

the aesthete

The head of Café Wolseley's retail sector, Lauren Gurvich King, is mad for Murano glass, Rome's oldest chocolate makers and a vintage Mercedes Benz named Gertrude. Portrait by **Rick Pushinsky**



“My living room has some wonderful antique furniture, with stories I treasure – including a ram’s head Chervet coffee table from Chicago”

My personal style signifiers are blazers, chunky heels and statement rings. I love a blazer with sharp shoulders and a nipped waist – Balmain’s longer versions are my favourites – and am a big fan of sandals by Prada, which has the best heel heights. Once I could prance around in ultra-high heels, but I’ve finally become a tad more sensible. My wedding and engagement rings and my mother’s diamond and citrine ‘60s cocktail ring are my classics, and always on. balmain.com, prada.com.

The last thing I bought and loved was a Diane Kordas black onyx, rose-gold and diamond rosary. It’s perfect for everyday and wonderful for layering. Diane is a fantastic jeweller – her pieces are unique and interesting. *Black onyx cross rosary necklace, £2,627; dianekordasjewellery.com.*

An unforgettable place I’ve travelled to in the past year is the Lanserhof Clinic in Lans, Austria. Having never been to a full-detox medical clinic, I didn’t realise what I was in for, but after nine days of fasting, unusual treatments and the most beautiful scenery in the Tyrolean mountains, I was hooked. I came back better, stronger, healthier and clearer. lanserhof.com.

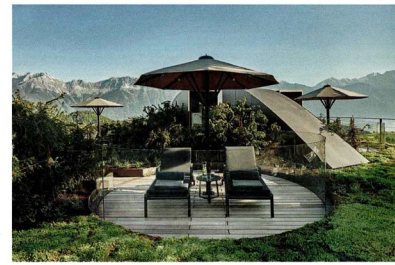
An object I would never part with is my car, a navy 1988 Mercedes-Benz 560 SL with palomino leather, purchased in LA in 2006 and brought to London 10 years ago. I named her Gertrude – a fitting name for a strong German woman, which she is! She’s a classic beauty. mercedes-benz.co.uk.

The best gift I’ve received is a 1940s men’s gold Rolex with a brown crocodile band, which was a gift from my husband. It’s inscribed “To My Queen” and I love it – a very unique watch with a very special sentiment. rolex.com.

My favourite room in my house is my living room. It contains my book collection – most of it, anyway – and my cherished ‘60s-’70s Murano glass bowls and ‘50s-’60s white ceramic vases. Also our art collection and some wonderful antique furniture, including a ram’s head Chervet coffee table from Chicago, a Willy Rizzo lacquered cabinet from Brussels and a lovely Bagues side table bought in Paris. They’re meaningful pieces, collected over time, and I treasure the stories they hold for me.

The grooming staples I’m never without are Oribe shampoo and texture spray, Olaplex conditioner and StriVectin moisturisers – total game-changers.

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Clockwise from above: **Lauren Gurvich King’s Diane Kordas onyx rosary. The Lanserhof Clinic, Austria. Fracas, £155 for 100ml EDP. Gurvich King at home in London. Far right: In the Morning by Jay Prince**



Clockwise from above: **Gurvich King’s gold 1940s Rolex. Her style icon, Mirella Agnelli. Ceramics at Chez Dedé, Rome. Her 1988 Mercedes-Benz. Le Sirenuse, Positano. Far right: Olaplex conditioner, £24 for 250ml**



And I’ve worn my perfume, Fracas, for at least 15 years now. *Fracas, £155 for 100ml EDP; harveynichols.com. Olaplex No 5 Bond Maintenance Conditioner, £24 for 250ml; cultbeauty.co.uk. Oribe Dry Texturizing Spray, \$46 for 300ml; and Signature Shampoo, \$44 for 250ml; oribe.com. StriVectin Advanced Retinol Day Moisturizer, \$99 for 50ml; strivectin.com.*

If I had to limit my shopping to one neighbourhood in one city, it would have to be Rome. I lived there for three years and loved the sights, sounds and smells. I’d shop at Chez Dedé for its inspiring collection of unique homewares, and also at Arcon, a mecca for the best in contemporary Italian interiors. To satisfy my sweet tooth, I’d visit Confeetteria Moriondo e Gariglio, one of Rome’s oldest chocolate-makers, for the indulgence of their marrons glacés. arconroma.com, chezdede.com, moriondoe.gariglio.com.

My style icon is Mirella Agnelli, the Italian noblewoman and wife of the late Fiat chairman, Gianni Agnelli. Her fashion sense, hairstyles, interiors and famous gardens were all pure style. As was her demeanour – I don’t think she had the easiest life, and her grace was a true example of what style means.

My beauty guru is Tracey Cunningham, who tends to my hair colour when I am in Los Angeles and has an extremely popular salon called Mèche in Beverly Hills. I’ve been seeing Tracey for more than 20 years. The first time, she had just become a colourist after years as Bette Midler’s assistant, and now she tends to the tresses of every major actress and pop star. I have been every colour under the sun and she always keeps me looking my best. *From \$150 for base colour; mechasalonla.com.*

The things I’m eyeing next are Picasso ceramics, particularly the large pitchers with the special handles. I always browse the auctions to see what’s out there and have been considering a purchase for years. I love that Picasso experimented with ceramics after being inspired by his time in Vallauris, and ended up creating more than 3,500 of these pieces.

An indulgence I would never forgo is art and furniture purchases. I bought an

“Jay Prince’s In the Morning is on my Spotify Repeat a lot”

unusual Robert Longo triptych from his *Men in the Cities* series from a gallery in New York years ago, and will always treasure it. I’m very proud to own it. I also have a wonderful Suzanne Guichon parchment and sycamore commode from the 1930s that I found at Les Pucés in Paris decades ago; it was one of my first significant furniture purchases and a catalyst for my love of all things 20th-century design. marcheauxpucés-saintouen.com, robertlongo.com.



The one artist whose work I would collect if I could is Jean Royère. His furniture is spectacular. I love the curved shapes and forms of his sofas and chairs; I actually pine for them. They’re biomorphic designs created in the 1940s, but they are incredibly modern. My dream is to own one of his extremely rare Polar Bear chairs.

The last music I downloaded was Ashley Beedle’s *Unmask Me* and Jay Prince’s *In the Morning*, which is on my Spotify Repeat a lot lately. spotify.com.

The site that inspires me is Pompeii. I went with my husband on a quick stop-off on the way to Naples airport last year after a few nights at my favourite hotel in Positano, Le Sirenuse. I knew the entire city was enveloped so quickly by volcanic lava and ash that it was perfectly preserved and frozen in time; but I had no idea how intact the structures, homes, art, signage – even the furniture – was. It’s truly remarkable; a vibrant and advanced society that ended entirely too soon. *From €315; sirenuse.it.*

The last items of clothing I added to my wardrobe were ATM T-shirts; I always purchase several at a time as I wear them with everything. Anthony is a wonderful designer and has the most interesting cotton fabrics and cuts. *From \$68; atmcollection.com.*

The best gift I’ve given recently was a set of our Wolseley bevelled crystal coupes as a hostess present. I am totally a coupe person rather than a flute one. Our glassware is made exclusively by one of the oldest factories in Europe; they’re hand-blown into fruit moulds and hand-bevelled, which gives them a wonderful deco feel. They’re perfect for champagne and cocktails. *Set of six, £245; thewolseley.com.*

AS TOLD TO MARIA SHOLLENBARGER