THE
VINTAGE WATCH
COMPANY

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Cotton floral patchwork top, £95, Karen Carnaby (020-7734 1202)

Pink striped shorts, £60, Paul & Joe at Harvey Nichols (020-7584 0001)

Striped winter sun hat, £195, Eres at Selfridges (020-7629 1234)

Black fluid kitten heels, £145, Oxford, available at www.oxfordshoes.com

Wicker basket, £55, Cath Kidston (020-7221 8000)

Beach towel, £145, from a selection at Burberry (0700 378 9010)

Pink mushroom print bandeau bikini, £120, Beach Bum (020-7730 2606)

Striped canvas beach bag, £55, Tommy Hilfiger (020 7235 2607)

Espadrille, £120, Fred Perry (020-7267 1440)

Brown sunglasses, £15, Harris & Spencer (1840 302 1204)

Yellow wedges, £84, Pantofola Nera Selfridges (0870 837 7070)

Shoe print bikini, £15, Paolo Nutini from Selfridges (0870 837 7070)

White frame sunglasses, from £100, Lyria Parker Vintage from Liberty (020-7734 1234)

STYLING: CLARE LAZARUS

COOLHUNTER TINA CAUDON

THE VINTAGE ROLEX

When something causes crowds to gather three deep in London's busiest shopping strip – the Burlington Arcade – questions may be asked. When the answer to the questions that must be asked is a watch shop, you could be forgiven for pondering the relevance of the lives of the glamorous-broad shoppers. Until you drop up that the shop in question is the Vintage Watch Company, specialising in old Rolexes.

We've boasted with the Rolex aficionado – it doesn't matter what you're wearing once you flash that watch, people regard you with a new-found respect. At least (let's be honest, it's not a new theory – it applies to any vintage Rolex) and it seems to apply to pretty much everything that was at or near cutting-edge of contemporary consumption: clothes, handbags, perfumes. There seems and something about where you quite feel, where you were going (except that you, with the blessing of hindsight, remember, perhaps know might even see clear, but I digress) you don't care where you are, where is around hand. Slide support in Range Rovers, journeys riding to hounds. Where will it all end?

Rolex, like many luxury brands have fallen foul of their own success – what everybody cares aspired to, anyone (with the cash) can now have. The question then, on every style arbiter's lips is how once exclusive brands can again become cool. It's not easy.

WITH THE BLURRING OF BOUNDARIES, YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU ARE: RAPPERS IN RANGE ROVERS, JOURNOS RIDING TO HOUNDS

You can't just dive everyone out of your deep brands as you might like to and start again. In courting the new customer, the luxury brand has created a new consumer and he or she is going nowhere.

This is, of course, where the idea of vintage dovetails nicely – old, non-perfect items, often one-offs, from books to diamonds, are hugely in demand, especially among those who once bought "brand" but have a more mixed mind now. Time to flash one image. And then there's the added bonus in that the "new different" regard old as just that – old. Who buy something that belonged to someone else when you can have a brand spanking model?

We've mentioned the Vintage Watch Co before in this magazine, but I'm making a special case for its temporarily because it's the perfect example of how to evolve old stock. This is a temple dedicated to the art of time telling. Once it's the hard-accepted fact of life (it has demanded for lower age) he was the handsome David, will offer the vintage of everything from the largest metrographic Rolex ever made (NOW £12,500), to a Rolexes with a leading dial (£4,500). The 50-60s are so Chronograph Cardiacs that have become close to some rare membership to be good to see. He's says his main customers frequently come back. "Watches are often the vehicle for a man to express himself – it's just simply nice to have an outlet. This is the age of the watch wearable." ■

The Vintage Watch Co
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