

Summer Shopping in London 2008

No need to let predictions of economic belt tightening put a stop to your belt buying - or any other accessories for that matter. Retail giants Liberty and Harvey Nichols have already started their sales and with plenty of others following suit you're sure to bag yourself a bargain. Our essential guide has helpful tips on summer staples from funky wellies to the best bikini buys in town.

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Pistol Panties

This sunny little shop has been warmly welcomed by London's abundance of hip beach bunnies since it opened in 2005. Kate Moss, Beyonce, Posh and Ginger Spices are all fans. And it's the only UK label chosen to show at this July's Miami Beach Fashion Week. A small summer-y shop, it maintains a very glam, beach-hut vibe that is both contemporarily trendy and has a stylish vintage feel to it. This summer there are four new bikini collections designed by Pistol Panties owner Paris-born, Miami-raised designer Deborah Fleming. Designs are pin-up girl retro, adorned in frills, bows, polka dot patterns and floral prints. You can also pick up some fashionably antiquated accessories for the beach. Lara Bohinc sunglasses, kaftans, kitsch straw beach bags, exotic shell jewellery and a sprinkling of vintage goods beautify the shelves. This place is sultry, beach chic at its best.

Address: 75 Westbourne Park Road, W2 5QH

Phone: 020 7229 5286

Open: Tuesday to Sunday 12pm-6pm

Nearest- Westbourne Park Tube

Station:



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From UK: 020 7437 4370 From overseas: +44 20 7437 4370

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Biondi

A common problem when it comes to buying bikinis is that your top doesn't necessarily equate to the size of your bottom - we've all been there. Luckily Biondi have come to the rescue in a bid to cap the usual summer crisis in the changing room. Not content with simply selling tops and bottoms separately, they've come up with a bespoke bikini service (from £250). It's pricey, yes, but they'll measure you up, offer you a personal consultation and then you can choose the style, fabric and trimming you want; you can even have your togs monogrammed. A sample bikini is then whipped up to ensure a flawless fit, before the final bespoke version is made on the premises. The service takes four to six weeks and is certainly worth the wait. We can only applaud them on their much-needed originality in the bikini industry. Mrs Rooney obviously agrees - Coleen was recently pictured in their Milly Cabana green floral print bandeau bikini.

Address: 55B Old Church Street, SW3 5BS
Phone: 020 7349 1111
Open: Monday to Saturday 10.30am-6.30pm /
 Closed Sunday
*Nearest-
 Station:* South Kensington Tube

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Heidi Klein

This is the ultimate year-round, one-stop shop for swimwear and holiday glamour. The venue itself radiates summer-y sunshine, complete with palm



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trees and sand, it's a very conducive atmosphere to bikini-buying. Expertly trained staff are on hand to advise on the best styles for your shape, and there's a little salon out the back of the Westbourne Grove branch for performing those vital beautifying measures before you bare all. They offer a whole raft of incredibly elegant own-label and designer bikinis, including Etro, Missoni and Anika Brazil. These bikinis are the darlings of beachwear and sported by many a celebrity in the Caribbean. You can also pick up some attractive beaded Taj kaftans, Debbie Katz and Tocca dresses, plus a floppy wide brim straw hat and beachy bead jewellery to complete the beach-chic look.

Address: 174 Westbourne Grove, W11 2RW
Phone: 020 7243 5665
Open: Monday to Saturday 10am-6pm
 and Sunday midday-5pm
*Nearest-
 Station:* Notting Hill Gate Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Funky Wellies

Call it the Glastonbury effect, even the most conservative brands of Wellington boots like Barbour are doing funky wellies these days. They come in a fetching pink as well as a Burberry type check. Not to be outdone, Burberry are doing them too, at £95 a pop. Kate Moss somehow managed to make hot pants and Hunter wellies look chic at last year's Glasto mud fest and now they come in a rainbow of riotous colours from purple to powder blue, available at Harrods, Russell andamp; Bromley and certain branches of Office. Cath Kidston, queen of all things floral, also does a cute line in oh-so-practical-but-pretty rubber boots, patterned with polka dots and climbing roses. Now there's no excuse for not looking hot this summer, even if you are sinking in the quagmire. What does make us laugh, though, is seeing this trend on the city streets. Please, leave this one in the fields where it belongs.



