

# IN & AROUND

## KING'S ROAD

Text: Lyndsey Dennis

From a private road for Kings Charles II to a high-end shopping district, King's Road in London offers a vibrant mix of traditional Chelsea shops alongside international brands.

Stretching through Chelsea and Fulham, King's Road derived its name from its use as a private road for King Charles II to travel to Kew, and was only opened to everyone in 1830. Chelsea was originally a poor area on the outskirts of London and became the area for artists and bohemians. Later, King's Road was the centre of counter-culture starting with the mods and evolving through punk to today, with shops such as Vivienne Westwood and Mary Quant being followed by The Ivy and the Bluebird today.

Neighbours with Cadogan Gardens, Duke of York Square and Sloane Street to name a few, King's Road and the surrounding area has changed substantially in recent years. 'There are two main changes, the first is that Chelsea has become far more international and now attracts retailers from all over the world. We have luxury pewter specialist Royal Selangor from Malaysia, Russian hair and beauty brand Sakurami, both on the King's Road alongside the first UK branch of French boulangerie, Oree on the Fulham Road,' says Richard Everett, Sloane Stanley Estate manager.

'The second change is the type of retailer. Whilst we still have traditional Chelsea shops such as Green & Stone, serving the artistic community, and Wilde Ones, a bit of bohemian Chelsea, there is a new generation giving a new twist: retailers such as Duck & Dry for quick hair styling, Face Gym providing non-invasive "facial workouts", or Fake Landscapes stocking artificial flowers and plants,' continues Everett.

Sloane Stanley has long used pop-ups as a way of introducing even more diversity and change, and attract increasing numbers of non-traditional retailers. This has been so successful that there is now a dedicated retail unit on the King's Road, the Concept Store.

'This is a revolving pop-up space within a prime retail unit that

offers brands the opportunity to secure a high street presence on the King's Road. We hand pick the best selection of brands possible to complement our retail offering and are proud to provide a dedicated space for exciting designers, entrepreneurs and emerging local and national brands with an opportunity to trade within our thriving and iconic destination,' says Everett.

In the Concept Store last year, dairy free ice-cream specialist Nana Nice Cream hosted a series of events from yoga classes and wellness talks, to a breakfast bar with Rude Health. Throughout the year the estate neighbours with key events including the RHS Chelsea Flower Show and Wimbledon Championships, which sees many of the tenants adorning their windows with displays inspired by these events.

Recently the area welcomed French furniture specialist Silvera with its debut UK showroom on the King's Road. Prior to this, Italian pizzeria Lievito opened its first ever pizza and craft beer dining concept on nearby Fulham Road in March. There has also been a strong succession of pop-ups this year, most recently a co-curated summer fashion concept store at 227-229 King's Road which stocked a unique mix of brands and emerging designers.

'The brands we continue to attract complement the vibrant Chelsea community and highlight the estate as a distinct retail and leisure destination in London,' says Everett.

So what's next for King's Road? 'Evolution and hopefully a bit of revolution! The Estate is fortunate that we can experiment, try out new ideas, take a chance. We are in discussions with a number of interesting retail and leisure brands, and also have an exciting calendar of pop-ups in place for the Concept Store, so watch this space,' concludes Everett. **RF**



The area is home to French boulangerie, Oree, which opened in 2016.

**RF**