

LIVING

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STYLE



Francis Klein's customisable eyewear, like this pair from The Eye Site, \$675, gives you colour, patterns, and quirky three-dimensional accoutrements.

Photos by Jason Ho and Keh Mui Fong



Alrossy, The Eye Site, \$995.

HIGH SHINE

Punk, goth, or high-society glamour — with lots of well-placed heavy metal, carefully crafted details, and uncommon materials, eyewear lends itself beautifully to such varied fashion statements. Unsurprisingly, these frames can be a tad heavy. The rims and floral cross accents of the gothic-style by Japanese label A'rossy are made of sterling silver, and its weight proves it.



Blac, The Eye Site, \$1,000.



Kirk Originals, The Eye Site, \$520.



Effector, The Eye Site, \$630.

Get framed

Our guide to some of the biggest trends in eyewear

UNUSUAL MATERIALS

Tired of ordinary plastics and metals? How about wood, acrylic, or carbon fibre? These one-of-a-kind carbon fibre frames from Blac were inspired by F1 racing, and make titanium eyewear look kind of clunky. Not that clunky can't be attractive — as these handsome wood frames by Japanese brand Effector demonstrate.

A fine spectacle

Eyewear takes accessorising to another level — myopia not required

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SHARON Friberg successfully underwent the vision-correcting procedure, Lasik, more than a year ago. Yet, she currently owns four pairs of spectacles.

The glasses, which include specialised eyewear brands such as Alain Mikli and Kirk Originals, are worn for effect, said the 44-year-old marketing director for designer eyewear store Seen@Dempsey.

Ironically, Sharon added, now that her myopia measures an almost-negligible 100 degrees, her range of eyewear choices has grown.

She had been limited to glasses with small frames because the lenses used to correct her myopia, at 700 degrees, would

look too thick in bigger frames.

With a laugh, she said: "The glasses I used to wear weren't things I wanted to be seen in!"

Like Sharon, a growing number of Singaporeans are seeing eyewear as fashion accessories, rather than just tools that help them see clearly.

Niche stores such as Seen@Dempsey and The Optique have emerged in recent years, and the older ones — such as Eye Place and The Eye Site — report a growing interest in design-driven eyewear.

Specialised eyewear brands generally offer quirkier styles than their mainstream counterparts. Spectacles are manufactured in smaller quantities and sometimes hand-made. They may also use unconventional materials such as carbon fibre.

Collin Teo, who co-founded Eye Place in 1994, said: "Customers have become better-informed and pickier. There are

many specialised designer brands available now, compared to when I started in the eyewear business 20 years ago, when there were only a couple."

Such changes have not gone unnoticed by renowned eyewear designer Alain Mikli, whose designs have been sold here for 15 years.

In an email interview, the French designer said: "Singapore used to be quite a conservative market, (where we mostly sold) metal frames in traditional shapes, but it has evolved to become a market for many different sorts of designs, such as bright, colourful acetate frames. Singaporeans now also welcome innovations in eyewear, in terms of materials, technology and crafting."

With the options available these days, eyewear aficionados are almost guaranteed to find glasses that suit their tastes, as well as their outfits.

There are no hard and fast rules to finding a perfect pair — or pairs.

For instance, while most customers seek out spectacles that best complement their appearance, said The Eye Site's marketing manager Desiree Koh, one of her customers wanted her glasses to "clash with her face as much as possible".

The customer, a fashion stylist, buys about 15 pairs a year.

Said Desiree: "She tells me, 'The more they clash, the more people will notice them. If not, what am I wearing frames for?'"

STORES

Atlantic Optical #02-09A Wheelock Place (Tel: 6734 1577)
Eye Place #01-06 Stamford House (Tel: 6338 3240)
Seen@Dempsey #01-03, 26 Dempsey Road (Tel: 6475 0730)
The Eye Site #B1-99/100 Parkway Parade (Tel: 6348 6670)
The Optique #B1-23 Ion Orchard (Tel: 6737 5665)