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Get your funky wellies at...

Burberry, Cath Kidston, Office and Russell andamp; Bromley.

Venue: Barbour
Address: 12 Ship Tavern Passage, Leadenall
 Market, Gracechurch Street, EC3V 1LY
Phone: 020 7626 2924
Open: Monday to Friday 10am-5pm | Closed
 weekends
*Nearest-
 Station:* Monument Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Birkenstocks

Every summer, the London streets are ablaze with a rich array of sandals and flip-flops. Clumpy, frumpy and built for comfort, Birkenstock footwear has become fashionable again in recent years. Versatile, robust and trendy, they sell over 100 different styles, colours and textures. Ladies adore the pretty pastel shades and for Spring 2008 designer Phillip Lim produced a new ultra hip range adding to the existing limited edition designs by Heidi Klum so there's even more choice. The men's sandals look good with anything from jeans to shorts and for kiddies there are some very colourful, endearing sandals they can comfortably charge around in.

Address: 70 Neal Street, WC2H 9PA
Phone: 020 7240 2783
Open: Monday to Wednesday, Friday & Saturday
 10.30am-7pm, Thursday 10.30am-8pm,
 Sunday midday-6pm



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*Nearest- Covent Garden Tube
Station:*

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Crocs

Like Marmite, you either love or hate these colourful rubber shoes. Either way, there's no avoiding them. Last summer saw Crocs snapping at the heels of Birkenstocks as the most common summer footwear on the streets. The appeal is so universal that it's not uncommon to see a family of croc wearers - with parents sporting the same shoes as their kids. Anyone old enough to remember jelly shoes from their childhood look on their Crocs with misty-eyed nostalgia. Younger Croc fans love that they can go paddling in theirs without being shouted out. Highly practical and comfortable, they may not be the prettiest things you can put on your feet but at least you can dress them up with Bob the Builder, Harry Potter and High School Musical accessories - a trend best left to the under eights.

*Venue: Office
Address: 190 Oxford Street, W1D 1NR
Phone: 020 7255 2410
Open: Monday to Saturday 9.30am-9.30pm and
Sunday 11.30am-6.30pm
Nearest- Oxford Circus Tube
Station:*

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Flip-Flops



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For those who like to adorn their feet with a daintier look, the Accessorize stores are bejewelled with heaps of flip-flops, from discreet suede bamboo flip-flops to those laced with colourful beads and exquisite white pink shells. They also sell some wonderfully unusual silky ethnic slip-on shoes decorated with Oriental embroidery and sequins. The best news is most of their flip-flops can be yours for a mere £10.

Address: 22 The Market, Covent Garden, WC2H
8RD

Phone: 020 7240 2107

Open: Monday to Friday 10am-8pm, Saturday
10m-7pm, Sunday 11am-6pm

*Nearest-
Station:* Covent Garden Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Spex in the City

If we're honest we'll admit that Italians put us in the shade when it comes to posing in a pair of sunglasses. Shopping at this place might just help to redress the balance. Choose your sunnies in this funky little Covent Garden shop and you'll be guaranteed a cool new look. Stop by in the sale and you may be able to grab yourself an absolute bargain. Staunchly independent, their idiosyncratic array of styles ranges from the starkly quirky to the reliably sophisticated. Designers include Alain Mikli, Phillippe Stark and Porsche, as well as some revered British designers, Booth andamp; Bruce, and Japanese Yellows Plus. Committed to elegant eye wear, it's worth dropping in on this shop before you choose your pair of sunglasses for the summer.

Venue: Spex in the City

Address: 1 Shorts Gardens, WC2H 9AT

Phone: 020 7240 0243



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From UK: 020 7437 4370 From overseas: +44 20 7437 4370

Open: *Monday to Saturday 11am-6pm, Sunday
1pm-5pm*
**Nearest-
Station:** *Covent Garden Tube*

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Bromptons

This cheerful, funky store is an esteemed opticians that just loves to dabble in a bit of summer fun. Located on Kensington High Street, it's faithful to its upmarket locale and stocks a raft of ultra-trendy sunspecs. Hip and fashionable Kensington natives often pop in, in search of titanium frames by Lindberg and Silhouette or, again, designs by Philippe Starck. They also sell German brand ic! and Oliver Peoples, both of which churn out really stylish frames. Bromptons is a great place to grab yourself a pair of well-fitting, fashionable frames - they sell some of the best in summer eyewear.

