea Rooms in Harrogate, and the family-owned business is still going strong. Visit one of the six Café Tea Rooms across Yorkshire, northern England, and pick up a box of Yorkshire Fat Rascal scones or a delicious, flavour-packed fruit cake.

### Oldest Sweet Shop in England, Harrogate, northern England

After visiting Bettys in Harrogate, drive just half an hour away to the village of Pateley Bridge and top up your sugar levels again. The [Oldest Sweet Shop in England](#), which has been trading since 1827, has shelves packed with jars containing all sorts of deliciousness! Sample traditional flavours like rhubarb and custard and pear drops, all of which are made to original recipes dating to the 19th century.



*Step back in time inside the world's oldest sweet shop*

### Twinnings, London

Tea merchant Thomas Twining opened Britain's first tea room at 216 Strand. The 300-year old [central London shop and café](#) is still going strong and is a haven for tea-lovers, stocking hundreds of teas, accessories and gifts. It's also home to a state of the art Loose Tea Bar - sign up to a masterclass with a tea ambassador to learn more about how to enjoy what is arguably Britain's favourite drink. Twinings has the world's oldest continually-used commercial logo, created in 1787, and holds a Royal Warrant from The Queen, which features on the inside of its deluxe tea boxes.

### Lock & Co, London

A postcard from abroad was once delivered to Lock, addressed to 'the best hatters in the world, London'. After starting out as a hatter's apprentice, in 1765 James Lock set up what is now the oldest hat shop in the world. The company's success was cemented when Lock became the hatter of choice to lords and leaders, with the St James's Street store perfectly located for attracting the political and aristocratic elite of the day. [Lock & Co](#) has continued to serve illustrious clients, boasting Royal Warrants from both the Prince of

Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh. Marvel at headgear of all shapes and styles in the London store, and have a hat fitted to you.

### **Cadbury, Birmingham, central England**

Now the second-largest confectionary brand in the world, Cadbury was established in 1824 in Birmingham, central England, by John Cadbury. He started out selling tea, coffee and drinking chocolate, but the company solidified its offering in 1905 with the invention of Dairy Milk, one of Britain's best-loved chocolates. Head to the wonderful, Wonka-esque [Cadbury World](#) just outside Birmingham to make your own chocolate, feast at the Cadbury Café and visit the world's biggest Cadbury shop!



*Cadbury World has the world's largest Cadbury shop*



*Johnstons of Elgin was established in 1797*

### **Johnstons of Elgin, north-east Scotland**

Treat yourself to the softest cashmere clothing made with the finest raw fibres from [Johnstons of Elgin](#), which was first established in 1797 and is still run by the same two families that started it. Using traditional techniques, Johnstons of Elgin knitwear and homewear is lovingly-made by skilled craftspeople, some of whom have been honing their craft at the company for almost 50 years. Visit the shop and heritage visitor centre in Elgin, just an hour by rail from Inverness, or the Hawick mill site, an hour and a half's beautiful road trip from Newcastle, just across the Scottish border.

### **Bushmills, Northern Ireland**

Established in 1608, Bushmills is Ireland's oldest whiskey. Head to the picturesque village of Bushmills and take a tour of the fittingly-named [Old Bushmills Distillery](#), learning how four centuries of whiskey-making tradition have been maintained through generations of the same friends and family - there's a shop on site, so you can stock up on gifts to take to your own friends and family back home. Make a night of it by booking a room at [The Bushmills Inn](#), just along the river, where you can sip the spirit to the sounds of live music after a hearty supper in the restaurant.

## Britain's sale seasons: a guide

Britain may be a nation of shopkeepers but it's also a nation of bargain hunters. Brits love to track down deals, especially during seasonal sale periods when shops offer huge discounts and incentives. And it's not just the high street shops and major department stores that drop their prices. Many independent boutiques offer hefty savings and you can grab even bigger bargains at outlet centres such as [Bicester Village](#) near Oxford and the [McArthurGlen Designer Outlet](#) in York. Time a visit to coincide with a big sale and you could make big savings during your trip.

### When are the main sale seasons in Britain?

#### Boxing Day and January sales

The biggest sale of the year kicks off on Boxing Day (26 December). It may be a public holiday in Britain but many shops open early to sell their discounted Christmas stock.

[John Lewis](#) famously launches its sale on 27 December to allow its staff to enjoy a Boxing Day break. The [Harrods](#) Boxing Day sale is now legendary, and crowds flock to the iconic department store in London's Knightsbridge to queue around the block overnight (serious bargain hunters start queuing as early as Christmas Eve) in order to hunt for the best bargains. Customers are even given Harrods blankets to keep warm. In previous years, the Boxing Day sale event has featured live reindeers and a performance by Florence + The Machine.



*Bag some luxurious bargains in the legendary Harrods Boxing Day sale Credit: Juliet White*

Popular high street store [Next](#) has more than 500 branches across the country and is known for the generous discounts it offers in the Boxing Day sales, with some of its stores opening as early as 6am. [Selfridges](#) department store (in addition to the London flagship store, there are also outlets in Birmingham and Manchester) is also popular at this time of year, particularly for the designer handbags and clothes on offer.

#### Easter sales

Good Friday and Easter Monday are both public holidays in Britain and the long weekend is always a regular fixture on the sales calendar. Many shops use this opportunity to sell off some of their unsold winter stock. Department store [Debenhams](#) has more than 240 stores across the country and at Easter (and at many other times of the year) you can take advantage of its popular 'Blue Cross Sale' that sees items discounted by as much as 70 per cent. After the Easter holidays you can also pick up heavily discounted chocolate eggs at Britain's main supermarkets including Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda and Waitrose.

### Summer sales (June and July)

The date that shops launch their summer sales very much depends on a number of factors, including the weather and general trading conditions. Unlike the Boxing Day or Easter sales, the summer sales do not launch on a specific date and individual shops can start their own sales at a time that suits them. The summer sales usually kick off in July or late June and, depending on performance, can stretch into August. If it's a particularly hot summer, shops can offer considerable discounts to lure people in from the sunny streets.



*Keep an eye out for the start of summer sales at Selfridges for some serious bargains ©VisitBritain / Britain on View*

### Black Friday (the fourth Friday of November)

The American tradition of shopping for bargains the day after the Thanksgiving holiday has caught on in Britain, and Black Friday is now a major event in the yearly sales calendar. Many people buy up all of their Christmas presents, as the sales launch on the fourth Friday of November. The date is now considered to mark the start of the Christmas shopping season. Whereas Cyber Monday focuses on online sales, Black Friday is all about in-store discounts. You can expect to see crowds of eager shoppers up and down major British high streets as well as shopping malls and department stores, with many extending their opening hours. [Marks & Spencer](#) often promotes discounts of up to 50 per cent, and offers a number of promotions at this time.



*Browse discounts upon discounts at Bicester Village ©VisitEngland / Experience Oxfordshire*

### Grab bigger bargains at Britain's outlet stores

Britain's outlet centres offer deals all year round but you can grab even bigger discounts during the main sale periods as items are marked down even further. While some stores might not observe the Easter or summer sale traditions, most outlet centres offer heavily discounted stock in the Boxing Day and Black Friday sales. Britain's most famous outlet centre is Bicester Village near Oxford, a 45-minute train ride from

London or an hour's drive from Birmingham. It's home to more than 130 boutiques including brands such as Gucci, Marc Jacobs and Paul Smith. McArthurGlen has designer outlets in six locations across Britain, including York (a two-hour train ride from London) and Cheshire, a 45-minute train ride from Liverpool. [Clarks Village](#) in Somerset, an hour's drive from Bristol, features around 90 stores including top British brands including Clarks, Hamleys and Hobbs.

## [A guide to Christmas shopping in London](#)

London is a great shopping destination at any time of year, but the city really sparkles at Christmas. Its streets twinkle with lights, its major department stores unveil impressive window displays and its Christmas markets sell all manner of festive treats. Our guide to Christmas shopping in London gives you the lowdown on where to shop for wonderful gifts at this most wonderful time of the year.

