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The Women on the Web

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The Gypsy's Olympic Gold List: Where to Shop in Vancouver



Holt Renfrew, Vancouver/Image: [CC/Aleksandar/Flickr](#)

Zonda Nellis Design, 2203 Granville St. This wonderwoman makes some of the best clothes a woman could own and her prices are a gift. Zonda makes stunning, simple tops and skirts and pants in wool jersey and silk jersey, linen, silk crepe and organdy voiles, velvets and embroidered velvets that fit just right and can become the basis of a wardrobe forever. She also creates fantasy clothes for expensive occasions and big events. And she creates terrific jackets and coats to complete an outfit. Her shop is filled with expensive-looking clothes that are not expensive, but she also will make an outfit to order. This is where your dream can come true and your husband doesn't have to be a banker.

Rose de Salvo at Holt Renfrew on Dunsmuir St. is another wonderwoman. Holt Renfrew carries all the big names as well as the hot new names from the United States and Europe. Rose is one of those rare fortuneteller women who knows everything in the store the angels had in mind for you. I kid you not. Once she has met you, she knows and never forgets your style, your comfort level, your price level. And she is easy. Comfortable. Out in front brushing away any problems in

alterations, shipments, showing you Gucci, Etro, Akris, Giorgio Armani, Dolce & Gabbana, Marc Jacobs, Michael Kors, Lanvin, Loro Piana, Oscar de la Renta, Prada, on and on.

As for cosmetics, never mind Sephora down the street. Holt Renfrew's cosmetic world has *more* and a collection of sweet but high-octane cosmeticians I think were trained by NASA to show you how to do what you do better than you do it. And, attention men! On another floor you will find all the menswear names you would expect to find and some surprises.

It's called "downtown." West Georgia Street and Burrard and Dunsmuir – with Holt Renfrew and the Four Seasons Hotel and with Vancouver's Hermès, Louis Vuitton and Tiffanys. At Hermès you ask for Steven. At Louis Vuitton the manager is the vibrant and welcoming Nancy and the best shoe salesman in Canada is there: Patrick.

Much of this runs over an enormous multi-level mall filled with smart men's and women's stores. THIS MALL is where you find THE BEST ICE CREAM CONES IN VANCOUVER in a little stall called Purdy's Ice Cream Shop. Ooooo la la. Different flavors of the very best ice cream – sometimes *Espresso Straciatella!*

Horrors! I almost forgot lululemon, started by Chip Wilson as a shop for all the Vancouver boarders. Then he moved on to the yoga wave with yoga-inspired apparel. It is now the sports clothes you see all over Vancouver because the town is filled with runners, boarders, bicyclers and yoga lovers. I go to the one in Downtown on Robson Street. There is one in Kitsilano. And they are growing like mushrooms all over America. You can see them on lululemon.com but the store is a lot more fun.

For dishes of all kinds from all countries and table linens, bed linens and kitchenware, the classy place is Atkinson's on Granville and Sixth across the street from Zonda Nellis.

There are home accessories in shops of all kinds but the special one is called Provide Home, 529 Beatty Street. Sets of three felt square containers in fashion colors – the three sizes give you places to toss keys or shoes or papers or books and magazines or things you need to remember – without looking like a mess. And beautiful linens, glass pieces that can give a whole room style, pillows that can make a room look modern, leather pieces that would make an office look intelligent. It is Robert Quinnell's place and he has many resources so ASK if you are looking for something great and haven't found it.

Vancouver has so many towers of blue-green glass that furniture stores thrive. My favorite is Italinteriors on Mainland Street in Yaletown. Miguel Bras is a decorator-designer-artist who oversees the store and helps buyers decorate their homes. He is a BIG talent – go buy a tiny table, meet him. Have the experience. You can always use a tiny cool table. He carries Molteni, Dada, Floss, Matteograssi, Artemide lighting, Cassina, Boffi, Cristian, Alias, Flexform, Metalarte, Simon/Ultramobile and anything you have a hankering for and can't find.

The other two furniture stores I like are Inform Interiors on Water Street in Yaletown – it is filled with great American modern and also one of the best furniture-architecture bookstore departments – and across the street is Boffi with completely different but equally terrific modern furniture and dramatic accessories. Some of the best big pillows I ever saw lying around a store.

Shopping for furniture can make you very hungry. Head for Ganache Patisserie on Homer Street nearby in Yaletown and the famous, sinful croissants they make. It is hard to eat an ordinary croissant again.

There is a great Chapters Bookstore on West Georgia. There is a very interesting Inuit Gallery at 206 Cambie Street. There are pizzas everywhere but probably the best is at Marcello's, 1404 Commercial Drive.

And for food shopping. **Ah Ha Oh Boy** is there a treat in store for you. You may read about going to Granville Island to the market and that is OK for an outing with the kids on a sunny spring day. But the place to shop for food is called Urban Fare. There are three, the brilliant results when a successful businessman in town had a big idea – to sell food as if it is a fun destination! So at Urban Fare there is Frank Sinatra and there is Michael Bubl  and probably Rod Stewart or maybe Yves Montand singing cocktail-type love songs; the oranges and the lemons and the apples have been shined to a gloss and piled into sculptures; the cheeses are endless and presented like jewelry; timely promotions are stacked into fashiony setups. Evian water is always doing something funny or dangerous or chic. You can buy your over-the-counter drugs, fill your prescriptions, buy *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* and all the other hip publications in this atmosphere. You can buy flowers and plants and you can buy delicious meals to take home to eat or you can just sit down on simple chairs at Urban Fare, eat and listen to Frank and Michael sing.

The three stores are on West Cordova off Coal Harbor; one hugs the new Shangri-La Hotel at 1128 West Georgia and one is at 177 Davis Street in Yaletown. Nobody does it better. Or as well. Except for Eli here in New York. But even Eli doesn't have Frank and Michael singing cocktail songs on rainy day mornings.

The Gypsy's Olympic Gold List: Where to Eat in Vancouver

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