

Best of Our Valley 2011: Shopping

Written by Written by Cassandra Weinman

Looking for diamonds, duds or digital equipment? These Web sites and Valley stores offer the best in Shopping.



Best National Jeweler **Second-Year Winner**

Bulgari

Known for its iconic jewelry, the Bulgari brand has grown to include handbags, fragrances and skincare. In addition to its luxurious merchandise, this company's unwavering commitment to worldwide philanthropy is as distinctive as the designs. 480.281.1380, www.bulgari.com.

Best Cosmetics & Skincare, Best Fragrance Selection and Best Department Store **Second-Year Winner**

Barneys New York

After capturing the attention of Arizona shoppers when it opened in October 2009, Barneys' unrivaled skincare, fragrance and cosmetic selection helps it stand out as the best department store in the Valley. With designers from Balenciaga to Yves Saint Laurent, this high-end shop gives patrons a taste of luxury. Bonus: The delicious Fred's restaurant is a perfect excuse for passing through. 602.337.6000, www.barneys.com.

Best Discount Store

E&J's Designer Shoe Outlet

Whether you're looking for sexy, sophisticated or simple, E&J's Designer Shoe Outlet supplies footwear for every occasion. Specializing in discount handbags and shoes, E&J's unparalleled selection makes it a must-stop destination for any accessory aficionado. www.ejsdesignershoes.com.



Best Local Jewelry Designer

Gail Carlson of GIGIChic

Gail Carlson's use of sumptuous materials and bold accents sets her apart from the average jewelry designer. The balance of seductive and playful, edgy and wearable in each GIGIChic creation makes Carlson's pieces a must-have for any and every occasion. www.gigichic.com.

Best Annual Fashion Event and Best Fashion Week

Scottsdale Fashion Week

Thanks to Scottsdale Fashion Week, Valley fashionistas now have a go-to destination to learn the season's must-have styles. A three-day show provides patrons with front-row access to unique fashions, live music and a chance to mingle with some of the state's best dressed. www.scottsdalefashionweek.com.

Best Denim

Buckle

Toting must-have jeans, shoes and accessories, Arizonans are delighted with this store's trendy wares. Recognizable names like Lucky Brand and Free People, as well as Buckle's BKE lines, provide shoppers with the chance to find the perfect pair of jeans. www.buckle.com.

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Best Local Fashion Designer

Angela Johnson of Angela Johnson Designs

Thanks to an extensive background in the industry and a genuine passion for design, Angela Johnson has garnered national recognition for her fun and funky creations. Best known for her eco-friendly T-shirt ball gowns, Johnson continues to wow critics and clients with her constantly changing designs. 602.481.1032, www.angelajohnsondesigns.com.

Best Year-Round Resortwear

Tommy Bahama

Resortwear from Tommy Bahama is a little like wearing a piece of vacation all year long. Bright colors and bold prints keep the lines contemporary, while a dedication to quality assures that every piece bought from this laidback store will last forever. www.tommybahama.com.

Best Pet Shop

Mackie's Parlour, A Pet Boutique

Offering everything from Swarovski crystal collars to fish chips, Mackie's Parlour pet boutique has owners and their animals begging for more. 480.991.7600, www.mackiesparlour.com.



Best Local Jeweler

OPUS – The Art of Fine Jewelry

At Scottsdale's OPUS – The Art of Fine Jewelry, priceless baubles and fine craftsmanship come together in jewelry that is both unique and wearable. With world-renowned designers on staff, patrons are invited to choose from the store's unrivaled selection or customize an original design. 480.948.6677, www.opusartofjewelry.com.

Best Gift Shop

Do Me A Favor

If you're looking to surprise a hostess, impress the boss or thank a neighbor, Do Me A Favor has everything for your gifting needs. Along with unique wares that range from fanciful wine stoppers to Parisian shawls, store services include gift-wrapping classes and nationwide shipping. 602.200.0190, www.favorfinegifts.com.

Best Modeling Agency

Empire Talent & Modeling Agency

Specializing in fashion, television and film, Empire Talent & Modeling Agency is the Valley's first stop for burgeoning celebs. With help from industry veterans, clients can learn all the tools they need to become a star. 480.788.1919, www.empiretalentandmodels.com.

Best Athletic Gear

Sport Chalet

If you're looking to shed some pounds or simply take advantage of the cool spring days, head to Sport Chalet for all your athletic needs. Boasting an array of the best sporting brands available, everyone is sure to leave the store looking and feeling like a winner. www.sportchalet.com.

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Best Stylist

Diane Aiello

As *AFM*'s very own fashion and beauty director, Diane Aiello's eye for style has made her an indomitable force in her field. She continues to impress industry veterans with her fresh looks and remains a highly coveted stylist. www.dianeaiello.com.

Best Bookstore: New

Borders

With everything from recent best sellers to literary classics, Borders invites patrons to come in and relax. Equipped with a quaint cafe and cozy reading areas for kids and adults, each store offers a respite from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. www.borders.com.