### Where to go Christmas shopping in London

[Oxford Street](#) in London's West End is Europe's busiest shopping street, and is lined with more than 300 retailers including major department stores and flagship shops. You'll find dedicated areas selling gifts and decorations at John Lewis, Selfridges, Debenhams and House of Fraser. Many of the shops open late in the evening in the run up to Christmas.



*Festive window displays adorn London's shops at Christmas time. Credit: VisitBritain / Simon Winnall*

[Covent Garden](#) is an atmospheric place to shop at Christmas. The piazza's covered market is decorated with giant baubles, and street performers brave the cold to entertain the crowds. Pick up unique gifts from the independent market stalls or shop for designer gear at stores including Chanel and Mulberry. Fashionable stores line the charming cobbled streets of the Seven Dials area, and you can shop for stocking fillers at the Disney Store and Benjamin Pollocks, a toy shop that sells traditional toys with a theatrical theme.



*Regent Street's famous Christmas lights*

[Regent Street](#) is a great place to stock up on gifts from top British brands including Molton Brown, Aquascutum, Barbour and Ted Baker. Between Regent Street and Carnaby Street you'll find Liberty, a beautiful wood-panelled department store that stocks luxury labels, homeware, jewellery, beauty products and an impressive selection of decorations. Whether your children have been naughty or nice, you'll find all sorts of fun presents at Hamleys, the oldest and largest toy shop in the world. Dating back to 1881, the shop's seven floors are stocked with games, gadgets, soft toys and specialist collector items.

At [Spitalfields Market](#) in Shoreditch, east London, you can shop for unique presents and handmade gifts. The stalls sell all sorts of items including artwork, jewellery, clothing,

ceramics and more. At Christmas, the Victorian market hall is bedecked with seasonal decorations and you'll find mulled wine and mince pies on offer. The market has extended opening hours in the run up to Christmas.

### London's best Christmas lights

The capital is at its sparkling best when the annual Christmas lights decorate the streets. Giant strings of lights line Oxford Street and Regent Street and there are big switch-on events at the end of November that bring together celebrities, live music and family-friendly activities. Cool [Carnaby Street](#) offers an alternative take on traditional festive lights as the decorations are designed around a different theme each year (previous themes have included the 'Swinging Sixties' and the Rolling Stones). Hidden away just off Oxford Street, [St Christopher's Place](#) is a cute piazza surrounded



*Light up your Christmas shopping on Carnaby Street*

by cafes and boutiques that twinkles under stylish Christmas lights between November and January. Or head to The Strand to take in the lights and stop to see the festive frontage of the [Savoy Hotel](#) and wander down to Trafalgar Square to see the iconic Christmas tree, donated to the city of London every year by the people of Norway in recognition of Britain's support during the Second World War.



*Don't miss the wondrous festive window displays at Harrods*

### London's best Christmas window displays

London's major department stores really get creative at Christmas and the window displays always draw huge crowds of festive shoppers. [Selfridges](#) on Oxford Street is well known for its iconic window displays that take an entire year to create. Previous themes have included fairy tales and zodiac signs. The displays at [Harrods](#) in Knightsbridge span 40 windows and often feature bespoke animatronics. The store has

previously teamed up with brands such as Burberry to create fashionable displays. Over in the West End, [Liberty's](#) elegant windows are always a hit with Londoners and visitors alike and are usually stuffed full of classic Liberty fabrics, glitter and gifts. [Fortnum & Mason](#) on Piccadilly is one of London's oldest department stores and its dazzling displays tend to focus on classic Christmas scenes. The yearly theme extends to the atrium, where you can fill a festive hamper full of the store's signature products, including tea and biscuits.

### London's best Christmas markets

[Winter Wonderland](#) in Hyde Park covers a sprawling site that features fairground rides, a giant Ferris wheel, an ice rink and German-style beer halls. Pick up presents and decorations from one of the 200 market stalls in Bavarian wooden chalets. Over on the [South Bank](#) you'll find traditional riverside stalls selling Scandinavian tree decorations and quirky stocking fillers every year. Combine a culture fix with a shopping trip by heading to the [Tate Modern](#) where wooden stalls fill the grassy area between the gallery and the river. You can also tuck into festive foodie treats including bratwurst, mulled wine and roasted nuts.

## Britain's historic shopping quarters

Combine a shopping trip and a spot of sightseeing with a visit to one of Britain's historic shopping quarters. The country may have a cutting-edge fashion scene, and a number of state-of-the-art shopping centres, but if you're looking to pick up something a little different, step back in time and explore characterful shops and independent boutiques in a heritage shopping district.

### **The Shambles, York, north England**

In the centre of York, the [Shambles](#) is one of the best-preserved medieval streets in the world. It was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 but many of the buildings date back to the late 14th and 15th century. The cobbled narrow streets feature overhanging timber-framed buildings that originally housed butchers' shops (you can still see some of the authentic meat hooks attached to the shop fronts). In some sections it's possible to touch both sides of the street with your arms outstretched. The area is now home to quirky gift shops and cafes.



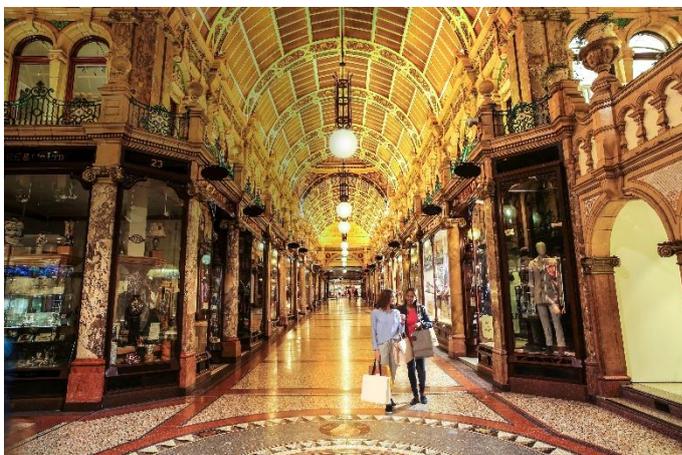
*The Shambles in York was mentioned in the Domesday Book  
Credit: VisitBritain / Britain on View*

**Getting there:** York is a two hour train ride from London King's Cross, and an hour and 15 minute train ride from Manchester.

### **Clifton Village, Bristol, south-west England**

A short walk from Bristol's iconic Clifton Suspension Bridge, [Clifton Village](#) is a posh suburb with a thriving shopping quarter. Most of the independent shops and boutiques occupy beautiful Georgian buildings, and you'll find stores selling everything from cool furniture and quirky gifts to food hampers and traditional toys. In the heart of the neighbourhood, Clifton Arcade is a stunning Victorian mall lined with a collection of tiny stores. Refuel at one of the area's historic pubs with a pint of local cider.

**Getting there:** Bristol is served by an international airport. The city is a two hour train ride from London, and a one hour 30 minute train ride from Birmingham.



*Leeds has a number of historic shopping arcades. Credit:  
VisitEngland/ Thomas Heaton*

### **Victorian shopping arcades, Leeds, north England**

Leeds has a fantastic shopping scene, with a range of high street stores, a modern mega-mall, and a number of major department stores. Its [Victorian shopping arcades](#) are packed full of character and are lined with a great mix of shops, from designer boutiques to hip cafes. Thornton's Arcade was the first to be built in 1878 and features a beautiful neogothic facade. Inside you'll find indie shops such as OK Comics and

cool menswear store, Chimp. The Queen's Arcade has a magnificent four-storey frontage and is home to high street favourites including Levi's, Office and Jones the Bootmaker. The most famous arcade is the Victoria Quarter. It was created by Frank Matcham, the designer behind the London Palladium theatre and the London Coliseum, and features golden mosaics, marble flooring and intricate ironwork. Under a stunning stained glass roof you can shop for designer gear from shops such as Mulberry, Vivienne Westwood and Louis Vuitton.

**Getting there:** Leeds is a two hour and 15 minute train ride from London King's Cross, or it's 50 minutes on the train from Manchester.

