

# Condé Nast Traveller

SINGAPORE  
SPECIAL 2015

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INDIAN EDITION

## ALL ABOUT SINGAPORE

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ON YOUR **NEXT TRIP**

**THE BEST**

**SINGAPOREAN  
BRANDS TO BUY  
HOTELS FOR BUSINESS,  
FAMILIES & GIRLS' TRIPS  
ART, ADVENTURE  
& ARCHITECTURE**

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FROM SINGAPORE**

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**DINNER & DRINK  
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# Wear to go

Discover local labels ★ Orchard Street

## MADE IN SINGAPORE

There's more to shopping here than malls. Local designers are creating new, one-of-a-kind labels you shouldn't ignore. By **Puja Disha Bharwani**



## WEAR TO GO

Singapore is almost 50—it's young, confident after years of being a work in progress. Matching the pulse of the nation, the creative energies of the local designers are also at their peak as they have grown with the city. Their work reflects the energy and landscape of their dynamic, multicultural environment.

Made-in-Singapore brands, such as designer clothing label Raoul and healthcare products company Osim, have already made a mark worldwide. But the retail scene on the island is changing, throwing up a whole new range of luxury products for the Singaporean buyer, who is looking for more than just a designer label.

"The perpetual demand for cutting-edge style and tastes in Singapore is what makes working here compelling," says Pakistan-born luxury jewellery designer Sara Taseer, who moved to Singapore in 2010 and quickly made a name for herself in the luxury retail market.

"Singapore's shoppers are always looking for that new experience," echoes Adrian Ang, owner and co-founder of Threadbare & Squirrel, a hip multibrand store. With the island nation being so well connected to the rest of Asia, influences come from everywhere. And its huge expat population means that brands here have to be world-class, competitively priced and truly unique in order to gain a loyal following.

This vibrant community of designers, curators and well-travelled consumers is powering the rise of lifestyle retail in Singapore. Here are some of our favourite brands you should know about.

### FASHION

#### ZENCHI

Zen made his first dress when he was sixteen. But it was a dress he made for a high-profile editor in Singapore in 2009, that enabled the label Zenchi to come alive. His simple, understated gowns made from Japanese silk and satin have found fans in Naomi Campbell, Zoe Tay and Kit Chan. He creates bespoke pieces for his clients, and his prêt pieces can be altered to specification at the boutique. Zen is a

one-man show, working through the whole process of creating the perfect dress for you all by himself. ([www.zenchicollection.com](http://www.zenchicollection.com); from S\$400 or ₹16,000)



#### ONG SHUNMUGAM

Priscilla Shunmugam, the half-Indian, half-Chinese designer behind the label, is an embodiment of Singapore's new wave of designers. Her statement dresses use traditional Asian textiles such as batik, lace and Indian and Chinese brocade in form-fitting contemporary cuts, lines and styles. Her overall style is eclectic, classy and original. Far from peddling 'fusion', it is a thoughtful blend of tradition and modernity—much like Singapore. ([www.ongshunmugam.com](http://www.ongshunmugam.com); from S\$488 or ₹22,330)

#### ZALORA

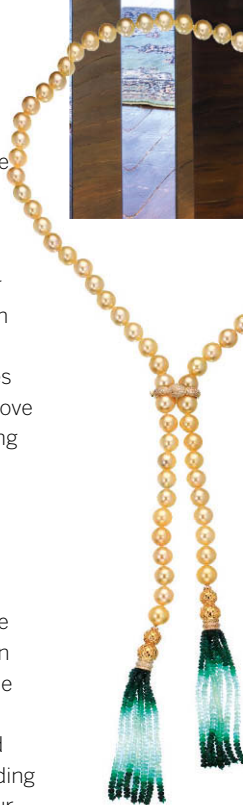
This mid-range online marketplace for men's and women's clothes, shoes and accessories stocks its eponymous label as well as international brands such as River Island and Betsey Johnson. Known for its extensive range of women's shoes and highly discounted prices and free delivery for purchases above S\$21 (₹960), it has a huge following in Singapore and the surrounding region. ([www.zalora.sg](http://www.zalora.sg); from S\$7 or ₹320)

#### EMBLEM

Highly regarded for its comfortable ballet flats, Emblem prides itself on getting the fundamentals right. The brand's USP is that the shoes are handmade with leather, inside and out. The flats feature "in-built padding into the insole, which mould to your feet". Yup, we're definitely fans. ([www.emblemboutique.bigcartel.com](http://www.emblemboutique.bigcartel.com); from S\$241 or ₹11,000)

#### ACTUALLY

This concept store is known for putting a truly original mix of quirky brands under one roof: local up-and-coming labels include YESAH, Mae Pang and 20:twothree. Pick from a range of sneakers, backpacks, denims, graphic tees and more. ([www.actually.sg](http://www.actually.sg); from S\$12 or ₹550)





history. The brand is known for its silver jewellery, but has recently introduced gold, black diamonds and other materials into its latest Jackson Pollock-inspired collection, called 'A Beautiful Mess'. ([www.carriekrocks.com](http://www.carriekrocks.com); from S\$158 or ₹7,230)

