

# VICTORIA'S SECRETS

*SW1 shopping is as diverse as it is thought-provoking. In Central Victoria, Belgravia and Pimlico, you'll find everything from high street 'A-listers' to more specialist, quirky retailers, running shoes in Cardinal Place to runner beans at the Pimlico Road Farmers' Market.*

Opening in 2005, **Cardinal Place** ([cardinalplace.co.uk](http://cardinalplace.co.uk)) is still the sharp new kid on the **Central Victoria** shopping block. Bursting out of the north side of Victoria Street, you might be surprised to hear that this striking £200m metal and glass development is built directly over the Circle and District underground line. Incredibly, 150m of tunnel passes straight through the building's basement, so the structure rests on rubber shock absorbers to cater for the vibrations.

True enough, these aren't the only vibrations Cardinal Place has made since it opened – if you'll pardon the pun. The local community has already taken to this relaxed shopping and dining-out environment, and the self-styled 'new heart and soul' of SW1 is drawing more of the capital's shoppers into the area, increasing the footfall for neighbouring businesses.

Side by side on Palace Street, to the east side of Cardinal Place, are sports names **Cycle Surgery** ([cyclesurgery.com](http://cyclesurgery.com)), **Runners Need** ([runnersneed.co.uk](http://runnersneed.co.uk)) and outdoor equipment suppliers **The North Face** ([uk.thenorthface.com](http://uk.thenorthface.com)). Like long-standing local shop, **Run and Become** ([runandbecome.com](http://runandbecome.com)), Runner's Need offers assessments that match the shoe to your running style, though the Cardinal Place resident is more likely to put you through your paces on a treadmill than down the street. Swap the outdoors for going out, and **Accessorize** ([accessorize.com](http://accessorize.com)), **Hobbs** ([hobbs.co.uk](http://hobbs.co.uk)), **Top Shop** ([topshop.com](http://topshop.com)), **Zara** ([zara.com](http://zara.com)) – and more traditional clothes retailers like Jermyn Street's **Hawes & Curtis** – might suit. Sniff out the natural scents of **Molton Brown** ([moltonbrown.co.uk](http://moltonbrown.co.uk)) and Province-inspired **L'Occitane** ([loccitane.com](http://loccitane.com)). Or pick **Edward Goodyear** ([edwardgoodyear.co.uk](http://edwardgoodyear.co.uk)) flowers for a different treat altogether.

As a whole then, **Central Victoria** is a real mixed bag. It's an area you can just as easily buy designer brands and luxury goods as you can practical items, entertainment and your evening meal. "It's definitely become an all-round shopping destination," said Josie Hunt of **House of Fraser** ([houseoffraser.co.uk](http://houseoffraser.co.uk)), a store that established itself on Victoria Street more than a century ago. "People now come here just for the shopping. We've got a lot to offer."

From this part of **Central Victoria**, the shopping trip carries on through Victoria train station, up the escalators into **Victoria Place** ([victoriaplaceshopping.com](http://victoriaplaceshopping.com)), then over Eccleston Bridge Road and down **The Colonnades**. From there, you really should check out **Elizabeth Street**, a stretch that runs straight into the heart of **Belgravia**.

With its specialist, independent shops, you can easily feel a hundred miles from the high street here. Down Elizabeth Street's western side, there's **Lucien Pellat-Finet** (

finet.com), where cashmere wool somehow mixes with street style; hat and bag design from **Philip Treacy** ([philiptreacy.co.uk](http://philiptreacy.co.uk)); perfumery by **Les Senteurs** ([shop.lesseateurs.com](http://shop.lesseateurs.com)); and even an outfitters for well-to-do dogs and cats, **Mungo and Maud** ([mungoandmaud.com](http://mungoandmaud.com)). Cross to the other curb for the **Chatsworth Farm Shop**; a case of 12 at **Joroboams** ([joroboams.co.uk](http://joroboams.co.uk)); a baker's dozen from French boulangerie **Poilâne** ([poilane.fr](http://poilane.fr)); jewellery from **Erickson Beamon** ([ericksonbeamon.com](http://ericksonbeamon.com)); and handmade treats from **The Chocolate Society** ([chocolate.co.uk](http://chocolate.co.uk)) – can you think of a better website address than that?

One name you'll see both sides of Elizabeth Street is **Tom Tom** ([tomtom.co.uk](http://tomtom.co.uk)): their cigar shop is on the west side, and their coffee house sits where the east-side corner turns into Ebury Street. Number 63 is actually one of the few places you can still smoke indoors – at least, if you want to taste Tom Tom's cigars.

South down Ebury Street and onto Pimlico Road, there's **Pimlico's** mouth-watering **Daylesford Organics** ([daylesfordorganic.com](http://daylesfordorganic.com)), where you can buy organic food, eat and learn to cook. **Pimlico Road Farmers' Market** also pitches up every Saturday morning at Orange Square, on the corner of Pimlico Road and Ebury Street. The London Farmers' Market website ([lfm.org.uk](http://lfm.org.uk)) describes the site as 'one of the most leafy and pleasant of all our market locations'. Stalls include David Jennings' seafood from the East Anglian coast, organic bakers Flour Power City from Surrey Quays, and Alham Wood handmade cheeses from Somerset.

Elsewhere in **Pimlico**, the streets cater for even more specialist food outlets. In fact, you might even say that Pimlico serves up the biggest variety of shops in SW1. Really, where else would you find big high street names, local hardware stores, and independents that deal in goods from fine arts and antiques to rare European textiles and upholstery fabrics? Check out the Pimlico Road Association website, [thepimlicoroad.com](http://thepimlicoroad.com), for more.