

Restore your leather for winter Advertising Feature

Long-lasting repairs for a new market

Quality-loving consumers are turning to vintage sales and restoration over fast fashion.

Our economic climate and changes in consumer attitudes are contributing to the trend of acquiring and reusing vintage clothing and accessories.

It is estimated that as much as a quarter of our wardrobes are made up of vintage items, and by 2022 that may increase to 40 per cent.

The attraction to vintage is driven by young people, who cite quality as a key reason for purchasing pre-owned goods.

"Rather than buying a cheap pair of shoes that end up falling apart, young people will buy good quality shoes second-hand," says Jenny Velakoulis, general manager of Evans leather restoration company.

"They might spend \$100 on a leather jacket at a vintage store, then come to us to restore the leather or replace the lining. Those old leathers are thicker and much better than new leathers, which tend to be very fine and prone to tearing."

The resale market is growing an estimated 24 times faster than traditional retail. Online marketplaces such as luxury consignment store The RealReal, mobile shopping app Depop, Facebook Marketplace and other platforms are increasing in popularity, in part because of their unique and affordable options. The resale industry is also projected to eclipse fast-fashion market share in the next



Many customers visit Evans to have their second-hand and vintage leather goods restored.

eight years. Consumers are shopping their parents' wardrobes and "Marie Kondo-ing" their own, as well. Rather than buying something new that has been mass-produced, they would rather repair a pre-owned, one-of-a-kind piece.

"We have people who come in whose mother has passed away. They might have a

Louis Vuitton or Chanel or Prada bag that they want to restore," Velakoulis says. "It's such a beautiful and unique thing to have because nobody else will have it."

"Anyone can go to a shop and buy a bag, but to wear something that has been passed down is really special."

Evans was founded in 1956 at Melbourne's

Royal Arcade by Evan Skliros, Velakoulis' father. He passed away a few weeks ago at age 84.

"He loved bringing happiness to customers by restoring pieces that mean something to them," she says.

"We bring life back to things. Everything has a soul and we want to keep things alive and take care of them."

A return to post-war values and nostalgia for vintage fashion are not the only driving factors. Fashion is a polluting industry, so buying vintage is considered a sustainable alternative as consumers aren't contributing to manufacturing demand. Rather, they're extending the lifespan of pre-loved items.

"This generation actually cares about the environment. They look after their things, they recycle and they fix things if they need to," says Velakoulis.

Though luxury shoes, bags and jackets are the most common items that come through the store, Velakoulis says items such as leather camera cases and writing pads can also be repaired.

"We clean the leather really well and see if that helps. Usually leather needs hydration, so we hydrate it and nourish it with oils," she says. "The colour is really important because once leather starts wearing, it goes a little bit grey, so we also put the pigment back on to restore the colour and prevent holes."

"We try our best to make it 100 per cent. If they like it and enjoy it, there's no reason not to do it."

EVANS

LEATHER RESTORATION

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