### **The Lanes, Brighton, south England**

Close to Brighton's seafront, the [Lanes](#) is a maze-like collection of narrow alleyways lined with boutiques, cafes, restaurants and pubs. The area once formed the heart of the fishing town of Brixthelmstone, long before the area became Britain's coolest seaside town. Many of the buildings date back to the 18th century and the colourful shops sell everything from fashion and jewellery to artwork and vintage homeware. On sunny days you can dine alfresco and listen to live music from one of the area's many buskers. North Laine is a bohemian quarter home to more than 300 independent retailers and some impressive street art, including Banksy's iconic Kissing Policeman piece.



*Brighton's bustling Lanes Credit: VisitBritain / Visit Brighton*

**Getting there:** Brighton is a one hour train ride from London Victoria or London Bridge.

### **Merchant City, Glasgow, Scotland**

The historic Merchant City area of Glasgow developed in the 1750s when wealthy merchants (known as 'tobacco lords') built residences and warehouses here. It's now one of the city's most fashionable neighbourhoods as the Victorian buildings have been converted into cool shops and eateries. Ingram Street forms part of the city's Style Mile and is home to designer stores including Mulberry, Armani and Ralph Lauren. Elsewhere you'll find bridal boutiques, vintage clothing stores and jewellery shops. Merchant Square is a stylish indoor hub with a courtyard surrounded by bars, cafes and restaurants. It hosts a weekly craft fair with around 70 stalls selling items from Glaswegian artisans.

**Getting there:** Glasgow is four hours and 30 minutes by train from London, and a one hour train ride from Edinburgh. The city also has its own airport.

### **Castle Quarter, Cardiff, Wales**

In the shadow of Cardiff Castle, the [Castle Quarter](#) features three beautiful shopping arcades that date back to 1885. The Castle Arcade is split over two levels and has a striking balcony, and public walkways, High Street Arcade features gothic architecture, and Duke Street Arcade is a protected Edwardian building. All arcades are lined with shops selling gifts, jewellery, books and clothes.

**Getting there:** Cardiff is served by an international airport. The city is a two hour train ride from London Paddington.

## Eight of the best: British markets

Shop for eclectic gifts and one-of-a-kind souvenirs at a traditional British market, where local traders sell handmade items and regional produce. We've rounded up eight of Britain's best, from a bustling Georgian marketplace in Bristol to a collection of stalls in an atmospheric church in Edinburgh.



*Pick up unique handmade accessories and more at Old Spitalfields Market. Credit: Joanna Henderson*

### Old Spitalfields Market, London

At this [hip market](#) in London's east end, you can shop for vintage furniture, clothes by up-and-coming designers, ceramics, graphic prints, homemade jewellery and much more. The covered Victorian market hall dates back to 1887 but recent redevelopments have seen boutique shops and small chain restaurants open up around the traditional market traders and food stalls. The busiest days are Saturdays and Sundays, but the market is open seven days a week.

**Getting there:** The market is a short walk from Liverpool Street, which has a train and tube station.

### St George's Market, Belfast, Northern Ireland

One of Belfast's oldest attractions, [St George's Market](#) was first built between 1890 and 1896 and is now the centre of the city's food and craft scene. This weekend covered market features more than 240 stalls that sell everything from fresh produce from local farms and seafood from the Atlantic to handmade jewellery and clothes. Friday is best for food, while the focus is on arts and crafts on Saturday and Sunday. A free bus service runs regularly between the city centre and the market.

**Getting there:** Belfast has an international airport, and is a 90-minute flight from London.

### St Nicholas Market, Bristol, south-west England

This thriving [Georgian marketplace](#) in the centre of Bristol is home to the city's largest collection of independent retailers. Under a striking glass roof you'll find stalls selling vinyl records, clothes, handcrafted gifts and more alongside a tasty selection of global food options including local meat pies, Portuguese tarts and Caribbean wraps. Stock up on local produce at the Wednesday farmers' market or buy one-of-a-kind pieces including artwork and jewellery at the Nails Market on Fridays and Saturdays.

**Getting there:** Bristol is served by an international airport. The city is a two-hour train ride



*Browse vintage clothes and artisan gifts as you wander through St Nicholas Market @VisitBritain / Iain Lewis*

from London and a 90-minute train ride from Birmingham.

### Borough Market, London

London's [oldest food market](#) dates to the 13th century and the sprawling site on the South Bank is home to stalls selling high quality food from an impressive array of independent providers. Go on an empty stomach and fill up on artisan cheese, freshly baked bread, olives and meats. There are plenty of take-home products that make great souvenirs or gifts such as preserves, oils and teas. The market holds regular workshops, tastings and food demonstrations, and attracts foodies from across the globe.



*Borough Market - a foodie's paradise! ©VisitBritain*

**Getting there:** The market is close to London Bridge, which has tube and mainline stations.



*Explore more than 200 stalls at historic Norwich Market © VisitBritain / Iain Lewis*

### Norwich Market, eastern England

Founded in the 11th century, [Norwich market](#) was originally set up to supply Norman merchants and settlers moving to the area from France. It's still a major trading hub with around 200 stalls selling a mix of food, crafts, gifts, clothes and accessories, and is one of the oldest and largest outdoor markets in the country. The colourful stalls sit in the shadow of the historic Guildhall and the city council building.

**Getting there:** Norwich is a two-hour train ride from London.

### Afflecks, Manchester, north-west England

In the heart of Manchester's vibrant Northern Quarter, [Afflecks](#) is an indoor market that celebrates the city's

alternative scene. In a former department store dating to the 1860s, this eclectic emporium is home to more than 70 independent boutiques and stalls selling everything from customised guitars and vintage clothes to affordable artwork and jewellery. Refuel at one of the cafes or relax with a hypnotherapy session. Don't miss the mosaics depicting cultural icons from Manchester's music scene (Stone Roses, Morrissey, Oasis) just outside.

**Getting there:** Manchester is served by an international airport. The city is a two-hour train ride from London and a 90-minute train ride from Birmingham.

### The Royal Mile Market, Edinburgh, Scotland

This [atmospheric market](#) is located in a 17th-century church right on the Royal Mile, Edinburgh's bustling high street. Shop for eclectic gifts, handmade jewellery, scented candles and music memorabilia in the beautiful surroundings of the Tron church with its

colourful stained glass windows and gothic interiors. The market is open seven days a week.

**Getting there:** Edinburgh is served by an international airport, or you can fly from London. The train from London takes approximately four hours and 20 minutes.

### **Shambles Market, York, north England**

There has been a [market](#) in York since Vikings occupied the city, but this specific marketplace dates from 1964. Close to the city's historic shopping district, The Shambles, this traditional market features more than 80 stalls selling local artwork, handmade gifts and regional produce. There's also a street food area with free Wi-Fi.

**Getting there:** York is a two-hour train ride from London and an hour and 15-minute train ride from Manchester.

## Eight of the best: Britain's vintage stores



*Vintage stores are big business in Britain Credit: VisitBritain/ Britain on View*

Like your clothes to tell a story? Love an accessory from another era? Hooked on the thrill of finding that one-off piece you *know* will have strangers coming up to you and asking: 'where did you get that - it's amazing!' You must be a vintage shopper. Check out these eight treasure troves for those who love the pre-loved.

### **Rellik, London**

One of the original and best, [Rellik](#) was opened in 1999 by three vintage-lovers who met as fellow market traders. They've been selling women's clothing and accessories at their enticing Golborne Road shop ever since, with a range spanning the 1930s to the present day.

Designers on their rails could include Vivienne Westwood, Comme des Garçons and Pierre Cardin, and the store is a favourite with stylists, designers and celebrities. A 15-minute walk away is [Portobello Road Market](#), where you can continue to rummage for fashion gold (fashion markets best on weekends).

### **Vintage to Vogue, Bath, south-west England**

Imren and John Owen, who run [Vintage to Vogue](#) in central Bath, exude a passion and delight for vintage clothing that is contagious. Step into their enchanting cabinet of curiosities and emerge with something you didn't know you needed, but which is guaranteed to become a favourite for life. Wares come from flea markets, auctions and passing locals - one of whom brought Imren her ultimate find: a bespoke Dior dress that was worn to The Queen's Garden Party in the 1950s. Vintage to Vogue has supplied costumes to *Downton Abbey*, *Mr Selfridge* and more.