#### MARILYN TAN JEWELLERY

Here you will find one-of-a-kind pieces made mainly with semi-precious stones, silver and 18 ct white and yellow gold. Tan has spent 20 years creating unique pieces by hand and is largely influenced by nature, the environment and her travels. Look for her cocktail rings and statement necklaces. ([www.marilyntanjewellery.com.sg](http://www.marilyntanjewellery.com.sg); price on request)

#### SARA TASEER

In just a span of four years, Pakistan-born Sara Taseer has made a name for herself in the luxury jewellery market in the Lion City. The former banker, who has lived in major world cities like Hong Kong, London and New York, says her work is a combination of Eastern and Western design concepts. "It's made for the modern woman who is independent in style and taste, strong and secure, but still sensuous and stylish." Specialising in diamond and precious stone jewellery, her minaret collection draws inspiration from Mughal architecture. ([www.sarataseer.com](http://www.sarataseer.com); from S\$2,681 or ₹1,22,700) →

## BEAUTY



#### MANDY T

This store's philosophy is to make chemical-free, natural skincare products with plant-based alternatives—and to keep things as simple as possible. The cult favourite is the Jasmine+Mint body scrub, but the Black Rice+Coconut and Lemongrass+Wild Honey soaps smell good enough to eat. ([www.mandytskincare.com](http://www.mandytskincare.com); from S\$26 or ₹1,190)

#### DRGL

Dr Georgia Lee is the brains behind this hi-tech premium skincare and make-up brand. Her extensive line of products also caters to men, treats hair loss and is suitable for sensitive and acne-prone skin. Dr Lee, who

has a cult following in Singapore, claims to be involved at every stage of development and ensures that each product is of the highest quality. ([www.drgl.com](http://www.drgl.com); from S\$6 or ₹275)

## JEWELLERY

#### CARRIE K

If you are looking for playfully interesting (and sometimes eyebrow-raising) artisan-crafted jewellery, a Carrie K original is what you should get. Designer Carolyn Kan's works "celebrate the beauty of imperfection and marvel at the mundane in everyday life". She does necklaces, rings, cuffs and even bow ties. Carolyn had a very successful advertising career and was on a year's sabbatical when she found herself in a silversmith's atelier in Florence. The rest, as they say, is

**Clockwise from top right: a body scrub from Mandy T; shoes from Emblem; Priscilla Shunmugam outside her store; make-up from DrGL; cufflinks by Marilyn Tan; a necklace by Sara Taseer; a display of shoes at Actually; apparel by Ong Shunmugam. Previous pages from left: a display at Books Actually; Vanguard bikes**



## WEAR TO GO

### HOME

#### COMMUNE

If you are looking for top quality wooden furniture, Commune will make you feel very much at home with its contemporary, minimalist, artisanal furniture. The pieces are designed by an international team based in Singapore, and the timber and wood itself are sustainably sourced from the US, Europe and Southeast Asia. The furniture is assembled in China, Malaysia and Vietnam, in order to keep it affordable. ([www.thecommunelife.com](http://www.thecommunelife.com); from S\$52 or ₹3,080)



#### IWANNAGOHOME

The store offers a variety of furniture, accessories, art, sculpture, china, linen, kitchen supplies and more—sourced from around the world. There is no singular design theme; in fact, the store's USP is the different styles available, which ensures that there's something here for everyone. ([www.iwannago.com.sg](http://www.iwannago.com.sg); from S\$2 or ₹90)

#### POMELO

A multi-brand furniture and home accessories store, Pomelo showcases some excellent small, independent brands with a focus on design and quality. "Many of our pieces are heirloom quality, and are built to last a lifetime and more," says founder Raymond Quah, a former advertising creative director. Signature pieces include the George Nelson Bubble Lamps and the 675 Chair by Robin Day for Case, which was designed in 1952 and yet seems contemporary. ([www.pomelo.com](http://www.pomelo.com); from S\$34 or ₹1,560)

### WHIMSICAL

#### ROSE CITRON

This boutique stocks handmade bags, accessories, soft home furnishings, gifts and children's wear. Especially popular items include cushions and table runners. The in-house French designer, Zoe Borie, plays with colours, textures and cultural influences—the result is European design with an Asian

twist. Zoe also offers custom-design services. Most products are made in Singapore with materials sourced from around the world. A must-visit for some truly fresh and fun pieces. ([www.rosecitron.com.sg](http://www.rosecitron.com.sg); from S\$73 or ₹3,340)

#### TROLLEY

The online store is a treasure trove of funky brands for your home. Perk up your doors with acrylic hangers that allow you to write messages; spoil your pets with adorable gifts they don't need or buy travel-themed



