

Monday, September 29, 2008

Enter your email
address to receive our
Weekly News Summary

Subscribe FREE!

CHINATOWN
LOS ANGELES

羅省華埠

Have you visited lately?



SALES &
LEASING



SEARCH THIS SITE

Best Shopping

SEARCH DOWNTOWN

Buy Buy Birdie

HOME

READERS' CHOICE

NEWS & OPINION

- Best Boutique: *Apartment 3*
2nd Place: *Freaks Vintage Boutique*

CALENDAR

RESTAURANTS

LISTINGS

CLASSIFIEDS

HEALTH

SPECIAL SECTIONS

DOWNTOWN LIST

BEST OF

LANDMARKS

DEVELOPMENT

DOWNTOWN
LA SCENE

RESTAURANT GUIDE

DOWNTOWN GUIDE

ABOUT US

EDITORS' CHOICE

- Best Secret Store: *Comme des Garçons*
- Best Sneaker Store: *RIF*
- Best Designer Clothing Steal:
Last Friday of the Month Sample Sales at California Market Center
- Best Designer Clothing Splurge:
Candice Held Boutique

BEST Boutique

Apartment 3

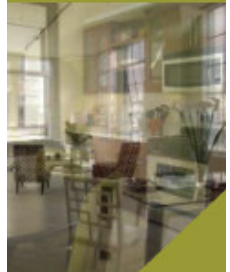
This funky Arts District boutique keeps regular business hours



Apartment 3. Photo by Gary Leonard.

THE
LOFT
Exchange

DOWNTOWN'S
LOFT BROKERAGE



Thursday through Sunday, but the best time to score bargains are during one of the store's so-called shopping "events," or sales coordinated with runway shows, ice cream socials and parties. Specializing in vintage wear and pieces by young designers, Apartment 3, founded by Kristin Knauff, has offerings that are funky and original, yet still extremely wearable.

From T-shirts to designer shoes, pants, dresses and blazers, the ever-changing inventory offers something for everyone, from discerning teenagers to their cool parents. At 1855 Industrial St., #103, (310) 924-9554 or apartment-3.com.-Anna Scott



BEST GROCERY GOODS

Ralphs Fresh Fare

When it opened last July, Ralphs was like the second coming for Downtown. It was, after all, the area's first new full-service supermarket in more than five decades. Needless to say, it had a lot of hype to live up to. Thankfully it delivered, and then some, with 50,000 square feet of gourmet goodies. Rows of organic, exotic and artisan ingredients beckon, from herbs and wild mushrooms to lychee and fingerling potatoes. From the high-end cuts of meat to the popular deli and bakery to the olive and cheese section, everyone walks out with something. There's even a wine tasting happy hour, and super knowledgeable and friendly resident wine guy Mike Berger will fix you right up. There are also a dry cleaners, florist, pharmacy and Coffee Bean on-site. Oh yeah, and it has become quite the singles scene too. Open daily from 5 a.m. to midnight. At 645 W. Ninth St., (213) 452-0840 or ralphs.com.-Kathryn Maese