Venue: *Bromptons*
Address: *202a Kensington High Street, W8*
Phone: *020 7937 5500*
Open: *Monday to Wednesday and Friday
9.30am-6.30pm, Thursday 9.30am-7.30pm,
Saturday 9.30am-6pm, Sunday 11am-6pm*
**Nearest-
Station:** *High Street Kensington Tube*

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

The Eye Company



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A massive range of contemporary sunglasses is available at this hugely hip little store in the heart of Soho. As well as classic Raybans you can get your hands on some seriously colourful designs by LA Eyeworks or funky, futuristic frames from X-I-T. They also do a refreshingly understated range from Minima and offer good value for money with Jai Kudo. For a more mainstream option, the lines by Paul Smith and Cutler and Gross are pretty decent. The shop also stocks a stylish selection of vintage frames, mainly from the 1950s and '60s - though some date back as far as the 19th century. Now that is definitely worth a glimpse!

Venue: The Eye Company
Address: 159 Wardour Street, W1F 8WH
Phone: 020 7434 0988
Open: Monday to Wednesday and
 Friday 10.30am-6.30pm, Thursday
 10.30am-7.30pm, Saturday 11am-6pm
*Nearest-
 Station:* Tottenham Court Road Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Bargains... Topshop andamp; Primark

Topshop and Primark are the twin bastions of bargain summer shopping for savvy London girls. Both are well known for their inexpensive plain tops, basic collections and a good range of accessories - Primark's offering is far cheaper on these finishing touches. Kate Moss' line for Topshop this summer includes animal print bikinis and vintage kaftans - plenty to keep even the most seasoned fashionista happy. The trick with these inexpensive pieces is to mix them up with designer key garments to create a versatile summer wardrobe. With both emporiums located on Oxford Street it's easy enough to combine a trip to the two in one afternoon. Flit through the rails at Miss Selfridge adjoining Topshop while you're at it (Topman is also



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just around the corner to keep your fella occupied). The large crowds that Topshop attracts each Saturday can make hard to track down a must-have item among the masses but it's well worth the effort.

Address: Topshop, 36-38 Great Castle Street, W1W
8LG
Phone: 020 7636 7700
Open: Monday to Saturday 9am-9pm and Sunday
11.30am-6pm
*Nearest-
Station:* Oxford Circus Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Mid Range... Banana Republic

We have been loving Banana Republic since it opened in London in spring this year. Bringing the popular preppie American brand to the UK was a welcome move with Londoners who like the sophisticated, smart-casual look. Somewhere between Reiss and Massimo Dutti, it's owned by Gap and is best described as Gap's older, wiser and more smartly dressed big sister. With three floors of affordable fashions filling this Regent Street store, the summer stock ranges from pretty silk blouses to summer shift dresses. The beauty of the store is in the lay-out of the clothes, making those key pieces easy to find. Just don't go comparing the prices to those in the US. On current exchange rates, the London tags start to look a little steep but, unless you're already planning a trip to the States, this is the best place to stock up on your summer staples.

Address: 224 Regent Street, W1B 3BR
Phone: 020 7758 3550



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Timing: *Monday to Wednesday & Friday
10am-8pm, Thursday 10am-9pm, Saturday
9am-8pm and Sunday midday-6pm*

**Nearest-
Station:** *Oxford Circus Tube*

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Blow the Budget... Dover Street Market

Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent are not labels you'd usually find down your local market but Dover Street is no ordinary market. In reality, it's a cutting-edge, design-led department store - the cool interior design is down to Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garcons fame. Recent collaborations with Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent, launching this summer, only add cachet to the existing designer offering. A minimalist, functional interior - steel beams, brick walls, Portakabins - provides a suitably stark canvas set over six floors for the various fashion designs on display. All of the designers displaying their wares are encouraged to adapt the space to suit their collection, which means that the interior is often as dynamic as the range of clothing. The designs on display won't be for everyone - this is high not high street fashion - but even if you're not there to buy, walking around this construction-site-come-shopping-centre is a rare treat.

