

Hot Stops

The ultra-hip BLVD. Below, clockwise from top left: well-known cross-streets; retro finds at Foley + Corinna Men; star-studded T-shirts and designer bags from Cherish.

# NEW YORK'S Lower East Side

A multicultural hipster enclave

BY JESSICA KOVLER  
PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HOLTERMANN

**F**rom the 1820s to the late 1970s, Manhattan's historic Lower East Side—a small enclave south of the East Village and east of SoHo—was primarily known as a home to immigrants from nearly every part of the world. Irish and German settlers, who were then followed by Eastern European Jews and more recently Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Asians, established their first U.S. houses and businesses in then-dilapidated tenements. In search of prosperity, these newcomers opened shops, after-hours clubs, and mom-and-pop eateries for the area's varied residents.

Many of these family-owned businesses still exist today, though much has changed in the last two years. Young international restaurateurs, designers, and boutique owners have transformed the community into a posh scene replete with fine dining, trendy clubs, and stylish fashion boutiques while maintaining the neighbourhood's rich cultural flair. These new spots are housed in newly renovated buildings that were former tenements. Here, the new not-to-miss venues of the Lower East Side.

## SHOPPING

Actress **Parker Posey** is among the celebs who have sought out the handcrafted accessories, modern sportswear, and avant-garde clothes at **FORWARD**. Highlights: accessories such as ballet slippers emblazoned with tattoo-inspired images by La Voleuse, felted-wool shawls and sweaters by Tolonen, and hand-embroidered tops by Phyl Casual Couture (72 Orchard Street; 646/264-3233).

Actors **Mark Wahlberg** and **Ben Affleck** have been spotted at **FOLEY + CORINNA MEN**, a store offering retro-chic one-of-a-kind pants and dress shirts by Foley coupled with Anna Corinna's vintage finds from around the world. Popular for winter is Foley's low-waisted, tropical-wool trousers in warm colours, paired with cashmere sweaters in cream and light blue (143 Ludlow Street; 212/529-5043).

**CHERISH** offers an eclectic collection of international designers such as Nanette Lepore, Lulu Guinness, and Elise Perelman for Lussena. The house line Starlet Fever features Hollywood-inspired T-shirts printed with images of classic motion-picture stars like Rita Hayworth, Joan Crawford, and Audrey Hepburn (179 Orchard Street; 212/253-2110).

International designer and Israeli-born pop singer **APOLLO BRAUN** manufactures "wearable art," worn by **Nicole Kidman**, **Britney Spears**, and singer **Deborah Gibson**. Inspired by the paintings of Jackson Pollack, Braun's one-of-a-kind pieces feature paint-splattered taffeta gowns, sequin-embroidered denims with leather fringe, and off-the-shoulder tees made of cotton (193 Orchard Street; 212/726-8075).

Both **Sean Combs** and designer **Anna Sui** are fans of **SHEHERAZADE**, a home furnishing store featuring pieces from North Africa and the Middle East. Highlights include Syrian gold-beaded chandeliers and Egyptian *moucharabiyh* (hand-lathed openwork) walnut chairs (121 Orchard Street; 212/539-1771).

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