



Spend a day browsing and buying on the South End's hippest strip

By Sascha de Gersdorff

Photographs by Greg Premru

SHOPPING AROUND

WASHINGTON Street

YEARS AGO, RESTAURANTS STARTED MOVING to the South End for cheap rents and a grunge-chic clientele. These days, their customers tend to wear Marc Jacobs and Prada while snacking on seared red snapper and foie gras. So it comes as no surprise that a flock of upscale stores have followed suit

HOME BASE

Chic home stores and upscale clothing boutiques have opened all along Washington Street, LEFT; find hand-made ceramics, ABOVE, at Vessels Gallery.

and opened on Washington Street. Arm yourself with a large latte and a sweet treat from Flour Bakery + Café and set out on a shopping spree.

Start at Michelle Willey and Vessels Gallery, two separate decor businesses that share the same space at 1636 Washington. Willey's mantra is "classic ideas for modern living," and the space shows it. You'll find spherical brown-and-green Natalie Blake ceramic vessels and wide Yafang Qi blue-and-white bowls. Other desirable domestic wares include delicate Irina Okula teacups

and soft Matouk bed linens and towels.

Walk past a string of eateries and into Parlor, a fashion-forward shop run by friends Kelly DiNisco and Nilda Martin. Besides being one of the only local stores to stock best-selling Nicholas K clothing, Parlor has gold and silver Melissa Rousseau jewelry, whimsical white lace Development dresses and orange-and-brown Tylie Malibu bags. Designer denim and T-shirts are also on hand, but what makes the spot especially hot is its funky, urban feel—almost like you've stumbled into a vintage record store that's

DYNAMIC DUO

Vessels Gallery and Michelle Willey share the same space, where you'll find ceramics, housewares and bed linens.



suddenly selling sequined frocks and washed leather handbags.

Make way to Lekker (Dutch for "alluring"), one of the stores in the 1300 block's home decor trifecta. Inside the clean, spare shop are Northern European-inspired designs, such as arty Cocoon mugs, Erik Bagger glassware and all-weather Bloom! lighted flower pots. Proprietor and Amsterdam native Natalie van Dijk Carpenter has an eye for streamlined accessories, and her space reflects a minimalist modern aesthetic. Snap up a Nicolette Brunklaus birch lamp on the way out.

Next door is Voilà, a new European home store. Owner Heidi Thiede moved her South Shore shop to the city last winter. Now she's sitting pretty at 1315 Washington, where she stocks exquisite European antiques and accessories. Standout pieces include an enormous mustard-colored Italian olive oil jar,



ANTIQUE SHOW

At Voilà, Heidi Thiede stocks bath linens by Legna and European antiques like this large Italian olive oil jar, *ristorante*.



wood-fiber Legna bath linens and soft Zoepritz throws (exclusive to Voilà). Thiede travels to France three times a year to cull her collection—she even imports antique fabric and fashions it into suede pillows and quilted coverlets. Most of her antique pieces are one of a kind, and representative of a style Thiede describes as “Parisian apartment: a mix of old and new chic styles.”

One storefront away, primary colors—deep reds, dark blues and strong yellows—catch the eye at Jonathan Golnik’s Red River Trading Co. This shop specializes in new and antique Asian furniture and home accessories. Most items come from China, where Golnik finds his inspiration. Stock includes everything from handmade Indonesian ceramics to wooden abacuses to giant teak cabinets. All the goods suggest the Orient, especially tall bamboo ladders and simple stained-glass lanterns.

WHERE TO SHOP

Flour Bakery + Café 1595 Washington St., 617-267-4300, www.flourbakery.com

Lekker — Unique Home Furnishings 1317 Washington St., 617-542-6464, www.lekkerhome.com

Michelle Willey 1636 Washington St., 617-424-6700, www.michellewilley.com

Parlor 1248 Washington St., 617-521-9005

Red River Trading Co. 1313 Washington St., 617-542-2223, www.redrivertradingco.com

Vessels Gallery 1636 Washington St., 617-424-6700, www.vesselsgallery.com

Voilà 1315 Washington St., 617-542-1190, www.voila-inc.com