Highlights

BOND STREET

NOTES:

★ Bond Street is mostly 'New Bond Street', and 'Old Bond Street' (the original part) is just a short section at the Piccadilly end. It is quite a narrow street; do not expect a grand boulevard.

★ Bond Street station is actually on Oxford Street, but nearby is pedestrianised South Molton Street which serves as a short-cut to Bond Street.

★ London's most exclusive street of shops: elegant and expensive designer clothing, jewellery, perfume, art and antiques, and also more Royal warrants - the coat of arms 'advertising' sanctioned by the Royal family - than anywhere else in London.

★ The nearest tube station to the Piccadilly end of Bond Street is Green Park.

Fenwick

One of eleven department stores around the country still to be run independently by the family of the same name. At its inception the Bond Street store was modelled on Le Bon Marché in Paris, which is regarded as one of the first ever department stores. There are five floors of fashionable clothes, including some by less well-known up-and-coming designers. There is a first-floor restaurant and a Carluccio's coffee bar downstairs. The pronunciation of 'Fenwick' is 'Fen-ick'.

DAKS

The classic UK label (now owned by the Japanese Seiko Co.) was established in East London by 16 year old Simeon Simpson in 1894. In addition to becoming official suppliers of uniforms to the military, it was DAKS that invented trousers with an adjustable waistband which at last eliminated the need for gentlemen to wear braces, and this was a particular advantage to golfers and other sporting types. The DAKS name that replaced the earlier 'Simpsons' is formed from the initials of the company managers of the time.

Tiffany & Co

In 1986, opened their first European branch here in Bond Street, nearly 150 years after the founding of the company in New York. Silverwork and fine jewellery made to Tiffany designs can be found in many museum collections around the world, and today's 'Tiffany Mark' wristwatch, based on Tiffany pocketwatch designs of the 19th century, is regarded as the culmination of this 150 year heritage. So too, is the celebrated Tiffany setting - a diamond ring with a six prong mounting which gives extra sparkle by raising the solitaire away from the band and into the light.

Browns

Growing from a small boutique in the 70s, to become a string of connected shops that sells clothes for women from the big-name designers, plus unusual one-offs and accessories. It is still a family-run business that prides itself on offering a friendly, more personal service than you might find in the larger stores.

5 Church & Co

One of Britain's oldest shoe manufacturers, now owned by Prada the international fashion group. The company was founded in 1873 by three brothers - William, Thomas and Alfred Church - who employed skilled craftsmen to produce limited numbers of high quality shoes by hand. Even today, a pair of Church's shoes will undergo up to 250 separate operations in production taking about eight weeks from start to finish. Famous wearers of Church's shoes have included James Bond and Winston Churchill.

6 Smythson

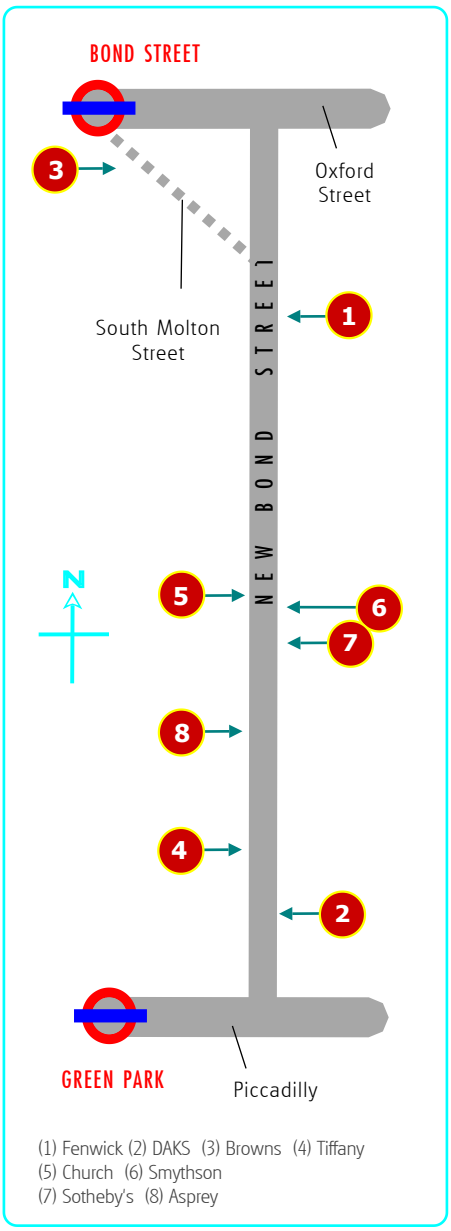
Stationers, renowned for their high quality stationery, diaries and leather goods for more than a century. There has been a Smythson shop in Bond Street since 1882, and today it even has its own small museum.

7 Sotheby's

the oldest of the London auction houses. With Christies (also on Bond Street) these two companies deal with the sale of the vast majority of jewellery, paintings and other art riches that go up for auction worldwide. The viewing galleries of the auction house are open to the public free of charge. At the entrance to the building, on top of the porch, you can see the oldest outdoor sculpture in London. Made of volcanic rock, it is of Sekhmet the sun goddess from Ancient Egypt and is about 3500 years old.

Asprey

The luxury goods shop 'for people of refinement and discernment'. Fascinating window displays reveal a quirkiness to some of the recent offerings, designed possibly, with a new type of international clientele in mind, but everything exquisitely crafted as always. Jewellers, watchmakers and leatherworkers create Asprey products from the in-house workshop on the first floor.



(1) Fenwick (2) DAKS (3) Browns (4) Tiffany
(5) Church (6) Smythson
(7) Sotheby's (8) Asprey