

THE JEWELLERY: LOQUET LONDON

WHAT: Part old-fashioned keepsake locket, part modern charm necklace

WHO: The founders are the stylish London duo Sheherazade Goldsmith, a British environmentalist, and model Laura Bailey, who have been friends since their twenties. "The idea came about from a gift my son gave me—something he had bought at a funfair," Goldsmith tells us. "I explained the idea to Laura and together we turned Loquet into a concept. It was something we both felt we would love to have, so it was seamless to develop."

HOW: Choose your locket (heart or round), size (large, medium or small) and metal (yellow, rose or white gold) and create something unique and personal, filling it with loose diamonds, birthstones, numbers, letters, a tiny charm or talisman.

JOIN THE CLUB: Celebrity fans include Alexa Chung, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, Poppy Delevingne, January Jones and Thandie Newton.

Loquetlondon.com

Tel: +44-208-876-5998

FOCUS

BESPOKE

How to stand out in a crowd? Be different. And a slew of new labels offering limited styles, high-end customisation and made-to-order details are helping us get there. *Vogue* uncovers the one-of-a-kind pieces you need to have in your wardrobe. By MALIKA DALAMAL

THE SHOE: MARGAUX

WHY: For perfectly fitted ballerina flats look no further than this New York-based company founded by recent Harvard graduates Alexa Buckley and Sarah Pierson.

HOW: Request a complimentary fitting kit that will be sent out in the post with a tape measure and measuring guide. (New Yorkers can have a fit specialist come straight to their door.) Choose a colour, and two weeks later your order will be ready to ship. Margauxny.com



THE BAG: PEAU DE CHAGRIN

In a world of fast fashion, former fashion publicist Mesh Chhibber and artist Sofie Guerrero realised the need for quality craftsmanship one could hold on to. The result? A collection that comprises just one style—an understated tan handbag based on the vintage doctor's bag. The anti-It bag, if you may. The concept? Once the run of 100 bags is sold out, you won't be able to get hold of the style again.

THE INSPIRATION: "Peau de Chagrin is inspired by Honoré de Balzac's novel of the same name. It's a Faustian tale of talent, decadence, debauchery, magic and a prophetic warning against materialism," Chhibber explains.

THE PROCESS: Each bag is handcrafted by a single master artisan in the Jura Mountains of Switzerland, part of the nation's "watch valley." The tan leather exterior is from a Belgian tannery that only works with the vegetable tanning method.

USP: Since they avoid the toxic chrome treating process often used to process leather, the bags are environmentally sustainable and socially responsible.

NEXT UP: Look out for the second product in the range—a limited-edition scarf made and printed in Lyon by a workshop founded in the city in 1890 that uses traditional printing techniques. Peaudechagrin.com >



THE BLAZER: BLAZE MILANO

THE INSPIRATION:

For the Italians, tailoring is everything. It's precisely this need that drove three chic friends—Delfina Pinardi, Corrada Rodriguez D'Acri and Sole Torlonia—to create a timeless collection of blazers handmade by Italian craftsmen in Milan.

THE PROCESS:

Four styles are currently available—Everyday, Weekend, Midnight Smoking and Colonial—and each can be customised with initials (font, colour and placement), buttons and fabric. Orders take approximately one to two months.

THE APPEAL OF BESPOKE:

"The era of looking like everyone else is over. People want to find their own identity," says Pinardi.

CRAZIEST ORDER:

The double-breasted Everyday blazer is the most popular

but the most unique so

far has been a mint blazer with creamy contrasts, and one in strawberry pink. "We were a little afraid but in the end it came out beautifully," Pinardi recalls. Blaze-milano.com

THE TROUSSEAU TRUNK: TRUNKS COMPANY JAIPUR

The Jaipur-based trunk company is the brainchild of brothers Paritosh and Priyank Mehta, whose bespoke trunks are made in collaboration with French designer Livio Delesgues and can be found in the homes of royalty, movie stars and tastemakers all over the world. The idea of travelling by ship, trunk in tow, might be a thing of the past but, as the brothers explain, these trunks—used as storage outlets and lifestyle pieces—are the future.