Address: *17-18 Dover Street, W1S 4LT*

Phone: *020 7518 0680*

Open: *Monday to Saturday 11am-6pm, late night
Thursdays 11am-7pm | Closed Sunday*

**Nearest-
Station:** *Green Park Tube*

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Bargains... TK Maxx

"Big labels for less" oh yes, you can say that again. One big bargain basement with sale prices on permanently, TK Maxx is the savvy shopper's haven. Three floors are dedicated to discount clothes - his and hers - as well as homewares. Head to the second floor for the men's department where you'll find well-known high street labels like French Connection, DKNY and Diesel, there's a good selection of casual clothes and sportswear too with sweatshirts by Nike, Head, Umbro and Fila. Suits are by Ben Sherman and smart work shirts by Charles Tyrwhitt and Pierre Cardin. It's easy to spend hours trawling through rails but well worth it when you get your reward - finding the designer gem in the rough. Prices are slashed by as much as fifty per cent off the recommended retail price so, even if you leave feeling slightly frazzled, you'll walk away with a bargain. Brilliant.

Address: 57 King Street, W6 9HW
Phone: 020 8563 9200
Open: Monday to Friday 10am-8pm, Saturday
 9am-7pm and Sunday 11am-5pm
*Nearest-
 Station:* Hammersmith Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Mid Range... Thomas Neal Centre

This is a trend-setter's heaven. Some say it's a bit pretentious but there's certainly no better place to pick up the latest streetwear collections. The inside of this gentrified warehouse has been converted into a fiercely hip medley of designer outlets specialising in urban cool. The shops are strewn across two floors of a rustic wooden interior, nicely complemented with a neat flagstone courtyard below where young socialites mingle, attempting to out-cool one



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another in the coffee shop. All the shops flog labels aimed at the young, wealthy and not particularly smart. You'll come across Boxfresh, Carhartt, Firetrap, Fred Perry, Diesel, G-Star and Fat Face, to name but a few.

Address: 29-41 Earlham Street, Covent Garden,
WC2
Phone: 020 7240 4741
Open: Monday to Saturday 10am-5pm and
Sunday midday-6pm
*Nearest-
Station:* Covent Garden Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Blow the Budget... Nigel Hall

Amidst the flamboyant fashions of Floral Street, Nigel Hall stands out for chic understatement. Simple, beautifully-cut, casual and smart-casual clothes in fashionable colours and subtly imaginative designs are their forte. The delicate fabrics they use aren't the hardest-wearing in the world but they're ideal for these hotter summer months, and you'll want to save these exquisite items for special occasions rather than daily use. Prices are steep, but hit them in the sales, and you'll find some dramatic reductions.

Address: 18 Floral Street, WC2E 9DS
Phone: 020 7836 8223
Open: Monday to Wednesday 10.30am-6.30pm,
Thursday 10.30am-8pm, Friday and
Saturday 10.30am-7pm and Sunday
midday-6pm
*Nearest-
Station:* Covent Garden Tube



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SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Fresh

This exclusive American collection of skin, body and haircare products, designs a stunning range of goodies just for summer. The products are lovely to look at with pretty packaging and slender bottles. Inside, it's no less disappointing. Crammed full of delicious ingredients such as soy, milk, rice and sugar, they smell good enough to eat. A comprehensive range of moisturising sun-creams will protect your precious skin with both the most technologically advanced formulas and a touch of class. They offer plenty of after-sun treatment too. We particularly recommend Foaming Shea Butter, it will leave your sun-kissed skin soft and silky. If you're feeling a little frazzled by all the frantic summer pursuits, re-nourish your skin with the popular V-Tonic. Designed to replace those nutrients lost through stress and exercise it's a real winner with Fresh fans.

Address: *92 Marylebone High Street, W1U*
Phone: *020 7486 4100*
Open: *Monday to Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 10am-7pm, Thursday 10am-8pm and Sunday midday-5pm*
Nearest-Station: *Baker Street Tube*

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Space NK

Summer skincare doesn't get much more stylish than this. Space NK is the high street's poshest cosmetics shop with niche must-have brands like Acqua



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di Parma, Laura Mercier and Jurlique. Toiletries, cosmetics, lip balms, camouflages and powders, as worn by celebrities and those in the know are all sourced here. For summer, protect beach hair with Frederic Fekkai SunShine Shield Spray and get a gorgeous just back from holiday sun-kissed look with Afterglow self-tan. We love Nars Monoi Body Glow which gives that scent of summer while making skin shine with a beautiful sheen. With 24 branches of Space NK conveniently located on most high streets across the capital there's no excuse for letting your grooming slip this summer.

