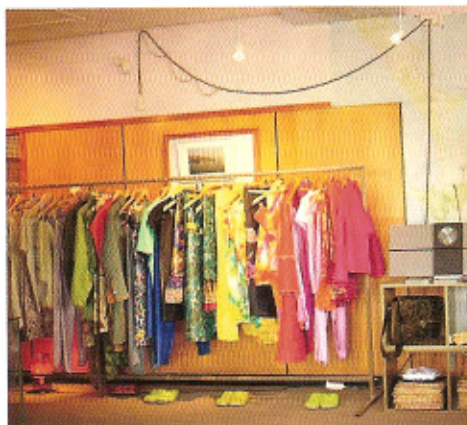




RETAIL

Southern Exposure

THE NOTION THAT FASHIONABLE shopping takes place only in cities is outmoded, thanks to the Internet. And so when Lise Strathdee—who grew up in Italy and New Zealand and then worked in Milan with Romeo Gigli for many years before establishing her own design studio in London—stopped off at a tiny, rural community in New Zealand in search of a lunchtime snack during a vacation, she knew she'd found the perfect place to set up shop. Outpost Hokianga (outposthokianga.com) is a hip concept store that mixes fashion, books, art and fine food, and happens to be located in Rawene, a village clustered around a harbor on the mighty Hokianga estuary. Four years on, Outpost Hokianga, which Strathdee calls “a general store for the 21st century,” is situated in a converted post office, and it's thriving. Products include her own designs, such as cargo pants reimagined in opulent Chinese silks, innovative jewelry, and gourmet food, like pesto made by local producers and balsamic vinegar imported from a former fashion manufacturer in Italy. While price is no concern to shoppers who have driven some two hours over switchback roads from The Lodge at Kauri Cliffs, the nearest five-star accommodation, Strathdee makes sure not to exclude the local community. “Prices start at 50c,” she says, “so a young girl can come in here and buy a pretty hair elastic or just sit in my fashion library.” —By Marion Hume



Pacific time A rural view, top, from Outpost Hokianga; the shop's interior and some items for sale, left and above

BEAUTY

Botanical Booty Think of it as the beauty equivalent of Russian nesting dolls. The Evolu Travel Tower is a group of essential potions—cleanser, eye gel, day and night moisturizers, a postflight mask and hand cream—that are stacked together in a single vertical package. Endlessly refillable, the stack comprises six 10-ml (0.34 oz.)

compartments, which lands it well below airlines' 100-ml (3 oz.) limit for carry-on cosmetics. The tower comes with a spare lid, so the pots can be transported as one or in sets, a true sign of skin-care glasnost.

www.evolu.com

—M.H.



SHOPPING

Malaysian Fusion

“We don't speak Dutch, but we think the name means *cute*,” says Kuala Lumpur native Jenny Chong, 32, who, along with friends (and former McCann Erickson advertising-agency colleagues) Jessy Yap and Samantha Wong, both 26, runs Mooie, the funkiest fashion destination in the Malaysian capital. On display is a wide range of Asian fashion labels, along with handbox-striped changing rooms and blackboard walls on which the trio chalk up monthly messages informed by their design backgrounds. “We like to be creative in everything we do,” Chong says. —M.H.



From left: Wong, Chong and Yap