



Bagged and booted:
shopping on Sunday
can be fun

WWW.BELGICA-TURISMO RICARDO DE LA RIVA

Sunday Shopping

Last week we lamented the fact that many Brussels stores shut their doors in the middle of the day.

So it came as a pleasant surprise when writer Katrien Lindemans discovered that Sundays provide a great day for bargain hunting

Fashion Fashionistas in desperate need of retail therapy don't have to rely on the internet, as a number of shops remain open all weekend long. I spotted very chic clothes and bags at Mary & Lou (105 Rue Blaes/straat) but am proud to report I resisted the temptation to splash out. Meanwhile flashy fashion store Johnny Velvet (1 Rue de L'Hôpital/ Gasthuisstraat) welcomes fans of colourful street wear and sneakers.

Furniture If you're looking for antique furniture, design from the 1960s or '70s, tribal art or vintage, the Marolles/ Marollen quarter is the place to check out. This popular area is especially alive on a Sunday, and has plenty to keep you busy. I enjoyed perusing the antiques in Jacques Brol (202 Rue Haute/ Hoogstraat), and bought myself a new set of dishes and cutlery in La Vaiselle au Kilo (124-126 Rue Haute/ Hoogstraat). The quarter's famous flea market is also ideal for treasure hunting. And once you're done, relax and indulge at one of the many bars and restaurants around. If all the antiques made you nostalgic, I recommend Brasserie Ploegmans (148 Rue Haute/ Hoogstraat) with its beautifully restored 1920s interior.

Books Every first Sunday of the month, the Halles Saint-Géry in downtown Brussels become a huge comic book market between 13.00 and 17.00. From second-hand and new editions, to journals, collector's items and ex-libris books – you will find pretty much everything ever printed here. On top of that, artists are often present to sign your newly bought comics. You should also visit the many second-hand book shops around Fontainas square. The books might not always be arranged in a logical order, but the shelves are stacked with some beautiful publications, many still in an excellent state. (Evasions, 89 Rue du Midi/ Zuidstraat; Bibliopolis, 30 Boulevard Lemonnier/ laan).

Outlets There's no reason for shopping on a Sunday to be expensive. Design Outletstore (98 Rue Haute/ Hoogstraat) sells designer kitchen equipment by the likes of Alessi or Villeroy & Boch at great outlet prices. You might even find your Sunday outfit at an outlet of fashion store Prive Joke (8A Rue des Grands Carmes/ Lievevrouwbroerstraat, between 14.00 and 19.00). It's a tiny place and the clothes hang in cardboard boxes, but there's still an eye-catching range available and the price tag says 60 percent off!

Kids Shopping with your young ones does not always turn out the way you planned it and it can be one of the most tiring tasks of the week. But the new children's bookshop Le Wolf (22 Rue de la Violette/ Violetstraat, 10.00 – 18.00) near the Grand' Place promises to keep both kids and their parents happy. The shop sells books in French, Dutch, English, Italian, Arabic and Japanese and has a jukebox telling fairy tales. Le Wolf (named after the wolf in Red Riding Hood) also has a little restaurant that serves an organic brunch or lunch. The kids can read in the Unusual Library while mum and dad enjoy a quiet drink in Grandma's Canteen. www.lewolf.be

Music Second-hand music shop Arlequin moved this summer from Ixelles to Saint-Gilles (90 Rue d'Andenne/ straat, 10.00 – 14.00), and counts blues, jazz, hip-hop and rock among its most important categories. On Fontainas Square you can buy, sell and exchange vinyl, CDs, and music DVDs at United Musik (26 Place Fontainas/ plein, 10.00 to 18.00).

Culture Have you ever wondered why some streets in the city centre feature a bronze scallop on the pavement? In total, there are 48 of them, and they symbolise the pilgrimage route of Saint James of Compostella. Following them will lead you from the town centre through Les Marolles to the beautifully restored Porte de Hal, the last gate of the second medieval wall around Brussels. It now houses a museum on the city's medieval and folkloric history, open on Sundays.

Give me more!

Order a copy of the Sunday Shopping Guide from www.atrium.irisnet.be and check out www.shoppinginbrussels.be for an overview of more than 10,000 shops in Brussels



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