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**WEST HOLLYWOOD BECOMES THE WEST COAST'S NEW FASHION MECCA
AS GLOBAL FASHION HOUSES JOIN LOCAL DESIGNERS IN THE "CREATIVE CITY"**

*West Hollywood's Reputation as a Haven for Designers Attracts Big Names Like
Christian Louboutin, Stella McCartney, 3.1 Phillip Lim, Balenciaga, Alberta Ferretti*

WEST HOLLYWOOD, Calif. – September 1, 2009 – As West Hollywood prepares for the opening of a much-anticipated new Christian Louboutin boutique and studio this fall on Robertson Blvd., trendsetters and fashionistas are discovering the West Coast's newest fashion mecca. The heart of the city's fashion scene lies south of the Pacific Design Center in the **Avenues of Art & Design** along Melrose Ave., Robertson Blvd. and Beverly Blvd.

"While the West Hollywood design district has always been famous for interior design, in the five years since I opened Alpha, I've seen the fashion community embrace the district as well," said Darren Gold, chairman of the board of the Avenues of Art & Design and owner of Alpha, a men's boutique. "The area has attracted creative, design-conscious retailers and consumers. It's a great place to discover the latest fashion trends and world-class designers all in one neighborhood."

GLOBAL FASHION'S LOCAL PRESENCE

In addition to the new **Christian Louboutin** store opening this fall at 650 N. Robertson, a number of global fashion houses have chosen West Hollywood as the location of their newest stores. **Alberta Ferretti**, an Italian designer known for her beautiful cocktail dresses, opened her only North American boutique at 8626 Melrose. The Alberta Ferretti boutique has been nominated for World Building of the Year 2009 in the World Architecture Festival. The store's interior is being recognized for its sophisticated, simple palette and bespoke magnetic display system.

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Balenciaga opened its fourth U.S. store at 8670 Melrose in West Hollywood in 2008. This is one of only two U.S. stores to carry both men's and women's designs. Cristobal Balenciaga, Balenciaga's founder, has been called "the master of us all" by Christian Dior, and actress Salma Hayek called the West Hollywood store "the most beautiful store in the world." **3.1 Phillip Lim**, which celebrated its first anniversary at 631 N. Robertson in June, is the celebrated designer's second U.S. store, and features his full line of women's, men's and children's wear, as well as accessories. **Stella McCartney** may have spearheaded this wave of fashion prowess when she opened her West Coast boutique in West Hollywood in 2003. Located at 8823 Beverly, the store has been a runaway success since it opened.

LOCAL DESIGNERS & BOUTIQUES ARE THE HEART OF WEST HOLLYWOOD

In addition to these high-fashion imports, West Hollywood is home to many homegrown designers and eclectic boutiques. Among the most prominent is **Maxfield** (8825 Melrose), the legendary retailer whose avant-garde styles and VIP treatment attract a second-to-none celebrity clientele. Other hip local retailers include **Alpha Man** (8625 Melrose), which offers clothing, accessories and gifts for the man with everything. **Kitson Melrose** (8590 Melrose), which has graced the pages of many lifestyle magazines, consistently stays one step ahead of the latest trends and attracts a devoted following among Hollywood's young and fashionable.

Among the more unique offerings, designer **Julia Gerard** has maintained a store on Melrose Ave. for nearly 25 years. After 9/11, she turned her store into the **Peace Gallery** (8575 Melrose) and produces rock and roll-inspired clothing adorned with peace signs and thought-provoking messages. **ARCADE by Rochelle Gores**, located at 8473 Melrose, carries an eclectic collection of renowned designers, including Yigal Azrouel and Emanuel Ungaro.

Outside of the Avenues of Art & Design, another great shopping destination is **Sunset Plaza** (8623 Sunset) on The Sunset Strip, which features stores like **Badgley Mischka**, **Catherine Malandrino**, **Leona Edmiston** and **On Sunset**. An added perk of shopping at Sunset Plaza is plentiful parking in their lot on the south side of Sunset. For the latest styles in trendy men's sportswear, look no further than **LASC**, located at 8592 Santa Monica Blvd. This 4,000-square foot store carries Diesel and G Star Raw, in addition to a huge selection of athletic apparel.

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ABOUT WEST HOLLYWOOD

Located at the foot of the Hollywood Hills in the heart of Los Angeles and just 1.9 square miles in size, the city of West Hollywood rivals the world's most exciting travel destinations. Visitors can spend their days shopping in the colorful design district, lounging at a rooftop hotel pool, or visiting one of the area's many cultural attractions. And when the sun goes down, West Hollywood really heats up with world-class dining experiences and the legendary nightspots of The Sunset Strip and Santa Monica Blvd.

For more information on West Hollywood's cutting edge businesses or to plan the ultimate getaway, please visit www.visitwesthollywood.com. For the latest offers and tips on living like a West Hollywood insider, visit www.WHinsiders.com.

ABOUT THE WEST HOLLYWOOD MARKETING & VISITORS BUREAU

The West Hollywood Marketing & Visitors Bureau is a 501(c) non-profit organization dedicated to marketing the City of West Hollywood as a "living forward" visitor destination to business and leisure travelers by promoting awareness of the city's unique location, image, businesses and industries and by providing support for the city's economic development efforts. For more information, please visit www.visitwesthollywood.com.

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