

LONDON'S style profile has never been stronger. And for the fashionista looking for a quick fix, there can be few better destinations in which to step out – immaculately shod of course. From the shenanigans of Fashion Week (18-22 February) to the delights of the Fashion and Textile Museum (founded by Zandra Rhodes and which hosts exhibitions on all elements of style, textile and jewellery), the British capital provides inspiration for both design students and all those just generally dedicated to following fashion. Lest we forget, there is also the irresistible lure of the best shopping, the classiest cocktail lists and the finest dining in the country. ■

RUTH WALKER



BEST PLACE TO STAY



TIME spent on the Tube is a waste of valuable shopping time, so choose a hotel in the middle of the action. Where better than **The Levin**, a mere lipstick's toss from Harrods, Harvey Nichols, Sloane Street and Beauchamp Place? The accommodation is exquisitely decorated (complete with in-room champagne bars, no less), service is incomparable and the restaurant next door in its sister hotel, The Capital, presided over by Jerome Ponchelle, is simply superb. Choose the five-course degustation menu, complete with decadent cheese course, for an unforgettable dining experience. Just don't plan on staying supermodel slim. *The Levin*, 28 Basil Street, London (020 7589 6286; www.thelevinhotel.co.uk), an executive double starts from £265 per night, including continental breakfast



BEST AFTERNOON TEA

UNDOUBTEDLY the most stylish snack in town, the **Berkeley's** Pret-a-Portea looks as good as it tastes. After scoffing sandwiches and skewers and taster spoons, the real showpiece arrives: a tower of decadent desserts, all inspired by the most recent collections of the world's finest designers. Sample, if you will, a Paul Smith orange, papaya and pink lavender bavarois topped with chocolate bowler hat, a belted Jason Wu poppy seed cocktail dress biscuit embellished with ruffled purple icing or a Christopher Kane pale pink macaroon filled with white chocolate and elderflower ganache. Oh, and there's champagne too, naturellement. *Pret-a-Portea*, The Berkeley, Wilton Place, Knightsbridge (020 7235 6000, www.the-berkeley.co.uk), from £35 per person (£45 with a glass of Laurent Perrier champagne)

BEST FOR FACIALS

GIVE your poor, polluted fizzog a treat with **Bliss Spa's** signature triple oxygen facial. It's not all whale music and aromatherapy oils – your "blockages" and blackheads are given a good seeing to, as well as a neck, shoulder, hand and foot massage, rounded off with a blast of pure oxygen, before you're sent back on to the congested streets miraculously clear-headed (unless you indulged in the relaxation room wine and brownies – naughty). *Bliss*, 60 Sloane Avenue, London (020 7590 6146; www.blisslondon.co.uk), hour and a half treatment, £145

BEST FOR THE HEAD

YASMIN Le Bon and Liz Hurley won't trust anyone else to colour their locks so you know you're in safe hands with **Jo Hansford**.

The welcoming salon is buzzy and friendly and the stylists really know what they're talking about. They even persuaded this blonde visitor to go red – and I love it. *Jo Hansford*, 19 Mount Street, Mayfair, London (020 7495 7774, www.johansford.com), tint/vegetable colour from £80, up-do from £70



BEST QUICK FIX

AFTER visiting the single biggest shoe destination in the world, **Selfridge's** Shoe Galleries – where 55,000 pairs are in stock at any one time, from Havaiana flip-flops to sky-high heels by Dior, Chanel and Louboutin – you might need to catch your breath. Fortunately the store's Groom room is a one-stop shop for a beauty fix. Its **Groom Hour** includes a facial, manicure, pedicure and brow tidy – so just lie back and let the therapists work their magic. *Groom Hour*, Selfridges, 400 Oxford Street, London (020 7499 1199, www.selfridges.com), £105

