boston

Equal parts old-world feeling and vibrantly young, this city is packed with preppy stalwarts and high-concept boutiques alike.

BY ELISE LOEHNEN. PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAVID LAND

Abodeon Owned by a furniture designer and a Houston Museum of Fine Art veteran, this 10-year-old spot is exactly what a great midcentury-modern home store should be. There are burnished walnut coffee tables and Danish consoles, but they're really just a backdrop for the winning selection of finishing touches: Carved '60s nesting bowls and ceramic coffee pots share the shelves with new picks, like Iittala mugs and flatware. 1731 Massachusetts Ave., 617-497-0137

Achilles Project The most buzzed-about arrival in the up-and-coming industrial Fort Point Channel area, Achilles Project is suitably slick. Forward-thinking apparel—Opening Ceremony jackets, Josh Goot dresses—is arranged in Plexiglas blocks; each night, when the space becomes a restaurant, they're reconfigured into giant glowing cubes. And proprietors Shaka Ramsay and Michael Krupp are launching an exquisite in-house label, too. 283 Summer St., 617-423-2257, achilles-project.com

Bobby from Boston In a city known for its classic attire, this vintage resource has achieved icon status. Its contents could outfit the cast of School Ties many times over. Bobby Garnett has been traveling the world for 30 years, snapping up striped college scarves, boiled wool ski sweaters, and beringbone vests, which are perfectly arranged in a charmingly dark, retro-clubhouse setting. While menswear is his forte, he recently started sourcing equally timeless womenswear, like '50s cocktail dresses and ladylike heels. Those who ask can visit his 5,000-square-foot warehouse, 12 miles north of Boston in Lynn. 19 Thayer St., 617-423-9299

Bodega A hidden location behind a functioning, totally nondescript bodega (there's a secret door in the back of the deli that leads to the boutique) may seem only like a clever gimmick, but it fits with the owners' general retail philosophy. Much like the random groceries that are sold up front, the boutique's Surface to Air tops and Japanese North Face jackets were chosen because they're useful, desirable, and have a long shelf life. 6 Clearway St., bgdastore.com
well-curated global bazaar—a perfect mix of eclectic bohemianism and full-on luxury. There are gorgeous antique gold necklaces, Melissa Joy Manning opal stacking rings, and flawlessly embellished labels like Matta and Gary Graham. 1741 Massachusetts Ave., 617-497-6677, nomadcambridge.com
Passport As its name suggests, this brand-new Harvard Square addition, owned by a recent business-school grad, is committed to all things travel. The essentials are here—cashmere wraps from White + Warren, Hayden-Harnett weekenders, itsy packs of stain remover from the Laundress—but what makes Passport so brilliant is the clothing. There are racks of multitasking, wrinkleproof staples from Love Ya-Ya and Twinkle by Wenlan that truly streamline the packing process. 43 Brattle St., 617-576-0900

Stel's Tucked away down a flight of stairs in a reworked 1900s horse stable, this unfussy four-year-old shop looks more like a chill basement hangout than a store. Guided by three retail veterans—Tina Burgos and Dave Nauyokas are Louis Boston alums, while Jon Callahan worked for Ermenegildo Zegna—the selection is interesting and well chosen and focuses on one-of-a-kind feeling pieces. Ribbon-festooned Lizzie Fortunato necklaces, woven L.D. Tuttle flats, and smock tops from A.P.C. are all winning options. 334 Newbury St., 617-262-3348, stelsinc.com

Stil The Chestnut Hill mall is home to a brand-new Cusp (the wildly popular offshoot of Neiman Marcus), the best area Barneys New York, and the largest location of Stil, a local chainlet. Owner Betty Biaz hunts through Scandinavia to fill her racks, loading up on established names like Camilla Staerk, as well as nascent talents such as Heartmade and Rüttou. It's all mixed in with delicate separates from a handful of other, more familiar-o-the-States lines, like Ports 1961 and Maloles. 199 Boylston St., 617-527-7845; plus other locations

Twentieth Century Ltd. Thousands and thousands of costume-jewelry pieces populate this cabinet at this subterranean Charles Street space. Collectible Chanel earrings and Miriam Haskell pins are here, but the real draw is the neatly labeled trays of coral necklaces, engraved lockets, and pearl stud. Don't miss the bins of $10 steals. 73 Charles St., 617-742-1031