### **Cloud Cuckoo Land, London**

Searching for a Chinese silk piano shawl? A 1950s embellished cocktail dress? Or how about some vintage Balenciaga couture? Such treasures and more are to be found among the glamorous wares at [Cloud Cuckoo Land](#), a diminutive boutique that nevertheless manages to pack in oodles of dresses, feathers and beads. It's on Camden Passage, a charming street in Islington crammed with enticing boutiques and cafés, and home to an antiques market on Wednesdays and Saturdays.



*Take a visit to Cloud Cuckoo Land. Credit: VisitBritain/ Pawel Libera*

### **W Armstrong & Son (also known as Armstrong's Vintage Emporium), Edinburgh, Scotland**

Stylish celebs including Kate Moss, Kylie Minogue and Florence Welch have all been beckoned into [Armstrong's](#) by the promise of cashmere, denim and silks from the Victorian

era onwards. This is no jumble sale - clothing is carefully organised by era and type, and props, statues and objects are peppered around the shop floor to amuse and inspire you. There are three Armstrong stores across Edinburgh - the first opened in 1840.

### **Retro Rehab, Manchester, north-west England**

Check yourself into [Retro Rehab](#) for some retail therapy sure to do your wardrobe the world of good. It's impossible not to be enticed into this cute boutique, thanks to the well-dressed mannequins on display in the window. Once inside find vintage garments, accessories and jewellery sourced from around the world and lovingly restored to perfect quality. It's one of a smattering of fabulous vintage stores in Manchester's Northern Quarter, home also to [Afflecks](#), the towering collection of stalls devoted to alternative fashion, accessories and oddities.



*Retro Rehab is in Manchester, north-west England*

### **Hope & Harlequin, Snoopers Paradise and Attic, Wolf & Gypsy, Brighton, south-east England**

Brighton is packed with creatively-clad locals, in large part thanks to its plethora of fabulous retro fashion stores. Take a vintage store tour, starting at [Hope & Harlequin](#), where elegance is the watchword. This boutique produces a vintage 'collection' each season, focusing on design, cut, fabric and print - and it's a magnet for brides-to-be searching for a unique wedding dress. Next, head to North Laine and stop off at [Wolf & Gypsy](#), whose careful hand-selection of garments makes it less crowded than most vintage stores. Finish in vintage heaven, [Snoopers Paradise and Attic](#), a collective that features 20 designers, makers and hoarders, selling everything from antique textiles to one-of-a-kind garments sewn from vintage fabrics. Team your new look with some old-fashioned seaside fun - Brighton Pier's fairground rides are ideal for that retro-inspired Instagram photo shoot!

### **Hobos Vintage, Blue Honey, Cardiff, Wales**

Particularly inviting to style-conscious men with a love of 60s, 70s and 80s fashion, [Hobos](#) is a fantastic store crammed with groovy shirts, Casio watches, and Lomo cameras. Find it in Cardiff's High Street Arcade, then head to nearby [Blue Honey](#), which 'sells vintage clothes in the week and make parties on the weekend' - get kitted out for the disco, then go to the disco!

### **Saratoga Trunk, Glasgow, Scotland**

Scotland's largest vintage shop has been in business for 30 years, not only supplying incredible vintage finds to the public, but also providing costumes for theatre and films. Movies including *Atonement*, *Evita* and *Miss Potter* have [Saratoga Trunk](#) to thank for many of their best-dressed moments. Find swirling ball gowns, chic cocktail dresses and glamorous jewellery and accessories. The immense store is a ten-minute walk from Glasgow city centre.

## Where to shop for brilliant bargains

If your budget is more high street than [Harrods](#) (although a spot of luxury window shopping there is highly recommended), check out our guide on where to get some of the best bargains across the land. From cut price Barbour and Mulberry via some vintage gems on Brick Lane, these top spots prove that being on a budget doesn't mean you have to skimp on style...

### Bicester Village, Oxfordshire, south-east England

In the Cotswolds, just a 45-minute train journey from central London's Marylebone (trains run twice an hour and stop right outside the door at Bicester Village Station) will bring you to Britain's most popular shopping outlet, [Bicester Village](#).

This one-stop designer shopper's paradise is home to more than 130 fashion and lifestyle boutiques, which offer savings of up to 70 percent. Up on the list of designers are Prada, Balenciaga, Burberry,

Dior, Brooks Brothers, Temperley London, Vivienne Westwood and Calvin Klein Underwear. Refuel at the [Farmshop Restaurant and Café](#), which has been opened especially for Bicester Village by the acclaimed [Soho House & Co.](#)



*Snap up a bargain at Britain's favourite shopping destination  
© Bicester Village*



*Gunwharf Quays sits right on Portsmouth's historic waterfront  
©Gunwharf Quays*

### Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth, south England

Keeping the south coast's fashion scene on point is Portsmouth's [Gunwharf Quays](#). Set down on the historic waterfront, there are 90 outlet stores offering up to 60 per cent off to flex your plastic in. On the womenswear front you'll find Armani, Jaeger, White Stuff, All Saints and Polo Ralph Lauren. For men there's Hugo Boss, Fred Perry, Fossil, Hackett London, Ted Baker and Crew, and for little ones there are bargains to be had at Gap, Bench, Animal and

Joules. Once you're done shopping there's plenty to keep you entertained in the evening, including a cinema, a bowling alley and an art gallery.

### The Outlet, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Just a 25-minute train journey south of Belfast will take you to luxury bargain shopping outlet, [The Outlet](#). Its discounts range from 30 to 70 per cent and cover more than 50 stores across several categories. Sports lovers should look out for Golf Nation, Craghoppers, Mountain Warehouse and Trespass, and for interiors aficionados, browse

Denby, Christy, Bedeck and Villeroy and Boch. There are also plenty of clothes and shoes to stock up on from brands including Gap, Fat Face, Next, L.K Bennett, Marks & Spencer, Jaeger and The Designer Studio. The Outlet is also great for keeping little ones entertained, as [W5 Lite](#) offers plenty of free interactive exhibits for them to get involved with.

### **Hackney Walk - London**

A newcomer to add to the budget shopping set is [Hackney Walk](#) on East London's Morning Lane. The upmarket shopping outlet sits within 12 railway arches, which have all been designed by award-winning British architect David Adjaye. It is, perhaps surprisingly, London's first luxury outlet. Among the sought after brands you can add to your wardrobe (at up to 70 per cent off) are Matches Fashion, Nicole Farhi, Pringle of Scotland, Aquascutum, Anya Hindmarch and Burberry.



*Get ahead of the trends at east London's Hackney Walk  
©Hackney Walk*

### **Mulberry Factory Shop, Somerset, south-west England**

The quintessentially British brand Mulberry started life in Somerset on founder Roger Saul's kitchen table back in 1971. Since then it's grown to be one of the most iconic British accessories companies, known mostly for its beautifully crafted leather heritage handbags. Its early design inspiration was taken from 'English rural pursuits' such as shooting, hunting and fishing, and you know that if you see the iconic Mulberry tree logo, then the quality will be excellent. If toting one of these on your arm is the dream, but slightly out of your price range, you're in luck. The [Mulberry Factory Outlet](#) sits in an old school building in the Somerset countryside and sells both past seasons of its accessories and clothing and limited edition samples at a hugely discounted rate.

### **Barbour Factory Outlet - Jarrow, north-east England**

Another British brand is Barbour, which has a story that dates back to 1894. Barbour's oldest archival jacket is named 'Uncle Harry's Coat' and was designed to protect the wearer against all weathers. Over the decades its functional but stylish designs evolved to include wax riding capes, all in one motorbike suits and scooter jackets. Of course, a lot has changed since those days, but Barbour still make its classic wax jackets by hand in its factory near Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Barbour jackets are so famous they're almost completely synonymous with the English countryside - and the discounts in the [Barbour Factory Outlet](#) in Jarrow are certainly something to wax lyrical about.

