



Photographs: Getty Images; Glasses courtesy of brands

Style

Welcome to the Golden Age of Glasses

Toss out your contacts. Cancel that LASIK appointment. The personal-style era has come for your glasses. Get to know the global shops, brands, and optical icons that are defining the moment in brave, bold, wholly expressive eyewear.



BY **YANG-YI GOH**

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Lessons From The World's Most Stylishly Bespectacled Men

VARIETY IS KING

“When you wear glasses, you’re signing up to be a certain type of person,” says David Sedaris, which is why the celebrated author and humorist keeps nine different pairs on hand to cycle through.

GO TINTED, BUT NOT TOO TINTED

New York artist Tyrrell Winston keeps his peach-tinted lenses on at gallery openings. “Those are situations where I feel super vulnerable,” he says, “so it’s like a superhero mask that protects me.”

FIND YOUR SIGNATURE

Dutch soccer legend Edgar Davids’s signature sporty, muscular frames helped turn him into an instantly recognizable global star and gave him a lifelong affinity for orange-tinted lenses. “When you look at green and white [on the pitch], it really separates them,” he says.

STYLE OVER SUBSTANCE

Some folks wear glasses in an effort to appear more austere and dignified. Not Kaytranada. “I need something *fun* to have on, you know?” he says. “I don’t just want to look like some serious man in glasses.”

CONSIDER PROPORTIONS

To balance out David Letterman’s epic retirement beard, the late-night icon has recently opted for bigger, brighter specs that can hold their own against his bushy grandeur.

MATCH YOUR VIBE

The key to pulling off your bleach-blond rite of passage as successfully as Seth Rogen? Locking down the peroxide with a pair of clean-lined wire frames.

THINK OUTSIDE THE SQUARE

Bowen Yang wanted glasses at age five—long before he actually needed them—after seeing footage of Elton John backstage with two enormous suitcases full of spectacles. These days, the *SNL* star is an eyewear king in his own right, with a proclivity for avant-garde shapes.

The Brands Of The Moment



Courtesy of Akila

Akila

Founder Chris Mart imported plenty of elements from the LA streetwear scene into his eyewear start-up: a penchant for wild colors, a commitment to accessible prices, and a knack for hype-inducing collabs with Pleasures, Mister Green, and the Grateful Dead.



Courtesy of Bonnie Clyde

Bonnie Clyde

After a childhood spent observing their parents' LA eyewear company, brothers Jon and Jeff Yuan launched Bonnie Clyde as a means of taking the family business in daring new directions—the kind of swervy, blinding glasses that would look right at home in a viral TikTok.



Courtesy of Crap Eyewear

Crap Eyewear

Don't let the name (or the affordable price tags) fool you: All of Crap's Venice Beach–designed, funk-heavy shades are constructed from prescription-ready, plant-based materials.



Courtesy of Nackymade

Nackymade

Entirely designed and built from scratch in master craftsman Naoki Nakagawa's Kobe, Japan, atelier, Nackymade's artful spins on old-school frames are easily identified by Nakagawa's signature dino-shaped arms.



Courtesy of O.P.R.

O.P.R.

If you're looking for a taste of true old-world luxury, O.P.R.'s vintage-inspired knockouts are among the few Italian-made frames still constructed by hand in the traditional way.



Courtesy of Native Sons

Native Sons

The brainchild of former Dita designer Tommy O’Gara—who helped usher Thom Browne, Supreme, and Visvim into the eyewear game—and Neighborhood founder Shinsuke Takizawa, Native Sons turns out frames that are boldface, meticulously engineered, and just the slightest bit off-kilter.



Courtesy of Mr. Leight

Mr. Leight

A joint effort by two generations of California eyewear royalty—Oliver Peoples magnate Larry Leight and his designer son Garrett Leight—Mr. Leight specializes in timeless shapes handcrafted by an elite group of Japanese craftspeople.



Courtesy of Jacques Marie Mage

Jacques Marie Mage

If you've seen a handsome movie star in sick sunglasses on the cover of *GQ* at any point in the past few years, chances are those shades were made by LA's Jacques Marie Mage—and, as it happens, the designer's optical frames are every bit as distinctive and red-carpet-ready as its darkly tinted counterparts.



