

LIFE & STYLE

STYLE SECRETS

Qing Shao, Owner of Q Apartment



What led you into selling vintage and retro garments? I used to work as a stylist, attending fashion shoots and shows in China and Europe. I developed an eye for vintage threads during [these] trips and began putting together my own collection of second-hand garb. The decision to open a retro boutique and share what I had accumulated through the years was just the next natural step. I set up Q Apartment last October.

What draws you to vintage fashion? Retro clothing is unique and beautiful in a way that modern, high street garments can't be. The quality of a 1930s or 1950s piece is just on a completely different level compared to what you get today. Designer [pieces] from the past exude a charm that's hard to resist. For me at least.

How many pieces do you own? Around 150.

Are people in Beijing interested in vintage wares? Yes, absolutely. An increasing number of young, well-traveled Chinese people are really getting into the whole retro, old-fashioned scene. They are style-savvy and acquainted with seeing and

purchasing vintage abroad. I expect to see more it into the future.

Latest fashion purchase? White silk pajamas with a printed flower motif I spotted on a street stall the other day.

How would you describe your style? I like to dress differently. I try to escape any typecasting when it comes to fashion. I can be sporting a super-chic ensemble one day and rock a grunge outfit the next. I definitely never stick to one trend.

Favorite designer? Yves-Saint Laurent, no doubt.

Do you have a piece you're particularly fond of? Yes, an Yves-Saint Laurent wrap skirt from the 1970s. I sold it recently, sadly!

If you could travel back in time to a decade, what would that be? The 1960s – it was a decade full of energy, ideas and amazing music. I think it would have matched my personality quite well.

> 2606, Bldg 6B, Pingod, 32 Baiziwan Lu, Chaoyang 朝阳区百子湾路32号苹果社区6B楼 2606 (186 1033 0793, by appointment only)

PHOTO BY NOEMI CASSANELLI

COVET

Cat Lady

This is one for all you feline aficionados out there, spinster or otherwise. Taking the concept of animal accessories to a whole new level, this cross-body cat bag (RMB198) lies somewhere between creepy and adorable. But it will prove a definite attention-grabber wherever you sport it. Crafted by Hong Kong design label Benwinwin and big enough to carry all your daily necessities, it's going to make kitty lovers squeal with delight. It may also make kids point at you in awe and cat-haters cringe. This is exactly what any dream bag should do. After all, haters gon' hate. The label also offers pillows shaped like hens and meerkats (YES PLEASE), bags that look like dogs and plenty more animal-inspired items. We assure you that this is going to be the next big trend for fall.

> Available at Monster, 89 Baochao Hutong, Dongcheng 东城区宝钞胡同89号 (8408 3481)



Perfect Cover

Cycling is great. Being caught in a sudden thunderstorm on the way to work and finding oneself covered in mud? Not so much. While ponchos offer good protection, they don't always cover your important bits and we all know that the posterior is right up there with the body parts you want to keep dry. No one wants a wet bum. But then perhaps you don't want to burden your fixie with a proper mudguard either. But fret not, the Ass Saver is here.

It may only be a tiny bit of folding plastic that slots underneath your saddle, but this clever bike gadget is an invaluable emergency fender to deploy whenever the streets get wet. There when you need it and gone when you don't, it ensures a dry bottom like nothing else (when it comes to cycling, that is – we recommend a towel for everything else). RMB70.

> www.wearefactoryfive.com



OVERHEARD

“Mainland travelers have shown incredible enthusiasm for the North and South Pole trips we organized before, so we are confident that those wealthy adventurers will be interested in conquering space”



Wang Luye, vice president of Dexo Travel, the Chinese business partner of Amsterdam-based Space Expedition Corporation (SXC) which is offering China's nouveau riche tours to outer space. The tickets – sold on Taobao – are going for as little as USD100,000, a snip compared to British billionaire Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic, which offers expeditions starting at USD250,000.

MADE IN CHINA

Smog Chic



Yes, pollution is an issue in China. Yes, the air can feel a little toxic and lung-defiling sometimes. We know all of this. And lest we forget, we have the never-ending stream of WeChat moments, Twitter posts and newspapers articles to remind us. Discussing smog has become as pervasive as talking about the weather. And just about as boring. But hey, since we've chosen to make this our home we should stop complaining and start making anti-pollution masks enviable accessories. If you can't escape the smog, you might as well look good trying not to breathe it in, right? Using the rationale that looking fashionable should clearly be one of your top priorities (alongside the science stuff), we recommend you invest in something that won't make you look like Bane or a rescue worker at Chernobyl.

Boasting a somewhat cooler range than most, Vogmask is a style-conscious line of masks worth checking out. First launched in the US, the company – which uses hospital-approved technology – opened its China offices in 2013, targeting both locals and expats concerned about air quality. The microfiber fabrics filter an average of 99.978 percent of particulate matter. But loads of them do that. What we like about these masks is the fun, kitschy and attention-grabbing prints – particularly the collection designed in collaboration with Plastered 8.

Because you (and your lungs) are worth it. RMB180-225. Sizes suitable for babies, kids, teens and adults.

> www.vogmask.cn



UNDER THE LENS

Masha Ma



One of the brightest talents among the new generation of Chinese contemporary fashion designers, Masha Ma has been enlisted to help luxury e-tailer Yoox celebrate the World Cup alongside nine top global fashion labels. The couturiers, which include brands like America's Opening Ceremony and Italy's MSGM, were tasked with creating a capsule collection of unisex sweatshirts representing their home countries' teams. Beijing-born Ma's design takes inspiration from China's sporting culture and features a red, white and black three-dimensional pattern with ripples, a pagoda, soccer boots and the letter "M" fused together in a collage. China might not have made it to the World Cup but at least now there's a reason to show some love to the team this summer.