### **Music Room, London**

Despite covering 3,800 square feet right in the centre of Mayfair (it's less than a minute's walk from Oxford Circus tube), the [Music Room](#) is one of London's best kept shopping secrets - purely for the fact that it hosts some of the best sample sales in town. Just some of the upcoming designers who'll be holding a full day of sample sales are contemporary British jewellery designer Monika Vinader, iconic Irish print designer Orla Kiely, British

womenswear brand Needle & Thread (known for beautiful, embellished dresses) and British fashion pack favourite, Erdem.

### Beyond Retro, London

The British are known for their quirky, individual style, and nowhere more so than in London. Here, individuality rules, and vintage is a key ingredient. One of the best places to get kitted out (and popular with Londoners), is [Beyond Retro](#).

There are a couple dotted across London (Dalston and Soho), but it's Brick Lane that we'll be making a beeline for, as it's the outlet and offers up to 70 percent off (plus, it's open late on a Thursday until 8pm). It opened in a former dairy factory in 2002, and is as much an important

part of East London's fashion scene today. Prices start from £5 and did we mention there's a 75-foot long wall dedicated to dresses?



*Beyond Retro is an iconic shopper's paradise in East London © Beyond Retro*

### Festival Park, Ebbw Vale, south-east Wales

In south-east Wales' Ebbw Vale, [Festival Park Outlet Shopping & Leisure](#) is changing the face of shopping in the area, with just shy of 100,000 square feet of retail space. And it's certainly one of a kind - after all, how many shopping centres do you know that sit within 75 acres of parkland and include their own [owl sanctuary](#)? It's got 50 birds of prey on site, including falcons, hawks and buzzards. Back to the shops, and among Festival Park's 59 stores there's a Marks & Spencer outlet, a Clarks outlet and a Gap outlet, so you can snap up high street clothes at even cheaper prices. Signing up for a VIP card will get you an extra ten per cent discount. Post shopping, as well as parkland, there's Britain's longest [Supertubing](#) slide and south Wales' largest free children's play castle to try out.



*Step back in time to the medieval shopping streets of the Shambles in York ©Visit Britain/Britain on View*

### York Designer Outlet Village - York, north England

York has always been a great British shopping destination, from the independent boutiques in the picture-perfect [Shambles](#) to the Browns department store in Davygate, via the 12th century Newgate Market. For the real bargains there's [York Designer Outlet Village](#). With a rather pretty backdrop of the Vale of York, it's got more than 120 shops (with 900 brands - mostly in the

luxury/designer realm), with up to 60 per cent off wares from Armani Exchange, Hamley's Outlet, Calvin Klein, Hobbs, Margaret Howell, L.K. Bennett, Musto, Reiss, The Kooples and tea connoisseurs Whittard of Chelsea.

## The great British high street

High streets, towns and city centres have been at the centre of the British way of life for hundreds of years. Down the centuries people have gathered there to do business, meet friends, eat and drink, shop, and enjoy themselves. At the heart of many communities, the British high-street is held in great affection - visit for shopping, but also to get a feel for real life in Britain today.

### **Bridgnorth high street, Shropshire, central England**

[Bridgnorth's high street](#) and atmospheric open-air markets attract shoppers from far and wide. Each Saturday the High Street and Meredith's Yard are filled with colourful awnings as traders sell everything from fresh fish to lawnmowers. Beneath the arches of the town hall, local people set out their stalls each weekend, offering plants, preserves and produce, cakes, flowers, crafts and a great selection of real ales from Shropshire breweries. Dozens of professional



*The historic and colourful Bridgnorth*

painters, potters, sculptors and carvers draw their inspiration from the surrounding landscape and their work can be seen in many local galleries. It's possible to spend many a happy hour bargain hunting in the district's wealth of antique shops.

**Getting there:** Bridgnorth is in the county of Shropshire which borders Wales and is adjacent to the counties of Staffordshire, Cheshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire and the West Midlands. Bridgnorth is approximately one hour 30 minutes from Manchester, and 50 minutes from Birmingham.

### **The Lisburn Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland**

Belfast's premier shopping district, [the Lisburn Road](#) has more than 100 shops, boutiques, restaurants, cafes and businesses and is, without doubt, the place in for quirky shopping. There's a sprinkling of designer boutiques, art galleries, home accessories and to-die-for shoes, jewels and lingerie. And there's a great assortment of cafes, bars and restaurants to ensure your shopping excursion is enhanced by fine food, gourmet gifts and the occasional cocktail. The area is also home to Belfast's signature delicatessen, [The Arcadia](#), which has been trading from the same shop since 1933, and offers the biggest selection of fine cheeses in Belfast; a veritable Aladdin's Cave of gourmet delights! For something more unusual, Fresh Garbage, which been in Belfast for 40 years, specialises in ethnic, street, dance and rock clothing and accessories making it one of Belfast's best known independent retailers.

**Getting there:** Belfast is Northern Ireland's capital city. It is reachable by ferry from Liverpool and is served by two airports.

### **Llandeilo, south-west Wales**

This colourful, picturesque town is scattered with small independent shops, stylish galleries, and boutiques. A true trend-setter, [Llandeilo](#) is home to quaint little shops such

as [Toast](#), which has now expanded to open branches in London, Harrogate and Oxford, selling clothes, shoes and accessories as well as homewares. [Heavenly](#), a miniscule shop on the High Street is famous for its handmade chocolates and ice-creams made from local organic milk and cream - you can even make your own flavour. [Fountain Fine Art](#) and the Bridge Gallery are found across the road, and sell the work of local artists with an ever-changing exhibition of new works. Peppercorn sells a great selection of cookery paraphernalia all housed in a Grade II listed building.

**Getting there:** Llandeilo is on the south-west coast of Wales. There are direct trains to Llandudno from London Euston in around four hours.



*Shopping in Derby. Credit: Diana Jarvis/ VisitEngland*

### **The Cathedral Quarter, Derby**

Renowned for its friendly atmosphere and beautiful historic surroundings, the [Cathedral Quarter](#) in Derby is the perfect place to do a spot of shopping and enjoy a lively café culture by day and kick back with a pint of real ale at night. A treasure trove to be explored via historic streets, with arcades and hidden entrances dotted throughout the area, discover specialist stores and independent shops selling everything from contemporary art to gadgets. The Quarter is also home to

[Bennetts](#), Derby's prestigious independent department store and The Cathedral Shop, which works closely with local authors, artists and artisans.

**Getting there:** Derby is Britain's most central city, and is only one hour 30 minutes from London, or less than 30 minutes from nearby Nottingham and Birmingham by train.

### **Dornoch, Inverness, Scottish Highlands**

In [Dornoch](#) you won't find a row of high street chain outlets but, spread around the small historic town are unique shops filled with character, making it a tranquil place to browse for everything from games to gifts. Take a break from shopping with a walk along the beach, a round of golf at the championship golf course, or a visit to the Cathedral, which dates back to 1224. Out of town but not far away is the Falls of Shin visitor



*Dunrobin Castle is close to Dornoch. Credit: VisitBritain/ Paul Tomkins/ VisitScotland*

centre containing lots of exclusive luxury gifts from Harrods. A trip to Dunrobin Castle is a 'must see' attraction - not only is it a magnificent fairy-tale castle with wonderful gardens, but it also has a fantastic display of falconry.

**Getting there:** Dornoch is on the east coast of the north Highlands, north of Inverness, around three hours 30 minutes by train from Edinburgh.

## Seven of the best: Britain's shopping centres

Despite the name, Britain's shopping centres offer so much more than shopping alone. A one-stop-shop for a great day out, they are all-under-one-roof shopping, dining and culture. Browse for everything from designer fashion to chocolatiers to jewellers all in one convenient location.

### *The Cool One: Boxpark, east London*

Eat, drink, shop or play at [Boxpark](#) in trendy Shoreditch - the world's first pop-up mall fusing modern street food with local and global brands. Entirely constructed out of refitted shipping containers, Boxpark is situated directly beside Shoreditch station and a short walk from Brick Lane, Spitalfields, Hoxton and Old Street. Housing both a pop-up shopping mall and its own food festival, the mall is home to stores including the iconic British amp manufacturer, Marshall; boutique home and garden store, Decorum and creative perfume house, Diptyque. Shopping done, sample the latest food craze, then grab a rum cocktail and head to the tent space to hear the coolest DJs step up to the decks and get the party started.