BEST PET SERVICE

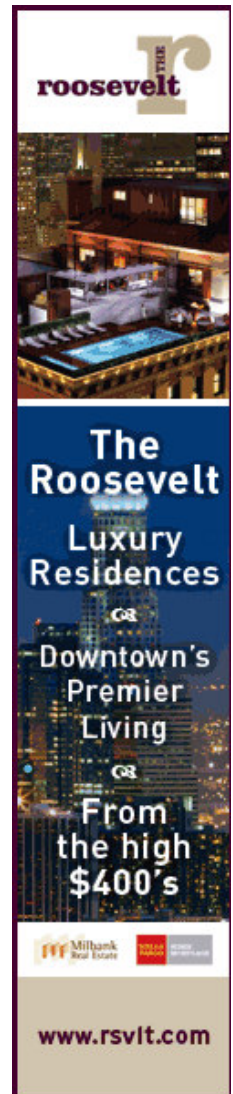
Pussy & Pooch

The newish pet emporium in the Old Bank District has everything for the discerning cat or dog. Stylish collars? Check. Organic and homemade treats? Check. Dog beer? Believe it or not, yes. The shop also carries a variety of packaged natural pet food and basic supplies like kitty litter and biodegradable poop bags, and features a self-serve dog and cat wash. Specialty shampoos, paw balm, dog boots and other extras are available on request. Is it a bad sign if you spend more time primping your dog than yourself? Nah. At 564 S. Main St., (213) 438-0900 or pussyandpooch.com.-Anna Scott

BEST SECRET STORE

Commes Des Garçons

To find this designer shop, walk through an iron gate into the skinny alley between the Historic Core's Bar 107 and sneaker store Blends. Through the



first door on the left, pass through a hanging curtain of plastic strips and behold: a small, industrial space with concrete floors and white shower tile walls, filled with pricey designs by the Japanese label. Pick up pointed leather shoes for \$500, a \$300 black shirt cut at strange angles or a \$1,000-plus coat, and leave significantly poorer but looking like a million bucks. The temporary "guerrilla" store has been open four months and is expected to remain in place at least nine more. At 125 W. Fourth St., (213) 626-6607.-
Anna Scott

BEST SNEAKER STORE

RIF

Situated in the heart of Little Tokyo, this store is all sneakers, all the time. Walls are lined floor-to-ceiling with more than 1,000 styles of kicks, mostly ranging from about \$200 to \$500. For those on the prowl for something special, the shop often carries limited-edition lines designed by well-known artists (you can pay more than \$1,000), but those just looking for something to wear every day can purchase simple, solid-color Pumas. For the sneaker-savvy, RIF boasts the coolest calling card of all: the right half of a pair of super-limited edition, yellow and black Nikes, made exclusively for members and friends of the rap group Wu Tang Clan. The sneaker is so priceless, store owners say, they keep the left shoe in their Tokyo outpost. At 334 E. Second St., (213) 617-0252 or rif.la.-*Anna Scott*

BEST DESIGNER CLOTHING STEAL

Last Friday of the Month Sample Sale at California Market Center

Once a month, many of the 1,000-plus showrooms in the Fashion District's California Market Center veer from their wholesale focus and open to the general public. The result is a chance to grab some of the latest clothing for well-below-retail prices. You'll find swanky name brands including True Religion, French Connection and Prada along with lesser-known boutique labels. Whether you have \$20 or \$2,000 to spend, there is a bargain to be had. Arrive early and leave plenty of time to peruse the behemoth that is the CMC, consisting of three adjacent 13-story buildings. When you're done, reward yourself with a cold drink and a trashy magazine at one of the tables in the lobby. At 110 E. Ninth St., (213) 630-3600 or californiamarketcenter.com.-*Anna Scott*

BEST DESIGNER CLOTHING SPLURGE

Candice Held Boutique

The Fashion District shop offers the ultimate in lovely women's summertime clothes: whimsical printed tunics, brightly colored, patterned halter-top dresses and funky scarves to tie around the head or throw over the shoulders. It's not cheap, but with dresses ranging from about \$140 to \$400, it's not prohibitive either. Inventory changes frequently, and many of the designs are one-of-a-kind, so if you decide to splurge, you'll know nobody else at the party will be sporting your duds. At 838 S. Spring St., (213) 612-0114 or candiceheld.com.-*Anna Scott*

page 26, 7/21/2008

© Los Angeles Downtown News. Reprinting items retrieved from the archives are for personal use only. They may not be reproduced or retransmitted without permission of the Los Angeles Downtown News. If you would like to re-distribute anything from the Los Angeles Downtown News Archives, please call our permissions department at (213) 481-1448.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of downtownnews.com.

Submit a Comment

We encourage your feedback and dialog, all comments will be reviewed by our Web staff before appearing on the Web site.

Name:

Email:

(optional)

Comments:

Image Verification:

