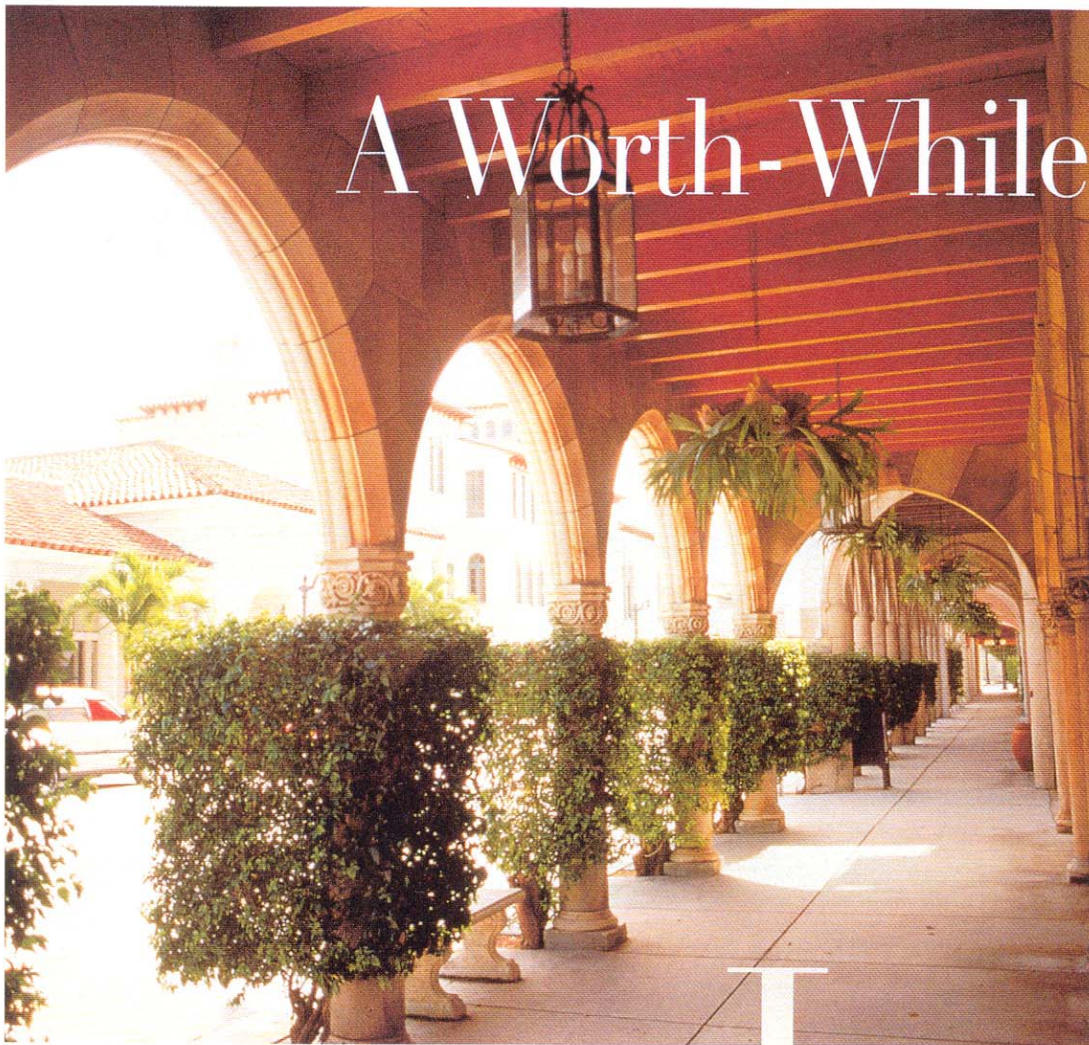


Moorish-Mediterranean architecture and flower-lined pathways are a pleasant backdrop for high-fashion shopping on Palm Beach's Worth Avenue.



A Worth-While Avenue

by Judy DiEdwardo

sophistication with the celebrity quotient of Beverly Hills—all set against the irresistible, ain't-life-grand backdrop of subtropical Palm Beach.

Strolling the Avenue is like mingling at a fabulous A-list cocktail party where the extraordinary is ordinary. Gone are the days when Jack Kennedy strutted Worth Avenue in khakis and loafers while Gary Cooper and Frank Sinatra lunched at Taboo. Instead, you're likely to see residents Rod Stewart, Jimmy Buffett or Donald Trump and their families out for a day of shopping. Then again, you might come across Celine Dion, Oprah Winfrey, Julia Roberts, Michael

A view down one of the manicured promenades of Worth Avenue.

It's easy to see why Worth Avenue in Palm Beach draws everyone from heads of state to international-business people. This four-block stretch of more than 200 specialty shops and restaurants is one of the world's most exclusive. It marries Manhattan



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The collectibles above are handmade for Johnnie Brown's, a family-run shop that many view as a Worth Avenue staple; The Meissen Shop sells sculptures made of Meissen porcelain, such as this one — an embracing Cupid and Psyche, circa 1772; For military-related antiques and souvenirs, shoppers visit Grand Armée.



Jordan and Miami-ites Rosie O'Donnell and Madonna, who are among a cadre of loyal patrons.

You may even forget you are closer to Miami than Milan, thanks to architect Addison Mizner's signature Moorish-Mediterranean-style architecture. In addition, you'll enjoy the Avenue's eight vias — enchanting tree and flower-lined pathways that divide many of the shops and open into courtyards containing even more shops. If you have time, stop



for an alfresco drink inside one of these bougainvillea-covered courtyards.

Eventually, make your way to **Taboó**, the best place to watch Worth Avenue in action, not to mention being a prime watering hole for visiting and resident celebrities. Although their menu spans the spectrum from frog legs to *osso buco*, they are famous for their warm steak salad and some of the best hamburgers in town. At the very least, you'll see a luxury-car parade of Mercedes-Benzes, Rolls-Royces and Jaguars outside — the Island's most popular trio.

At **Cartier**, don't be surprised to see everything from a \$690,000 yellow-gold diamond necklace being discreetly bundled into a waiting limo, to a royal family looking to update their private jew-

elry collection. You'll also see a slice of Americana, where children are rewarded for their patience with coloring books (Cartiér, of course) while patrons' canines are met with bowls of water and treats.

Speaking of pets, for that big day out, **Palm Beach Pets** in the Gucci courtyard provides grooming services, goodies and gifts. Afterward, pooches can trot over to the popular **Dog Bar**, a semi-circular water trough that fronts the Phillips Gallery farther down the Avenue.

Peek inside the Avenue's other exquisite jewelers—**Hamilton, Tourneau, Greenleaf & Crosby**—even if the price tags strain your imagination. This is the street where dreams are made. Visualize, breathe. Stop in at **Tiffany & Co.** for anything your budget allows, and **Trillion** with its festive 70-plus color assortment of handmade cashmere sweaters.

Collectors of memorabilia will find an eclectic mix at **Paper Treasures** with autographed documents, books and photographs.

Also be sure to visit the new **Chanel** store on the corner of Worth Avenue and Hibiscus. It's three stories of sumptuous luxury with an ultra-chic couture salon on the top floor. Other fashion must-sees include **Ralph Lauren, Gucci, Armani, Hermés, Louis Vuitton, Valentino, Emanuel,** and **MaxMara**, where the see-and-be-seen crowd gathers to slip their buffed bodies into the latest styles.

Need a last-minute manicure, massage or haircut? **Spa Essentials** in the Gucci courtyard is open not only Tuesday through Saturday, but often on Mondays and Sundays too. They also sell great refurbished, vintage handbags. There's also **Georgette Klinger**, a world-renowned skincare salon with a very devout following, located in the Esplanade shops at the top of Worth Avenue (where **Saks Fifth Avenue** will

be joined by **Neiman Marcus** this fall).

The architecture alone of Mizner's fabulous two-story, open-air shopping enclave is worth the trip. While there, visit **Martha Phillips**, the venerable women's couture shop where Jackie Kennedy, Marjorie Merriweather Post

and every chic celeb shopped the latest styles from Paris and Milan. Today, you'll find traditional gowns from Mackie and Herrera and designs by newcomers Lane Davis, Randolph Duke and Zang Toi, along with those fabulous Moo-Roo handbags that debuted at the Oscars.

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Roy LICHTENSTEIN "Crying Girl" 1963 Lithograph signed in pencil

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Among the Avenue's nine art galleries, which feature world-renowned artists as well as hot up-and-comers, don't miss the **Galleria of Sculpture** tucked inside Via Parigi, where you'll find a stunning collection of contemporary art glass that is a feast for the eyes. And in Via

Flora, visit **Beach Orchids**, where you can find potted and loose orchids in the smallest shop on the Avenue—and **Grand Armée**, where history buffs will swoon over everything from \$10 lead soldiers to a prized \$45,000 Imperial Russian helmet worn by the Czars. See the custom shad-

ow boxes and handmade collectibles at **Johnnie Brown's** (named for Mizner's deceased pet monkey, a one-time Palm Beach mascot). Owner Didi Shields mans the helm along with her husband Frank, who is as much a signature of the family business as their daughter Brooke.

Relax over lunch at **Renato's**, nestled behind the archways of Via Mizner. This is a favorite bistro among locals who swear by the *veal chop funghi trifolati*, their best seller. And for a mid-afternoon refreshment, **PariSorbet** in Via de Mario is famous for homemade desserts that are as unique as Palm Beach itself. Try the grapefruit, green apple or Grand Marnier sorbets, depending on your plans for the afternoon. Then stroll next door and indulge yourself with a pair of **Stubbs & Wooten** slippers that can be custom monogrammed. (Hint: Best buys are during the store's spring sale.)

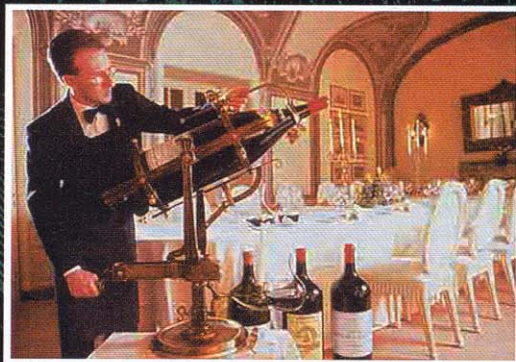
At the foot of the Avenue is the venerable **Everglades Club**, where weekly fashion shows launched the careers of Valentino, Blass, Givenchy, Madam Greis and Pauline Trigere. But a glimpse of its exterior will have to do. It's members only.

Across the street in Via Roma, be sure to visit the **Meissen Shop**, which is devoted exclusively to exquisite, antique Meissen porcelain dating back to the 1700s. You'll also find **Douglas Lorie Inc.**, which sells exquisite Boehm, Lladro and Herend porcelain, along with fine Lalique crystal. Surprisingly, they also have a great baby department featuring fine china and fabulous Gund teddy bears.

And speaking of kids, don't pass by **Cloud 10** without stopping. Along with the **Purple Turtle**, this is the Avenue's premier children's shop with everything from \$3,500 custom-made dollhouses to scrumptious teddy bears made from recycled fur coats of mink, beaver and seal.

After all, this is Palm Beach. ♣

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