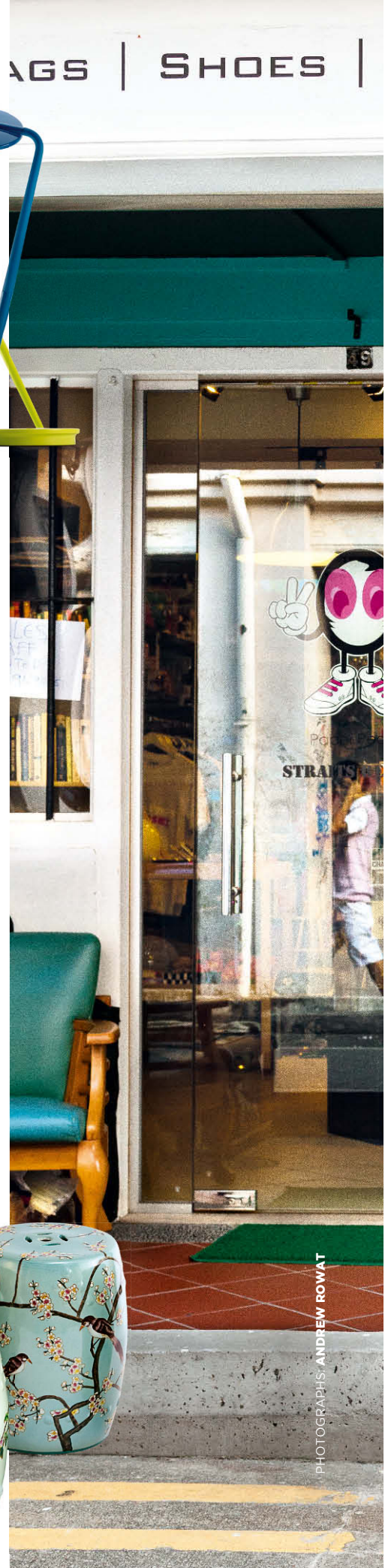
stationery and get it sent to anyone, anywhere. The site offers worldwide shipping and is a great place to find useful yet quirky items. ([www.trolley.storenvy.com](http://www.trolley.storenvy.com); from S\$3 or ₹140)

#### THREADBARE & SQUIRREL

Sitting in a renovated shophouse at the corner of a quiet lane and a busy road, the boutique stocks ceramic rings from the UK, wooden watches from the US and 3D printed rings from Australia. They also carry local and regional labels for clothes and bags. The owner handpicks the goods and hopes to provide "a curated shopping experience that is warm and personal". ([www.threadbareandsquirrel.com](http://www.threadbareandsquirrel.com); from S\$10 or ₹460)



**Clockwise from above: cushions and furniture at Rose Citron; funky lamps from Pomelo; the storefront of Straits Records; the interior of Straits Records; stools at iwannagoHome**



ACCESSORIES

STRAITS

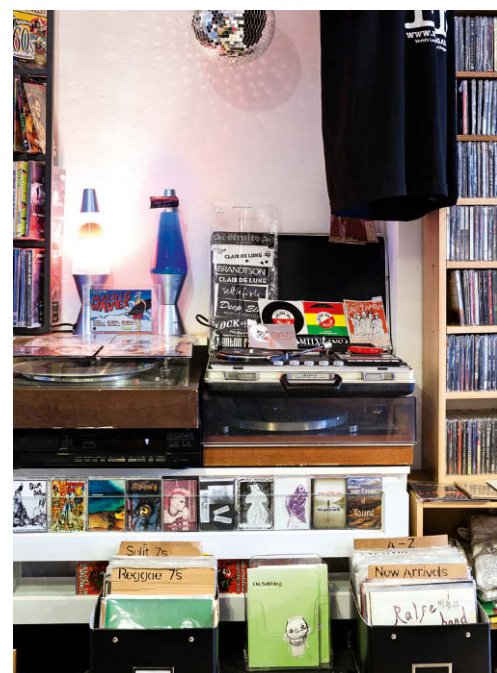
RECORDS



[cntraveller.in](http://cntraveller.in)

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travel ideas

WEAR TO GO



#### BOOKS ACTUALLY

An independent bookstore, it houses the largest collection of Singapore's literary publications, including out-of-print titles, rare and antique editions and critical, obscure works. Bookworms, rejoice. ([www.booksactually.com](http://www.booksactually.com))



#### VANGUARD

The globally renowned bicycle design company has recently moved its base to Niseko in Japan, but Singapore is where it all started. Vanguard designs out-of-the-ordinary rides, as well as restores collectors' pieces. The bicycles are world-famous for their sustainable design. The store also provides maintenance, servicing and rentals. If cycling is your thing, you won't want to miss this place. ([www.vanguard-designs.com](http://www.vanguard-designs.com))

#### STRAITS RECORDS

This quirky alternative records store is full of regional punk rock, indie music and jazz, and other related paraphernalia that you won't find at mainstream music stores (if you can still find mainstream music stores, that is). Strictly for those who are not fans of Justin Bieber and U2. Call before you make your way there, as the store has erratic working hours. (24A Bali Lane; +65 9681 6341)