*Boxpark is made-up of refitted shipping containers*



*Duke of York Square offers established brands and chic boutiques*

paradise, it is also home to one of London's best artisan food markets, along with restaurants for al fresco dining. The centre is five minutes' walk from Sloane Square underground station.

### *The Gigantic One: The intu MetroCentre, Gateshead, north-east England*

There are almost 330 shops, including major department stores such as Debenhams, House of Fraser and Marks & Spencer at the [The intu Metrocentre](#), one of the biggest

### *The Posh One: Duke Of York Square, west London*

The historic and elegant [Duke of York Square](#) in Chelsea offers one of Britain's chicest open air shopping centre experiences. More than 30 stores housing both established brands and unique boutiques mean you can fill your wardrobe with smart threads at Joseph, or newly-opened boutique Rtister. Have your hair blow-dried at The Duchess of Cambridge's favourite salon, Richard Ward, or stock up at the Mary Quant cosmetics store. A food-lovers'

shopping centres in Europe. Five malls and three themed areas, the intu MetroCentre is also home to The Qube, an entertainment area including the only IMAX cinema in the north-east and Namco Funscape, which includes bowling, dodgems and soft play for the little ones. Take a break from shopping at one of 60 restaurants and bars, cafes and coffee shops. The centre is 15 minutes by road from the city of Newcastle upon Tyne, or around three hours by train from London.

### ***The Quirky One: Afflecks, Manchester, north-west England***

Described as an 'emporium of eclecticism and a totem of indie commerce' in Manchester's Northern Quarter, [Afflecks](#) is a shopping centre like no other. Here you can shop for anything from top hats to tattoos, cool skate wear to customised clothes. Opened in the 1980s, it became the shopping destination of choice for Manchester musicians like The Happy Monday's. Today even Lady Gaga is a fan - no wonder as it is packed full of weird and wonderful independent stores where you can dress up and even get something pierced! Manchester has its own airport, or is a two hour train journey from London.

### ***The One with Views: Victoria Square, Belfast, Northern Ireland***

There aren't many shopping centres with their own glass dome but [Victoria Square](#) boasts just that with stunning 360 degree views across the Belfast skyline from the viewing gallery. Combining old and new, Victoria Square is home to all the best high-street stores, from Levi's and H&M to Hobbs and All Saints and, uniquely, a Victorian fountain at the front door. Belfast is served by two airports, sea crossings from Scotland and England and a direct rail link from Dublin.



*Get views across Belfast from Victoria Square's distinctive glass dome*

### ***The Intimate One: Cardiff Arcades, Wales***

Cardiff is home to beautiful Victorian and Edwardian shopping arcades that reflect the city's rich heritage and offer an intimate environment for shoppers who enjoy a quieter alternative to the bustling high street. The historic [Castle Quarter Arcades](#) are packed full of vintage clothes stores, craft and coffee shops, while The Royal Arcade, Wyndham Arcade and Morgan Arcade, are full of clothes shops, jewellery stores and a Cardiff institution: Spillers Records, the oldest record shop in the world. Nearby is [Cardiff Market](#), which has traded in one guise or another since the 1700s and features a striking glass-roofed Victorian structure - a must-visit for traditional sweetshops, bakers and more. Cardiff has its own airport, or is just over an hour's drive away from the historic English city of Bath.

### ***The Sophisticated One: Princes Square, Glasgow, Scotland***

A restored former 19th century Merchants' Square, [Princes Square](#) is today filled with designer brands such as Vivienne Westwood and super-cool outerwear brand Belstaff. Hunt for covetable trinkets at Dower & Hall and Links of London, and stock up on beauty products at Space NK and Jo Malone London, plus goodies for the home at Le Creuset and

Castle Galleries. The courtyard and terrace levels are packed with bustling cafés and restaurants including Tinderbox for coffee, and Darcy's for a leisurely lunch. Glasgow has its own airport, or is an hour's train journey from Edinburgh.

## Shopping at Britain's airports

When you have a few hours between connections to spare, or need a last-minute gift before heading home, the airport duty-free and shopping sections are a real savior. From luxury labels to high-street fashion, and confectionery to fine fragrances, here are some of the best airports around Britain for retail therapy on the fly.

### London Heathrow Airport

One of the world's busiest airports with 75.7 million passengers last year, [London Heathrow](#) is one of the best airports for retail therapy. With more than 400 retail outlets, in 2014 Heathrow was the first airport to introduce a personal shopping lounge in Terminal 2, as a complimentary service for passengers. In recent years, department store [Fortnum & Mason](#) joined 21 luxury and designer brands as part of Terminal 5's shopping redevelopment.



*Chanel is one of the luxury brands you can buy at Heathrow's Terminal 5*

### Edinburgh Airport, Scotland

The place 'where Scotland meets the world', [Edinburgh Airport](#)'s shopping offer certainly has an international feel, as well as showcasing Scottish products to suit all tastes and budgets. Highlights include luxury accessories and ready-to-wear clothing brand [Michael Kors](#), where there is a discount for travellers at the brand's airport outlet. For beauty-buffs, [Mac](#) make-up offers quality skincare, cosmetics and specialty products, while [Jo Malone](#) presents a unique collection of colognes, bath oils, body lotions and candles. Be sure to visit [Brora](#), one of Scotland's leading luxury knitwear brands, where all the cashmere, knitwear and accessories are made in one of the oldest mills in Scotland. With a heritage dating back to 1797, Brora is all about timeless and elegant fashion, and you can be assured of a warm welcome at the airport store.



*Buy brands including Hugo Boss at Cardiff Airport in Wales*

### Cardiff Airport, Wales

The departure lounge at [Cardiff Airport](#) had a complete makeover recently and is now home to [Nuance Tax and Duty Free](#) which stocks high-end fashion and beauty brands as well as home-grown Welsh products. With brands such as Clogeau Gold, Follie Follie, Links of London and Hugo Boss you'll be spoiled for choice while perusing the jewellery and watches on sale. Beauty product lovers can choose from a range of international names including Chanel,

Dior and Lancôme and there are tempting clothes outlets too, including Superdry, Animal and Fat Face as well as the beach favourite, Havaiana flip-flops. If you are after a Welsh

memento from your trip, then Cardiff Airport's departure lounge is a one-stop-shop for teddies, books, Welsh whisky and even the latest Welsh rugby strip for sports fans.

### George Best Belfast City Airport, Northern Ireland

Who can leave a holiday in Northern Ireland without a gift of Irish whiskey in their suitcase? Always well received by friends and family, you'll find plenty to choose from while shopping at one of two [Taste of Ulster](#) shops at the [George Best Belfast City Airport](#). Be tempted by the tasty local merchandise at these artisan food and drink stores, including smoked salmon from the North Coast Smokehouse and soda bread from Our Daily Bread, both delicious souvenirs to linger over when you return home. Once the taste buds are satisfied, visit the popular high-street clothes store, [Clockwork Orange](#) and browse the big names on offer such as Firetrap, Miss Sixty and Hilfiger.



*There's a branch of Harrods at Gatwick Airport*

### London Gatwick Airport

[Gatwick](#) is Britain's second largest airport, and has a [huge selection of shops](#) in its two terminals to cater for the 35 million customers it serves each year. Options include a branch of British institution Harrods, offering a chance for some last-minute luxury purchases. Another well-known British brand, Cath Kidston, is also present, offering bright and colourful printed items including bags, clothing, and accessories. Try before you buy at World of Whiskies - take a seat in

its tasting bar and explore some of the 250 whiskies it offers, before deciding which one to take home. Alternatively, choose something special for yourself or a loved one from diamond and watch specialist Ernest Jones.

### Manchester Airport

[Manchester](#) was Britain's third busiest airport in 2016, and boasts two runways and three terminals, packed full of shopping options. High street brands including Fat Face; JD Sports; Next and Accessorize all have airport outlets, while there's also a great selection of beauty brands. Have a make-up lesson thanks to cosmetics brand Bobbi Brown; chat to the beauty experts about all your skin needs at Clarins; or pick up a selection of ethically-made products at The Body Shop. Kids, meanwhile, will love [Zoodle](#) - a new store packed full of books, toys and sweets.