THE PROCESS:

"Each trunk tells its own story. We invite clients to our atelier in Jaipur to discuss their requirements, after which we prepare a final sketch. They can select the function as well as finish. We can further personalise the trunks with initials and crests on a brass plate," says Paritosh.

THE APPEAL OF BESPOKE:

"Our trunks are a reflection of our core values: unique, discreet, handmade and authentic. Bespoke trunks have evolved from being a mere statement-making piece to an extension of the client's personality. They are designed to treasure every possession," he adds.

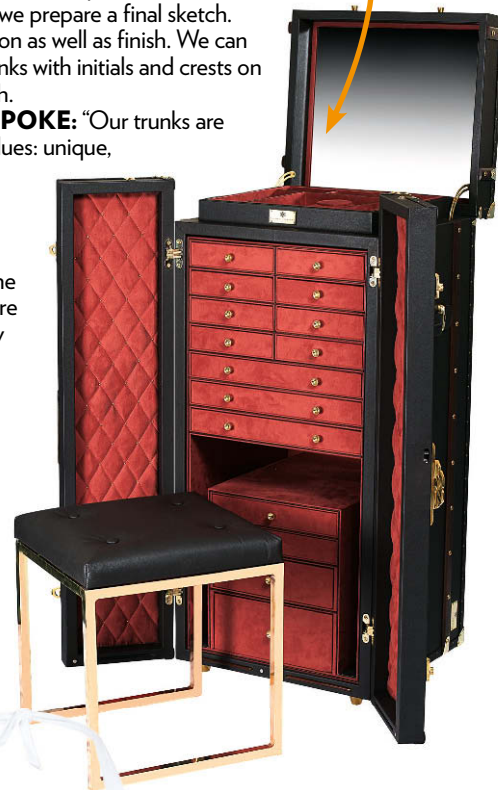
MOST EXQUISITE TRUNK:

"We crafted a sword trunk that was presented to a royal groom by the bride's family during the toran ceremony. It was made from brass."

Trunkscompany.com;

Tel: 0141-4064999,

0141-2210595



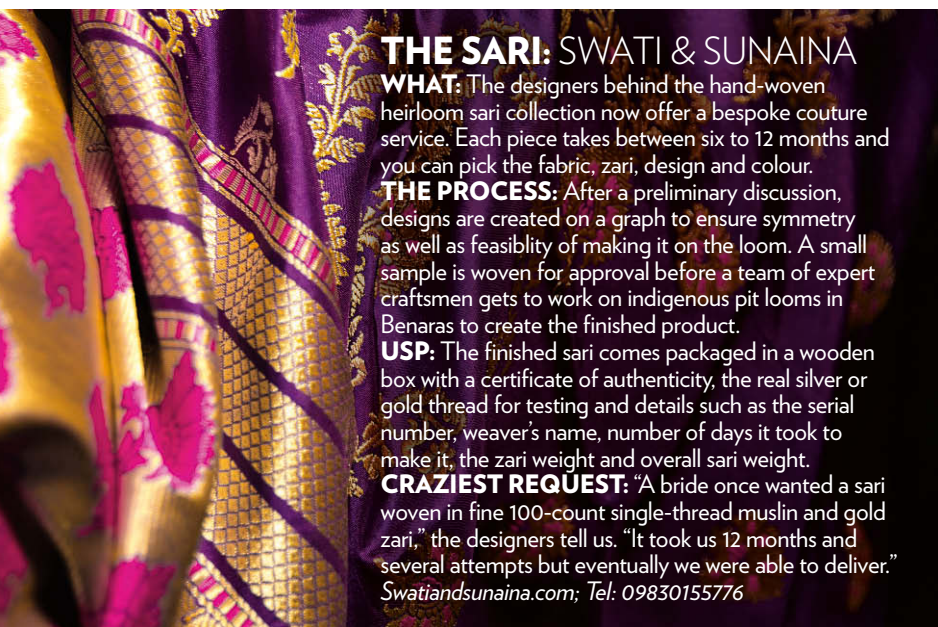
THE SARI: SWATI & SUNAINA

WHAT: The designers behind the hand-woven heirloom sari collection now offer a bespoke couture service. Each piece takes between six to 12 months and you can pick the fabric, zari, design and colour.

