

DEPARTURES

M A G A Z I N E

DRESSCODE
STYLE GUIDE

SOCCER FASHION

By day they are cashmere-factory workers, by night the best-dressed soccer players in the Umbrian League. Their team, A. S. Castel Rigone, is owned by Brunello Cucinelli, designer of the six-ply cashmere sweater and native son in the town of Castel Rigone. Full disclosure: When out on the field, the team wears Nike.

S

SAMPLE SALE

Virtual catfight? Late last year a crop of Web sites began staging online sample sales of high-end goods. "It gives shoppers the thrill of competition without the bad aspects, like getting elbowed over a Prada clutch," says Paul Hurley, CEO of Ideeli (ideeli.com), which specializes in bags and other

accessories that are discounted up to 80 percent; some are from labels rarely available in the United States, like France's L'Amarte and Lancel.

On Gilt Groupe (gilt.com) Alexis Maybank and Alexandra Wilkis Wilson have collected an impressive roster of designers—from Carolina Herrera and Rachel Roy to John Varvatos and Valentino—since their November 2007 debut sale, which featured items from close friend Zac Posen at up to 70 percent off retail. Membership is via word of mouth and personal social

networks, including a VIP invitation card distributed at select events. Ideeli maintains its exclusivity by targeting certain demographics and offering shoppers first- and second-row alert options (much in the way friends and family are privy to traditional sample sales before the doors open to the public). Once a member is online, the sample sale rules of first come, first serve, still apply. *Both Web sites are offering DEPARTURES readers exclusive access (ideeli.com password: departures; Gilt Groupe address: gilt.com/departures).*

Skeleton Watches

Many a movement can appear transparent, but how do you know when a watch is really a skeleton? "The term is used loosely today," says Doug Escribano, a watch specialist at Christie's New York. "But a true skeletonized watch has a movement that's visible from the front and back." Patek Philippe's new 5180/1G is the real deal. \$84,300; patek.com

Two classic European sneakers face off. In one corner is the traditionally canvas, rubber-soled **Superga**—the "people's shoe of Italy"—designed in 1925 and updated through a collaboration with sartorial menswear brand **Isaia** in

SUPERGA VS. BENSIMON

ostrich, crocodile, or water-resistant Aquacashmere (from \$295; 212-245-3733). In another corner, the very French, très simple **Bensimon**, inspired by army surplus and favored by Serge Gainsbourg and Brigitte Bardot, is now available for the first time in America (from \$42; bensimon.com).

Sign of the Times?

Saks Fifth Avenue will now convert prices to euros upon request.