## Insider guides: five of Britain's best shopping cities

So many shops, so little time! Make the most of your precious shopping hours with these introduction insider guides to some of the best areas and unique shops in five of Britain's cities. London is a shopping wonderland, but why stop there? Bristol's bohemia, Liverpool's glamour, Edinburgh's elegance and Birmingham's diversity are all easily accessible by train. There's always something new to discover - here are some tips to get you started.

### Liverpool, north-west England

*Good for: glamour and beauty*

Love shopping? You'll feel right at home here - [Liverpool's](#) glamorous residents like to dress up!

#### **Must-visits**

##### **Cavern Walks, Mathew Street**

This [boutique designer shopping centre](#) is on Mathew Street in the city centre, close to the legendary Cavern Club - the birthplace of the Beatles. Top shops include [Cricket](#), Liverpool's famous designer boutique selling the hottest designer collections. Meanwhile, the [Vivienne Westwood](#) store sells the full range of fashion and perfumes from this iconic British designer. For carefully-selected quality menswear brands for the contemporary gent, head to [Weavers Door](#).



*Quality menswear at Weavers Door. Credit: Sarah Runnacles*

##### **Metquarter, Whitechapel**

A very short walk from Cavern Walks is [Metquarter](#), a central luxury shopping mall containing boutique stores and brands including MAC, Hugo Boss and Diesel. Smudge Boutique has dressed stars for the red carpet and stocks labels including Alice McCall and Wildfox. For beautifully-made court shoes and clothes, check out beloved British brand, [LK Bennett](#).

##### **Bold Street**

Under ten minutes' walk from Metquarter is Bold Street - a bohemian thoroughfare selling everything from world foods to art and funky clothes. [Utility](#) celebrates totally individual design, selling quirky books, gadgets and funky cards. [Transalpino](#) sources rare trainers from around the globe, and Resurrection has great vintage finds. An ideal spot to refuel is [Leaf](#) - a teashop and café serving delicious food.

##### **Liverpool ONE, Wall Street**

Also within walking distance is the huge Liverpool One, which has more than 170 shops, bars and restaurants spread across its open-air complex. You'll find top high street brands such as Zara and Topshop at this modern city centre shopping mall, plus the [Harvey Nichols Beauty Bazaar](#) - a one-stop beauty destination with a champagne bar, and even a spa.

## Cheshire Oaks, Ellesmere Port

Looking for a bargain? Just a 30-minute drive from Liverpool is Cheshire Oaks - Britain's first and largest designer outlet centre. It has 145 stores, with luxury labels including Belstaff, Burberry and Mulberry offering products at discounted prices.

## Bristol, south-west England

*Good for: independent shops*

[Bristol](#)'s creative vibe extends to its abundance of independent stores.

### Must-visits

#### Clifton Village

[Clifton Village](#) is Bristol's main boutique shopping area, and is a pretty cluster of cobbled streets. Explore stylish boutiques, gift shops, cafés, hidden gardens and the Victorian [Clifton Arcade](#).

Owned by three sisters, [Grace & Mabel](#) is a curated mix of clothes and accessories including labels such as J Brand jeans, Paul Smith and Antik Batik, alongside local design talent.

[Arch House Deli](#) in Boyce's Avenue is a food lover's paradise of picnic-perfect delicatessen goodies. And don't miss Bees & Graves in Clifton Arcade, a glittering emporium of 1920s beaded dresses and vintage costume jewellery.



*Clifton Village's Victorian arcade ©VisitBritain / Pawel Libera*

#### Park Street

Less than 20 minutes' walk from Clifton Village, [Park Street](#) is home to some of the trendiest shops in the city. [Weapon of Choice](#) is a dedicated street art gallery and shop. Jewellery fans can browse bold statement pieces from designers including Alex Monroe and Kate Smith at [Diana Porter Contemporary Jewellery](#), which offers an engraving service. Walk further up to Queen Street and flick through CDs and vinyl of every genre at [Rise Music](#), which has an in-store bar and hosts live gigs!

#### St Nicholas Market, Corn Street

Around 15 minutes from Park Street is Bristol's oldest market. [St Nicholas Market](#) dates from 1743, and is open between 9.30am and 5pm Monday-Saturday. A maze of quirky stalls, historic architecture and street food, the market is full of character and heaven for bargain hunters, with Bristol's largest collection of independent retailers under one roof. On Fridays and Saturdays there's the [Nails Market](#), with original artwork, handcrafted jewellery and vintage clothing; then two Saturdays a month, [Bristol Flea Market](#) arrives with more than 100 stalls selling all sorts of items.

#### Stokes Croft and Gloucester Road

Slightly to the north of the city is [Stokes Croft](#), famed for its street art, including work by legendary local graffiti artist, Banksy. The connected Gloucester Road is Europe's longest street of independent shops, and a great place for shabby chic and artisan food and drink - relaxed wine shop [Grape & Grind](#), for example, offers a great selection of high-end and

everyday wines, craft beers and artisan spirits.

## **Edinburgh, Scotland**

*Good for: sophisticated shopping in a historical setting*

Luxury brands, high street fashion, chic boutiques and fine Scottish produce - [Edinburgh's](#) got it covered.

### **Must-visits**

#### **Princes Street**

This sophisticated street has medieval Edinburgh Castle as its backdrop and is high street fashion heaven, with huge flagship stores such as Primark, Marks & Spencer, and the historic Jenners department store.

#### **The West End**

This quaint area is a minute's walk from Princes Street, with William Street and Stafford Street at its heart. William Street is an enclave of gift shops, delis, and chic indie boutiques such as [Sam Brown](#) and [Frontiers](#). For unusual jewellery pieces sourced from local and global designers, check out [Lily Luna](#), while stationery fans will love [Paper Tiger](#).

#### **George Street and Thistle Street**

A short walk from the West End, the shopping experience continues! For clothes, Jane Davidson's boutique on Thistle Street stocks selected pieces from international fashion brands such as Erdem, Jenny Packham and Roksanda Ilincic. If you're in the market for a diamond engagement ring or a luxury watch, head to super-glamorous [ROX](#) on George Street, complete with an in-store Laurent-Perrier champagne bar. For traditional Scottish tartan design in contemporary styles and colours, browse ceramics, textiles, furniture and fashion at Anta on George Street.



*Shop contemporary Scottish brands on historic Edinburgh streets. ©VisitBritain / Andrew Pickett*

#### **Multrees Walk, St Andrew Square**

Under than a ten minute walk away is [Multrees Walk](#) - a luxury shopping area that's home to stores including Mulberry and Burberry. It also features Scotland's only [Harvey Nichols](#), where you can browse the likes of Celine, Victoria Beckham and Balenciaga all under one roof.

#### **The Grassmarket and Victoria Street**

Apparently, Harry Potter author JK Rowling based Diagon Alley on this narrow, winding street of shops, with its mix of independent Scottish designers and artisans selling world crafts, vintage clothing and antiques. Within 15 minutes of leaving Multrees Walk you could be at the acclaimed [IJ Mellis Cheese](#) shop, sampling fine cheeses from across Europe and

picking up a selection of breads, chutneys and meats - the perfect ingredient for a picnic in the nearby Princes Street Gardens.

## **London, England**

*Good for: big names and big stores, complemented by a huge independent offering*

Shopping in [Britain's capital](#) is exciting and diverse. There is truly something for every style and budget - from bespoke luxury to high street bargains, vintage markets to independent stores.

### **Central London**

#### **Oxford Street**

This [iconic retail hub](#) is home to more than 300 shops and flagship stores. Top shops include beloved British department store [John Lewis](#), legendary [Selfridges](#) near Marble Arch, and the huge flagship Primark store near Tottenham Court Road is heaven for bargain hunters. Trend-conscious shoppers flock to the colossal [Topshop/Topman](#) Oxford Circus, famous for its extensive collections of up-to-the-minute fashion.