Best Web Clothing Shopping

Shopbop.com

Shopbop.com's ability to predict the trends has fashionistas across the world eager to purchase from this cyber boutique. Mixing modern and classic brands with styles that range from casual to haute couture, online shopping has never been easier or more fun. www.shopbop.com.

Best Bookstore: Secondhand

Dog-Eared Pages Used Books

Cleverly named Dog-Eared Pages bookstore supplies Valley residents with an amazing collection of new, used, rare and other hard-to-find books. A fully functional Web site also allows shoppers to peruse the store's shelves from the comfort of their homes. 602.283.5423, www.dogearpagesusedbooks.com.



Best Boutique: National or International, Best Handbags & Accessories, Best Shoe Shopping and Most Exciting Store Opening

Tory Burch

More than six years after Tory Burch released her initial shoe design, this unstoppable fashion force has taken the style world by storm. Offering everything from shoes to denim, there is no question why this new store at Scottsdale Fashion Square has stolen the hearts of local style mavens. Easily recognized as one of the most popular brands available for women of any age, Tory Burch's unique accents and functional designs are suitable for everyday or a special night on the town. 480.946.1873, www.toryburch.com.

Best Deal Web Site

DoozyofaDeal.com

Initially started to help people fund-raise more easily, DoozyofaDeal.com has grown to provide businesses and patrons with quality services and products at a discount price. By simply selecting a city and creating an account, online shoppers can make purchases that are economical and philanthropic (the site gives 7.5 percent of each sale back to the community). www.doozyofadeal.com.

Best Vintage or Secondhand Store

High Society Resale Boutique

Thanks to the brilliant minds at High Society Resale Boutique, gently used designer clothing and accessories are available to Valley residents at unbeatable prices. With a dedication to trends and quality products, customers are thrilled with the treasures that await them inside this Scottsdale secondhand store. 480.951.2506, www.highsocietyresale.com.

Best Technology & Gadgets

Microsoft Store

More than two decades after Microsoft became a household name, the computer empire has grown to produce tech-savvy phones, gaming systems, PC's and laptops. The Scottsdale-based store brings all the company's gadgets under one roof, ensuring all your technology needs

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are met. 480.308.0800, www.microsoftstore.com.



Best Engagement Ring Store and Best Local Watch Selection

Coffin & Trout Fine Jewellers

With an expansive jewelry collection that features some of the finest gems available, Coffin & Trout Fine Jewellers literally sparkles. Thanks to the exquisite service and a dedication to craftsmanship, a gift from this store is the perfect way to celebrate a new love, birthdays or just-because occasions. 480.763.1300, www.coffinandtrout.com.

Best Boutique: Local

Muse Apparel

For five years, Muse Apparel has flaunted its SoHo-inspired vibe and cool, contemporary fashions in Phoenix's historic Central Corridor. 602.749.8880, www.shopatmuse.com.

Best Shopping Center: Indoors

Fiesta Mall

Featuring stores for all members of the family (think Macy's, Forever 21 and more), Mesa's Fiesta Mall, a Westcor shopping center, is the perfect spot to escape the heat and lighten the wallet. 480.610.0842, www.shopfiesta.com.

Best Wedding Dress Shop

Lillian Lottie Couture

Lillian Lottie Couture is a necessary stop for any bride looking to feel like a princess on her big day. In addition to the amazing gowns, which come in nearly every cut, style and fabric, this bridal boutique offers an array of services to make sure every detail is divine. 480.941.6041, www.lillianlottiecouture.com.



Best Swimwear Shopping

Aqua Beachwear

Whatever your swimwear needs, Aqua Beachwear has everything from yellow polka-dot bikinis to lacey tunic cover-ups. Brands like Juicy Couture and Betsey Johnson keep the store's selection contemporary, while a variety of styles and cuts assure the perfect fit every time. 480.443.8909, www.aquabeachwear.com.

Best Glasses

Paris Optique

In the Valley of the Sun, sunglasses are not only a trendy accessory but also a necessity on scorching summer days. Paris Optique's unrivaled variety of the hottest designer shades are available at any one of the store's five locations. www.parisoptique.com.

Best Place to Hoard Fashion & Accessories for Cheap

H&M

After gaining a cult following overseas and across the nation, H&M has finally found a home in the Valley. Boasting high-quality designs and accessories at wallet-friendly prices, this clothing chain continually keeps customers guessing with evolving styles and partnerships with some of the world's most recognizable fashion houses. www.hm.com/us.

Best Outlets or Discount Shopping Center

Arizona Mills

With some of the hottest styles and coolest prices, Arizona Mills offers name-brand wares for a steal. Featuring outlet stores from Juicy Couture and Nike, shoppers are not only delighted by the dozens of shops but also the daily deals that await. 480.491.7300, www.arizonamills.com.

Best Shopping Center: Outdoors

Westgate City Center

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Just a few minutes from University of Phoenix Stadium and the Jobing.com Arena, Westgate City Center entices shoppers and sports fans with delicious food and unrivaled entertainment. Thanks to an array of shops, restaurants and a movie theater, patrons may come for the game but stay for the fun. www.westgatecitycenter.com.