Courtesy of Kaleos

Kaleos

Jumbo-size geometric shapes are the name of the game at Barcelona's Kaleos, whose singular spectacles often seem plucked straight out of those killer old photos of your parents in their 20s.

The World's Coolest Eyewear Stores



Courtesy of Silver Lining Opticians

Silver Lining Opticians

New York City

When the NBA became the battleground for an eyewear cold war, this low-key SoHo boutique inadvertently became one of the league's biggest arms dealers. "Every basketball player suddenly needed better glasses than the next guy," recalls cofounder Jordan Silver. "Dwyane Wade, Amar'e Stoudemire, LeBron—they were all coming in. It was a fun time." Those hoopers joined Silver Lining's global roster of regulars, thanks to the store's bang on mix of vintage Ray-Bans and Persols alongside eclectic offerings from the likes of Bruno Chaussignand and Masunaga. "We've done glasses for everybody," Silver says. "Jay-Z, Puff. Directors. Fine artists. It's a neighborhood staple where people come to hang out, but it's also a world-class shop."



Courtesy of Continuer

Continuer

Tokyo

Given Japan's outsized stature in the world of glasses making—designers like Thom Browne, Jacques Marie Mage, and Dita all manufacture their eyewear there—Tokyo is expectedly rife with killer optical shops. But Continuer ranks ahead of the rest thanks to its god-tier curation. Inside this clean, compact store you'll find a big picture overview of the very best the contemporary eyewear market has to offer: the major independent players you know (Mykita, Oliver Peoples) and the tiny underground makers you won't find anywhere else (Qulo, Grapes & Celadon).



Courtesy of General Eyewear

General Eyewear

London

Hidden inside an 1850s Victorian railway arch, the bunker-like emporium houses a thousands-strong archive that stretches as far back as the 1810s, alongside the shop's own highly distinctive in-house line. And according to creative director Fraser Laing, you'll receive no false praise in an effort to make a sale. "If a customer picks out a frame that we think is suboptimal in terms of flattering their appearance, we will always make our opinion clear," he says. "Everyone can look more impressive and imposing with the right frame."



Courtesy of Vintage Frames Company

Vintage Frames Company

Montreal

When Quavo, Nas, or 2 Chainz are on the hunt for a fresh pair of gold-rimmed Cartiers or iced-out vintage Cazals, they call up Vintage Frames Company's Corey Shapiro. His Montreal flagship is an ode to the cultural history of glasses, from the baby grand piano and marble floors—a nod to eyewear god Elton John's legendary Caesar's Palace residency—to the unrivaled collection of epic designer frames by Christian Dior, Jean Paul Gaultier, and countless others adorning the walls chronologically. "We've curated all these different eras to not only allow people to come in and shop," Shapiro says, "but also to get a real education on how eyewear has evolved and developed over time."



Courtesy of L'Ingénieur Chevallier

L'Ingénieur Chevallier

Paris

Under the stewardship of the Parisian eyewear masters at Maison Bonnet, L'Ingénieur Chevallier—founded in 1740 as the very first optician in Paris—is undergoing a full-scale reimagining. Where Bonnet specializes in wholly bespoke creations, Chevallier will deal in what CEO Franck Bonnet calls “custom-made ready-to-wear.” Step inside Chevallier’s refurbished Rue des Pyramides shop and you’ll find a true optical workshop—where the label’s artisan-crafted glasses will be exactly fitted to, in Bonnet’s words, “the morphological specificities of its owner.”



Courtesy of Gentle Monster Haus Dosan

Gentle Monster Haus Dosan

Dosan, South Korea

Gentle Monster’s sprawling boutique is designed to “deteriorate the boundaries between commercial space, art gallery, and art studio,” according to the South Korean brand’s space design team. Weirdo installations dominate all five levels, including an ever-evolving exhibition area on the first floor, experimental videos by Berlin director Jonas Lindstroem, and a hulking, six-legged robotic creature that stalks the third floor. But don’t get it twisted: The sleek, postmodernist eyewear is still the main draw here, and you’ll leave with a pair of glasses that’ll prompt what the team calls “an emotionally stimulating experience.”

Yang-Yi Goh is GQ’s style editor.

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