#### **Regent's Street**

Arching from Oxford Circus to Piccadilly Circus, this [elegant street](#) is home to some of London's oldest, most famous shops. Luxury British heritage brand [Burberry](#)'s four-floor flagship store is visually stunning. Britain's most famous toy shop, [Hamleys](#), has been trading for more than 250 years and sells every toy or game imaginable over its six floors. Founded in 1875, one-of-a-kind artsy department store [Liberty](#), just behind Regent Street, is famous for its floral prints and large selection of pieces by young British designers.



*Shopping on elegant Regent Street. @VisitBritain / Britain on View*

#### **Carnaby**

Step under the iconic arched Carnaby Street sign to this [funky area](#) between Regent Street and Oxford Street with more than 100 shops - a mix of boutiques, shoe and denim brands and heritage brands such as Dr Martens - plus bars and restaurants to recharge in. Check out distinctive jewellery at [The Great Frog](#), where every piece is hand crafted on site. Customers include Johnny Depp, rock legends Metallica, and supermodel Kate Moss.

#### **Covent Garden**

Covent Garden, under 20 minutes' walk from Carnaby Street, is one of London's prettiest, most diverse shopping areas. Check out arts and crafts at Covent Garden Market and King Street for classy brands such as [Sandro](#) and [Jo Malone London](#). Deviate from the mainstream in bohemian Neal's Yard, a brightly painted courtyard lined with vegan cafés and home to ethical beauty brand [Neal's Yard Remedies](#) for the last 30 years. [Seven Dials](#) is a network of seven atmospheric streets lined with international fashion stores, boutiques and beauty salons.

[Beadworks Bead Shop](#)'s huge range of unique beads from all over the world is a crafter's dream. Check out British jewellery brand [Tatty Devine](#)'s playful, kitsch acrylic statement pieces - in the Seven Dials store you can design your own personalised name necklace and see it get made on the spot!

## West London

### Portobello Road Market, Notting Hill

An unmissable London shopping experience, [Portobello Road](#) boasts one of the most-famous street markets in the world. It's easy to spend hours browsing along this mile of shops and stalls selling vintage clothing, rare antiques, gifts, souvenirs, and street food. The market is around ten minutes' from central London on the underground and is in full swing on Saturday - arrive by 11.30am to avoid the crowds.

Saddle up in Wild West-style at [Jessie Western](#) - a visual feast of cowboy boots, Stetson hats, fringed suede jackets and Navajo turquoise jewellery. Just a few shops down is [Alice's](#) antiques, a fascinating emporium of rare, out-of-the-ordinary vintage finds. You won't miss it - the outside of the shop is painted bright red!

### Knightsbridge

This glitzy area of London is synonymous with luxury, and is less than 15 minutes by underground from Portobello Road. It's home to the world-famous [Harrods](#) - a spectacular emporium of prestigious brands and all things luxury, including its dedicated [Shoe Heaven](#) department, and Toy Kingdom for little shoppers.



*Harrods shoe heaven. ©VisitBritain / Andrew Pickett*

## North London

### Camden Market

Actually a series of adjoining markets, you'll find a maze of stalls and some of the most unusual shops in London at [Camden Market](#), with punk clothing and tattoo parlours aplenty. Full of atmosphere, the markets are open every day and busiest at the weekends. Browse home decor, boho fashion, crafts and trinkets, jewellery, books and vintage in the original Camden Lock Market. The adjoining Stables Market, a former horse hospital, has 700 stalls selling wares ranging from antiques to alternative fashion. Camden is also the home of [Cyberdog](#), which has been clothing clubbers for more than 20 years. This neon-lit, three-floor wonderland specialises in dancewear and fluorescent futuristic fashion. You can't miss it - two giant robot statues flank the large doorway.

## East London

### Shoreditch High Street

Now a shopping destination in its own right, [Shoreditch](#) is renowned for vintage outlets alongside big brands, designer boutiques, indie labels and eclectic gift shops. After browsing indie labels such as Wondaland and Knowledge Cotton in [Aida](#), shoppers can get their hair and make-up done at the store's vintage beauty salon. Shoreditch High Street is around 25 minutes from central London using the underground and overground networks.

### Boxpark, Bethnal Green Road

This 'pop-up shopping mall' housed in shipping containers is a mix of contemporary lifestyle stores and cafés, and is just around the corner from Shoreditch High Street. [Pärla](#) is a curated selection of beautiful jewellery by various designers, chosen by the store's owner. Be inspired by quirky, bright home accessories, creative books, artwork and funky stationery at [The Gift Box](#).

### Brick Lane

This [buzzing area](#), a five-minute walk from Boxpark, is best-known for its curries, but also offers great shopping. [Sunday UpMarket](#) in the Old Truman Brewery is a mélange of 140 creative traders, and lauded as one of London's best markets for new designers.

[Pam Pam](#) caters for 'girls who aren't girly girls', with a room dedicated to women's trainers. [Rough Trade East](#) on Dray Walk is arguably one of London's best independent music shops, and stages in-store gigs. Just off Brick Lane on Hanbury Street is [Blitz](#), the world's largest vintage department store, with racks of classic rock tees, Japanese kimonos and pastel denim.

### Spitalfields

[Old Spitalfields Market](#) is a vibrant hub for creative traders. On Saturdays and Sundays it's packed with stalls, including new designers and mouth-watering street food. [Inspitalfields](#) is a colourful shop for humorous gifts, cards, and unique homewares, while stylish independent boutique [The Mercantile London](#) sells selected pieces from affordable European labels- and even has a cute shop dog called Robert!

### Columbia Road Market

A 20-minute walk from Spitalfields, [Columbia Road](#) becomes an oasis of foliage and flowers every Sunday, and has 60 independent shops - from art galleries to garden shops - as well as pubs, delis and cafés to refuel in.



*Colourful gifts at Box Park. Credit: Sarah Runnacles*

## **Birmingham, central England**

*Good for: high street brands, Asian fashion and special jewellery pieces*

Birmingham is a city that is renowned for its shopping. Whether it's luxury or value, it has something to suit all budgets and tastes, all within easy distance of each other.

### **The Bullring**

This [iconic shopping centre](#) - a design statement in itself - boasts 160 stylish stores featuring 2,000 brands. These include [Selfridges Birmingham](#) - a smaller, edited version of the famous London store, housed in an extraordinary bubble-like architectural wonder.



*The Bullring. Credit: Diana Jarvis / Visit England*

### **Custard Factory, Gibb Street**

Just a ten-minute walk from the Bullring, the [Custard Factory](#) is an independent shopping destination dubbed 'Birmingham's creative quarter'. Browse jewellery, ceramics and textiles from more than 70 of Britain's leading designer-makers at the Sara Preisler Gallery, and find rare, niche vinyl at Milque & Muhle record shop.

### **The Mailbox, Commercial Street**

A 20-minute walk from The Custard Factory (or ten from the Bullring), this attractive city centre building is a luxury retail hub. Be pampered in the [Harvey Nichols](#) beauty rooms, or browse The Mailbox's edit of standalone stores of acclaimed brands, such as London-based Savile Row tailor, [Gieves & Hawkes](#).

### **Jewellery Quarter**

Birmingham's [Jewellery Quarter](#) is Birmingham's 'golden mile', home to more than 100 specialist outlets, all within 25 minutes' walk of the city centre. With shopfronts glinting with gold and dripping with diamonds you'll be sure to find gifts galore. If, however, you're after something extra special, a number of the jewellers take commissions to design bespoke, one-off pieces. Silversmith [Becca Williams](#) makes pieces inspired by coastal landscapes; firm [Drippgold](#) specialises in engagement rings; while award-winning designer [Fei Liu](#) fuses eastern heritage and western design in his colourful creations.

### **The Balti Triangle**

This colourful area isn't just about curries - it's also home to glistening Asian jewellery and textile shops, and is just a 20 minute bus ride from central Birmingham. Step inside [Gohil Emporium](#) in Stratford Road for crafts, artefacts and specialist household items imported from the Far East. [World of Fashion](#) in Ladypool Road is a treasure chest of special Asian garments and accessories mostly designed by Nesh, the shop's owner.