

Sole Patrol

| By *Lilith Schechner* | Photography by *Julia Galdo* |

Los Angeles is an unlikely cobbling capital. The phrase "local footwear" evokes flimsy slip-ons and the ubiquitous flip-flop, and our well-heeled citizens prefer stylish soles imported from Paris or Milan. To the rescue come five L.A. designers determined to make a footprint for the fashionable set. They are digging their heels firmly into the Southland and creating high-end footwear that could send a friction down Sergio Rossi's four-inch stilettoes or turn Christian Louboutin's red soles green.

LD Tuttle Putting her best foot forward this season is Tiffany Tuttle, who referenced old photos of army ski regiments, musician Iggy Pop and the 1962 short film *La Fée* for her LD Tuttle collection. Born from this extraordinary mash-up is a feminine suede shoe with bold Frankenstein stitching, a low leather motorcycle boot with studded straps and a high top leather and patent sneaker, heralding the launch of select unisex styles. "There's always something to discover in Los Angeles," Tuttle says. Lucky for us, we've just discovered her.



The Stalker (\$842). LD Tuttle available at Creatures of Comfort and Saks. ldtulle.com

Calleen Cordero From her North Hollywood factory to her Beverly Blvd. boutique, Calleen Cordero's shoes are testaments to hand-crafting. Her heavily studded leather sandals have become must-haves—the soft leather clogs with hand-tooled details and sky-high open toe boots set with polished gold zippers are also shoe-ins for classic status.



The Letigo Lace-up (\$895). Calleen Cordero available at Ron Herman and Madison. calleencordero.com

From left: Tiffany Tuttle, Calleen Cordero, Jerome C. Rousseau and Nicole LaFave near Cordero's factory.



The Regent (\$850). Jerome C. Rousseau available at Barney's Beverly Hills. jeromerousseau.com

George Esquivel "I tell my guys to put love into the shoes," says George Esquivel, who employs up to 10 shoemakers at a time to supply his sun-dappled West Hollywood store. Approximately 40 hours are spent hand-crafting each pair of his tough leather boots, quirky wingtips and impeccable brogues that have graced the famous feet of Pearl Jam, Guns N' Roses and No Doubt. This fall he adds feminine designs, including a richly barnished suede shoe with hand-cut ribbon laces.



The Juliana (\$595). George Esquivel available at Esquivel House. esquivelhouse.com

Omelle Stepping out for its second season is Cherise Angelle and Nicole LaFave's chic and playful line, Omelle. Fall designs include a chocolate leather bootie with a luxuriously knit beidge, a taupe suede shoe with a plush gathered pouch and a chic felt boot with a smart fold over the ankle that's fastened by an oversize button. Smitten celebs like Blake Lively, Ali Landry and Sharon Stone have snapped up the line.



The Frana (\$825). Omelle available at Madison and Fred Segal. omelle.com

Jerome C. Rousseau

Footwear phenom Jerome C. Rousseau designs his eponymous line, which has attracted heel-happy celebs Charlize Theron and Cameron Diaz, from his Beachwood Canyon home. Inspired by a young Kate Bush, Rousseau is going "Victorian meets Bohemian" for fall with a chestnut suede boot that flaunts a provocatively low-cut ankle and an exquisite black and green kopanl prize heel.