



Veteran thrifter Phoebe Verkouw at Goodwill Boutique (1621 L St.)



# Thrift Scores

## BUYING USED IS SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND MORE FASHIONABLE THAN EVER.

BY CATHERINE WARMERDAM | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARCUS MEISLER

**T**hrifting has been around forever, largely because frugality is a necessity for many shoppers. But shopping secondhand has taken on more urgency—and even some cachet—thanks to greater consciousness about the human and environmental toll of fast fashion and hyper-consumerism.

According to the Council for Textile Recycling, Americans throw away an average of 70 pounds of clothing and other textiles annually. By some estimates, clothing and footwear production is responsible for up to 10% of annual global carbon emissions. Meanwhile, worker rights organizations have repeatedly documented abysmal work conditions at factories around the globe where textiles and other consumer goods are produced.

As people's awareness about these issues grows, retailers and shoppers are responding. According to a 2021 study conducted by GlobalData and commissioned by thredUP, the world's largest fashion resale site, the secondhand market is expected to double in the next five years as circular business models gain traction and more people become open to buying secondhand goods. That's welcome news, because keeping clothes in use for longer reduces waste.

It helps that we're living in a moment when fashion is all about individuality, so that the thrill of finding a one-of-a-kind item at a thrift store both incentivizes and destigmatizes secondhand shopping. Today's fashionistas unabashedly embrace recycled apparel, whether it's a \$5 crocheted sweater vest from a charity shop or a pair of gently worn Proenza Schouler boots fetching \$500 at a vintage boutique.

None of this is lost on uber-thrifter Phoebe Verkouw, who has made a career out of mining thrift shops for fashion gold and helping others do the same. "What I love about thrifting is that it's sustainable. It's really important for people to be more conscientious about how they shop because there's so much waste in fashion. I think of thrifting as a movement," says Verkouw. "At the same time, it makes having an authentic style attainable because you don't have to spend a lot of money."

Whether you're a seasoned thrifter, a consignment junkie or totally new to the idea of resale retail, we've got you covered with a guide to Sacramento's best-loved secondhand stores. And we'll introduce you to three expert thrifters who epitomize secondhand chic.

## THE DEN

Nicole DeCroix and Eason Donner opened this eclectic furniture and housewares shop in WAL Public Market in late 2021. The collection skews toward midcentury and postmodern items, but DeCroix prefers not to be confined to a particular era. Practical stuff like everyday glassware is big here. “We like to sell functional things you would use daily, something you would go to Target for, not just kitschy and collectible things,” says DeCroix. 1104 R St.; IG @thedenvintage



## ARTICLE CONSIGNMENT BOUTIQUE

This upscale, contemporary fashion consignment shop in East Sacramento carries “everything from Lululemon to Louis Vuitton,” according to Valerie Sanchez, who owns Article with her husband, Abe Sanchez. Luxury handbags are hot items here; recent inventory included a quilted Chanel shoulder bag at an asking price of \$6,600. The owners go to pains to authenticate each item’s provenance. Shoppers seeking high-end items “want a place with a good reputation so they know the piece is quality,” says Sanchez. 706 56th St.; (916) 316-5772; [shoparticleconsignment.com](http://shoparticleconsignment.com)



## LATOYA SKINNER

The creative stylist behind **Lola Earl**, a home goods pop-up shop at Scout Living

### WHERE SHE SHOPS:

The Warped Table, The Den, Scout Living

### WHAT SHE HUNTS FOR:

Unique artwork, lamps, furniture and ceramics that “have a history and have traveled through time.” Skinner collects vintage pottery with rotund profiles and distressed surfaces “because the roundness of them feels almost like a hug to me, reminding me of family and commitment, while the scrapes and scratches remind me that beauty doesn’t have to be perfect.”

### WHY SECONDHAND:

Used pieces introduce beauty and meaning to Skinner’s living space. “I personally feel your home should feel loved and soulful. I learned in 2020 that home is a sanctuary, a place of calm, a place of peace. I love to have something unique that tells a story and makes you feel good. That’s why vintage plays a huge role in my personal style. Also, I love the hunt. A lot of times I don’t know what exactly I’m looking for, but I like things that are heartwarming, whether it’s furniture or an accessory. When you buy second-hand, you’re giving that item a new life.”

### ADVICE FOR SHOPPERS:

“First, take your time. A home should be decorated over time. It might take a year or three years, but find pieces that you connect to rather than just grabbing whatever. You will start to build a unique room in your house that makes you feel good. And second, if you see a vintage item you really love, buy it. You will find a place for it in your home eventually.”



“When you buy secondhand,  
you’re giving that item a new life.”