Address: 32 Shelton Street, WC2H 9JE

Phone: 020 7379 6384

Open: Monday to Wednesday, Friday and
Saturday 10am-7pm, Thursday 10am-8pm
and Sunday midday-6pm

*Nearest-
Station:* Covent Garden Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

L'Occitane

Inspired by the South of France, this chic little gem brings the beating sunshine and the summer glamour of San Tropez to Regent Street. New for this summer, L'Occitane do Brasil, offers natural sun protection. Like all of L'Occitane's products, broad spectrum SPF creams and after-sun balms come with the goodness of natural ingredients. Products include good-for-you ingredients such as almonds, oranges, olives and honey, all of which carry the sweet essence of summer. Packaged up incredibly attractively, every product is really classy. We love the Shea Butter moisturising range especially in the summer months. Perfect at quenching sun-dried skin, splash a bit of this stuff on and you'll feel soft, supple and drop-dead gorgeous. If you're feeling a little hot under the collar their Light Body Green Tea Gel is so refreshing and great for a sweltering summer in the city. Glamorous ladies can also choose



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from a whole range of floral fragrances. The four roses scent will have you smelling like an English Garden in July. Delicious.

Address: 149 Regent Street, W1B
Phone: 020 7494 0467
Open: Monday to Wednesday, Friday &
 Saturday 10am-7pm, Thursday 10am-8pm
 and Sunday 11am-5pm
**Nearest-
 Station:** Oxford Circus Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

D2 Leisure

This gargantuan warehouse store has one of the finest and best value ranges of bicycles in the capital. The selection is so extensive that kids can be dragging parents around for hours until they find the one they like best. Colourful bikes, BMXs, cruisers, trikes, mountain bikes, Disney bikes and even unicycles are on sale. With the size of the shop, there's plenty of room to take a test ride to make sure it's the right one. As well as all the two-wheeled fun, D2 stock a great selection of battery-powered ride-on quads, cars, motorbikes and skateboards, as well as outdoor games including giant board games.

Address: 201-203 Roman Road, Bethnal Green, E2
 0QY
Phone: 020 8980 4966
Open: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and
 Friday 9am-5.30pm, Wednesday
 and Saturday 9am-5pm | Closed Sunday
**Nearest-
 Station:** Bethnal Green Tube



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SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Early Learning Centre

The Early Learning Centre prides itself on offering parents the chance to buy safe toys, designed to develop young children's skills and help them explore their imaginations, while having fun at the same time. The Chelsea branch of this nationwide chain has a fabulous array of playthings perfect for kids to enjoy in the sunshine. Youngsters can splash around in the paddling pools, jump up and down on the trampolines, bounce on inflatable castles, scoot around on roller skates and enjoy a game of cricket with their friends. They'll also love pretending with their mock garden tools, barbeques and picnic hampers. There are a number of well-designed playhouses that can be ordered too. If you're free on Tuesday mornings, from 9.30am - 11.30am, the shop organises a play session where the kids can run wild experimenting with all the toys. I don't know a youngster who'd turn down the opportunity.

Address: 36 King's Road, Chelsea, SW3 4UD
Phone: 020 7581 5764
Open: Monday to Friday 9.30am-7pm, Saturday
 9.30am-6pm and Sunday 11am-6pm
**Nearest-
 Station:** Sloane Square Tube

SUMMER SHOPPING IN LONDON 2008

Patrick's Toys

Patrick's Toys stocks a superb, diverse range of outdoor games and equipment that your kids will love to play with this summer. From traditional favourites like climbing frames, swings and slides, to great new kit like go-karts with



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engines - the selection has something to please all the young ones. For budding green-fingered youngsters there is a solid range of Brio garden tools. You'll find enough here to keep your brood amused until September.

Address: 107 Lillie Road, SW6 7SX
Phone: 020 7385 9864
Open: Monday to Saturday 9.30am-5.30pm
Nearest-Station: Fulham Broadway Tube



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