THE PROCESS: After a preliminary discussion, designs are created on a graph to ensure symmetry as well as feasibility of making it on the loom. A small sample is woven for approval before a team of expert craftsmen gets to work on indigenous pit looms in Benaras to create the finished product.

USP: The finished sari comes packaged in a wooden box with a certificate of authenticity, the real silver or gold thread for testing and details such as the serial number, weaver's name, number of days it took to make it, the zari weight and overall sari weight.

CRAZIEST REQUEST: "A bride once wanted a sari woven in fine 100-count single-thread muslin and gold zari," the designers tell us. "It took us 12 months and several attempts but eventually we were able to deliver." Swatiandsunaina.com; Tel: 09830155776



THE BIKINI: MELISSA ODABASH

WHAT: Honeymooning brides can show off their new marital status in a Melissa Odabash personalised bikini.

HOW: The London-based swimwear designer will embellish the back of your white Martinique or Maldives styles with 'Mrs' and the first initial of your new surname in either gold embroidery or small crystals. Odabash.com >





THE TRUNK: NAPPA DORI

Delhi-based designer Gautam Sinha's brand of handmade leather accessories includes everything from tote bags and trunks to iPad and laptop covers and is known for its nostalgic, sepia-toned aesthetic. We asked Sinha how he creates the old-world charm through a modern process.

Which products do you customise?

The most popular are the trunks. We can create specific outer colours, different fabrics and prints for the inner linings as well as varying compartments and sizes.

How long does it take?

A fully bespoke piece can take up to 20 days from the initial sketch phase but monogramming can be done in a few days.

What is the best bespoke piece you have made?

A Japanese chef wanted a personalised trunk to carry all his precious chef's knives.

Have you ever declined a request?

I wouldn't want to go into too much detail but let's just say there have been some strange requests in the line of some leather restraints! Nappadori.com

THE SMOKING SLIPPER: DEL TORO

WHAT: These borrowed-from-the-boys alternatives to ballet flats are available in velvet, suede or linen with options of a customised image or monogram embroidery in over 25 colours ranging from fuchsia to hunter green, turquoise and cobalt blue.

WHERE: All products are made on the Adriatic coast of Italy.

THE INSPIRATION: A combination of founder Matthew Chevallard's Italian heritage, his childhood spent amongst the preppy aesthetic of Palm Beach and a love of edgy New York and Japanese street style.

JOIN THE CLUB: Celebrity fans include Olivia Palermo, Kendall Jenner and Kristen Stewart. Deltoroshoes.com



THE POP CLUTCH: SARA BATTAGLIA

WHAT: Italian designer Sara Battaglia (sister of fashion editor and street-style star Giovanna Battaglia) offers a customised version of the Lady Me clutch.

WHY: Forget subtle monogramming; these bold creations come emblazoned with your name (up to six letters, numbers or symbols) in metallic lettering on vibrant silks and finished with luxurious brass hardware.

JOIN THE CLUB: Celebrity fans include Rihanna, Anna Dello Russo, Rachel Zoe and Karolina Kurkova. Sarabattaglia.com



THE PYJAMAS: OLIVIA VON HALLE

WHAT: There is something undeniably chic about monogramming your pyjamas—especially when they are part of British designer Olivia von Halle's luxurious and tailored pure silk range inspired by Coco Chanel.

HOW: In collaboration with embroidery specialist Hand & Lock, known for their work with the British royal family, von Halle offers a bespoke service where initials, names, short messages or family crests in various script styles can be hand embroidered on to the pocket or wrists.

JOIN THE CLUB: Celebrity fans include Victoria Beckham and Kate Moss.

Oliviavonhalle.com; Tel: +44-20-7700-1007 ■



Giovanna Battaglia with her monogram clutch

REX FEATURES