LaToya Skinner at Scout Living



## SCOUT LIVING

Secondhand has never looked so swell. Since founding midtown's Scout Living in 2006, owners Erin Boyle and Stefan Betz Bloom have kept a clear-eyed focus on bringing customers highly sought-after mid-century-modern furnishings and home décor. The result is an eye-catching multivendor shop that's as fresh and relevant as ever. "We don't think of ourselves as an antique store, and neither do our customers," says Betz Bloom. "They come here because the quality is there, the value is there. To buy a new table that is as well made as anything we have here would cost a fortune." 1215 18th St.; (916) 594-7971; [scoutliving.com](http://scoutliving.com)

## SUPERBUM PLANT CO.

More than 25 artists and vendors hawk their goods at this eclectic shop where East Sac Hardware stood for many years. Owners Vanessa and Dylan Van Vleck are longtime thrifters and avid gardeners who merged those pursuits to create Superbum. Not everything here is secondhand, but it's nevertheless a great source for vintage pottery and cast-off vessels—think quirky ceramic figurines—that Vanessa transforms into pots for plants. “It’s so fun to give things new life and not build up the landfill,” she says. 4800 Folsom Blvd.; (916) 531-2203; IG @superbumplantco

## ECO THRIFT

The mother of all thrift stores at nearly 40,000 square feet, Eco Thrift off Florin Road can be overwhelming to the uninitiated, but veteran thrifters delight in the vast selection and special markdowns. This place has it all: racks and racks of clothing and shoes for men, women and kids; books; kitchenware; toys; sports gear; jewelry; purses and much more. It's a reliable source for practical household items and closet basics that you turn to again and again—if you're willing to rummage for them. 7224 55th St.; (916) 254-5730; [ecothrift.com](http://ecothrift.com)

# BUY / SELL / TRADE

Buy-sell-trade retailers are perfect for those who want to earn a little cash while paring down their closet or trade in some items to freshen up a wardrobe. These shops tend to be choosy about what items they'll accept—they typically seek out contemporary styles aimed at younger shoppers. So be sure to consult their wish list in advance.

### FREESTYLE CLOTHING EXCHANGE

1906 L St.; (916) 441-3733; [freestyleclothing.com](http://freestyleclothing.com)  
(Additional locations in Folsom, Roseville and Fair Oaks)



### CROSSROADS

2935 Arden Way; (916) 972-9900; [crossroads trading.com](http://crossroads trading.com) (Additional location in Roseville)

### THREADS CLOTHING EXCHANGE

223 Vernon St., Roseville; (916) 771-3222; [threadsclothingexchange.com](http://threadsclothingexchange.com)





## VINTAGE YSJ

Since 2008, this mid-town store has served discerning customers who appreciate the eclectic mix of modern and vintage fashions. Mother-daughter owners Maggie Kafati and Yasmine Saba curate the collection, which includes items like a high-waisted linen skirt from Christian Dior and an Yves Saint Laurent French sailor dress, both from the 1980s. They also carry a swank collection of old furs. Vintage pieces are tagged with the era in which they were made, ranging from the 1930s to the 1990s. *1812 J St.; (916) 442-4882; shopysj.com*



## RENAISSANCE FINE CONSIGNMENT

The grande dame of luxury consignment in Sacramento, Renaissance has been around for a quarter century and is still going strong. At this Sierra Oaks boutique, owner Kendra Younger focuses inventory on designer brands—think Gucci monogram boots, Prada handbags and Chanel jackets—that are strong sellers even in a pandemic. If you've got a special item collecting dust in your closet, "it's a good time to come in and trade up," says Younger. "In 2022, people want to get out of their house, get out of their sweats and get back into the market." *2362 Fair Oaks Blvd.; (916) 485-4911; renaissancesb.com*



## PHOEBE VERKOUW

Expert thrifter and effervescent personality who goes by The Dress Fiend on social media

### WHERE SHE SHOPS:

Charity thrift stores, vintage boutiques, consignment shops, Sacramento Antique Faire, online resale sites such as Poshmark and wherever she can find a sartorial treasure for a great price

### THRIFTING HERO:

Her mom. "Some of my earliest memories are of thrifting with my mom. She was a single parent and an expert tailor who made a lot of our clothes. She taught me the importance of quality fabrics, good brands to look for, how things were made, what decade they were from. After I was teased for a pair of red bell bottoms I wore to school, she encouraged me to always be myself. She is 100% my inspiration."

### HOW SHE FEELS IN

**VINTAGE WEAR:** "I feel like it's my armor. When I put on a spectacular piece of vintage, I feel as though I can accomplish anything and take on the world."

### ADVICE FOR SHOPPERS:

"Larger thrift stores can be overwhelming. I suggest going in with a mission, maybe make a mental list of the top three things you want to get. That can help keep you focused. When shopping vintage, maybe you don't recognize the brand, but you can still check for quality. Find the label with the fabric type: Is it linen? Cashmere? These are clues." Also, know your own measurements "and bring a tape measure with you, because sizes from different eras are all over the place."



Beret found at Goodwill



Necklace found at Sacramento Antique Faire



Top found at Crossroads



Skirt found at Goodwill



Shoes found at Goodwill



“Some of my earliest memories are of thrifting with my mom.”

Phoebe Verkouw, photographed at Goodwill Boutique in some of her favorite thrifting finds

## ROSEN

Briana Thomas worked in the fashion design industry in New York City before landing in Sacramento and opening Rosen, her charming vintage home goods and apparel shop in Oak Park. Thomas's creed: "Keep prices low, colors neutral and fibers natural." Expect era-crossing attire made primarily from silk, cotton, denim, linen and wool. She's also adamant about size inclusivity in her collection. 2660 33rd St.; [shoprosen.com](http://shoprosen.com)



# CHARITY SHOPS

While everyone's familiar with Goodwill and Salvation Army stores, thrift shops that benefit specific charities are some of Phoebe Verkouw's favorite places to find deals on big-name luxury labels and sought-after vintage apparel. "Small charity thrift shops are where the gold mines are," she says. "People give where their heart is, and charity shops are where they bring their best stuff." In fact, Verkouw scored one of her most spectacular finds—a silk polka-dot Chanel dress suit from 1964—at a charity store for \$80. "I had an out-of-body experience when I discovered it," she recalls. "It's so special it could be in a museum."

## FABULOUS FINDS ON FULTON

(benefits Assistance League of Sacramento) 2751 Fulton Ave.; (916) 488-0828; [assistanceleague.org](http://assistanceleague.org)



## THE DISCOVERY SHOP

(benefits American Cancer Society) 2708 Marconi Ave.; (916) 484-0227; [cancer.org](http://cancer.org)

## TRUE (Totally Recycled Urban Exchange)

(benefits WEAVE) 1900 K St.; (916) 319-4916; [weaveinc.org](http://weaveinc.org)



## WEAVEWorks RECYCLED FASHION

(benefits WEAVE) 2401 Arden Way; (916) 643-4606; [weaveinc.org](http://weaveinc.org)



## THE THRIFT STORE

(benefits WEAVE) 6606 Fruitridge Road; (916) 383-3651; [weaveinc.org](http://weaveinc.org)



## RACKS VINTAGE BOUTIQUE

Owner Rachel Ricketts does "all the picking myself" at this all-vintage midtown boutique specializing in men's and women's attire from the 1890s to the 1990s. The collection on any given day might include a 1940s Levi's jacket or a classic St. John knit suit. "I love vintage because the clothes are so well made and have stood the test of time," says Ricketts. "I also love the stories behind the garments and selling to someone who will really appreciate a certain piece." 1822 24th St.; (916) 799-3735; IG @racksvintageboutique

## #PANACHE

A visit to #Panache is probably as close to a Parisian flea market as one can get without leaving Sacramento. Owners Ralph Barnett and Hector Lopez are Francophiles who delight in hunting for luxury home goods and apparel, especially if a French label is involved, and bringing them back to local customers. Chanel is queen here, but shoppers will also find pieces from Hermès, Givenchy and more. Lopez describes the East Sac boutique as "like a candy store, but without the calories or the cavities." 5379 H St.; (916) 813-5758

# OLIVIA CORREIA

Budding fashionista and senior at McClatchy High School

## WHERE SHE SHOPS:

Freestyle, Goodwill Boutique in midtown, Upscale Thrift, Eco Thrift, The Antique Company, Cuffs

## WHY SECONDHAND:

Worker justice. "I am drawn to the idea of how a piece of clothing affects other people. I feel connected to the kids making clothing in factories overseas. It's terrifying, the idea of being a child and making close to nothing sewing clothes for people who don't think about the struggle you've gone through. When I got really into shopping, I started seeing clothes that I liked but I knew weren't ethically made. Buying from a place that doesn't prioritize that takes away all of the fun for me. I don't want to have that guilty conscience."

## MINDFUL SHOPPING:

"When I first started thrifting, I was frustrated because I didn't know how to make it work the way that so many people do. I was used to retail fashion, where things are handed to you. But with thrifting, you have to practice and look and stay persistent to find the things you want. You have to develop a knack for the rack. You are forced to pay attention to what you're buying and figure out if you really need it."

## ADVICE FOR SHOPPERS:

"Just stick to it. It's really fun if you keep going." A thrift store "may feel a little weird or dingy, but if people could just be a little more curious about the experience, I think they would get a lot out of it." ❧

## CUFFS

Lacadia Johnson's midtown boutique, a Sacramento favorite for almost two decades, sells both new and vintage clothing for women, including dresses, tops and jackets. Although sourcing vintage pieces can be laborious, she continues to stock secondhand apparel from the '50s through the '90s because it's in high demand. "One of our defining style elements is something that feels unique and original, and that's easier to find in vintage pieces," says Johnson. "Plus, there's the sustainability factor, which I feel really good about." 2220 J St.; (916) 443-2881; [shopcuffs.com](http://shopcuffs.com)



## THE BUS STOP VINTAGE

Audrey Panson and Alike Lemon are the drivers behind The Bus Stop Vintage, a mobile boutique that makes regular stops at the Midtown Farmers Market and other spots around town. The pair converted a bus, which had been their home for a year, into a shop that stocks men's and women's clothing, housewares, home décor and vinyl records. It's a labor of love, says Panson, who champions "the circular economy of clothing, because fast fashion is doing negative things to this planet." [thebusstopvintage.com](http://thebusstopvintage.com); IG @\_thebusstop\_



“With thrifting,  
you have to practice  
and look and stay  
persistent to find  
the things you want.”



Olivia Correia, photographed wearing her secondhand finds at Freestyle in midtown