



HOW
WE
SHOP,
2021
LIVE
AND
LOOK

JOHN LEWIS
& PARTNERS



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TIME TO DELIGHT, DELIVER AND DISRUPT

INTRODUCTION

More centred and thoughtful. More aware of the importance of friends and family. More rebellious. More appreciative of our homes. Less prepared to put up with nonsense. These are just some of the ways in which customers' priorities have changed over the last 20 months.

Thanks to science, the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic is hopefully behind us. But the unprecedented events of 2020 and 2021 have left a permanent mark on how we shop, live and look. People have become clearer about what matters to them and their work-life balance has shifted towards life. At John Lewis & Partners we've seen these changes emerge. Our mission is to be joyfully bold for our customers as life's new patterns take root. We aim to delight, to deliver and to disrupt.

Four main trends defined what people shopped for this year. Firstly, they looked to turn rooms in their homes into multifunctional living spaces. Secondly, they used technology to help them achieve this. Thirdly, we saw a rise in people cooking from scratch or seeking help with their meal preparation. Baking and cooking became family activities. And fourthly we saw a move to casual dressing as Working From Home became the norm. There is still a place for formal dressing, but casual is here to stay.

We saw a significant change in how people shopped too. Before the pandemic, around 40% of transactions happened online or used our Click & Collect service. That figure is now settling between 60 and 70%. We have a network of over 1,000 locations where customers can pick up their purchases – from John Lewis and Waitrose stores, Co-ops, Booths and Shells. Sales through our app have risen from 15% pre-pandemic to 25% today. Over half our customers now make a multi-channel journey when they shop, meaning they combine online and physical visits to us. Our website has become richer, more colourful and more inclusive over the last year. Our stores have changed too. They are now true destinations; vibrant hubs where customers can shop, browse, eat or discover the range of services we offer.

Why services? Because the definition of ownership has changed. You don't need to buy something to possess it. Renting can be better for the environment too. So we've launched a furniture rental service with Fat Llama and have announced we'll build new rental homes. We're also growing our financial services division, which we believe can be four times bigger than it currently is.

There's a wonderful energy to John Lewis today. But there's so much more we can do. We're going to increase newness, improve customer service even more and add theatre and zest to our ranges (for pizzazz, check out our new ANYDAY fashion range). I want customers to leave our stores or our website having had extraordinary service and a joyful experience. I want them to be surprised at our boldness. And I want them to know we are here for all their big life moments. It has been a tough few years. Customers deserve nothing less from us.



PIPPA WICKS

Executive Director, John Lewis

I hope you enjoy the How We Shop, Live and Look 2021 report.



PRODUCTS THAT DEFINED THE YEAR

TRAMPOLINES

270%+

Daily health and fitness routines became popular over lockdown thanks to exercise gurus such as Joe Wicks. Sales of trampolines bounced accordingly and peaked in December 2020: what better way was there to tire out the kids than putting a trampoline in the garden and letting them go for it?

SPEEDOS

100%+

The trend for wild swimming helped sales of Speedo's men's swim briefs (in black, blue and orange) double over the year. There was also the Tom Daley effect: he won his Olympic gold medal wearing a pair of very small trunks. It has been a good year for the brand: total sales of Speedo swimwear have risen 79%.

HOT TUBS SALES

200%+

We only started selling hot tubs last Christmas and customers couldn't get enough, sales peaked in April. Hot tubs are the ultimate in affordable home luxury. Our inflatable models are easy to assemble, and they come with filters, the requisite chemicals and a cover. Champagne and banging tunes are extra.



AIR FRYERS

400%+

Forget a chip pan full of boiling oil: air fryers are the future. Safe, clean and odour-free, they use a small amount of oil and circulate hot air around internally, thereby vastly reducing the fat content of our favourite foods. They're versatile too: air fryers can also be used for risottos and curries. They were the perfect gadget for a year in which everyone was home cooking.

TENTS

650%+

It was all about the staycay, baby! Travel restrictions meant it was tricky to go abroad so we embraced the home holiday. Sales of camping gear rose by 105 per cent while sales of tents increased by 650 per cent. Sports Outerwear, such as lightweight coats perfect for vamping up a windy hill, rose by a third.



CORNER SOFAS

95%+

This year was all about making the space in our homes more efficient. Rooms became versatile living spaces: the dining room doubled up as an office, the sitting room became a classroom. We call it Broken Plan Living. The corner sofa has therefore been one of our best-sellers. It's easy to move and can fit pretty much anywhere, whether we're relaxing, dining, teaching or working.

SMART HOME SECURITY

10%+

We sold more video doorbells than there are seats in Wembley Arena in the first half of the year. As people were at home all the time, their family's security became a greater priority. Video doorbells also deterred pesky passers-by from swiping parcels left on the doorstep. There was also a health reason: video intercoms allowed homeowners to chat with delivery drivers without having face-to-face contact.

PIZZA OVENS

195%+

For the first time ever, our best-selling pizza oven sold more units than our best-selling barbecue. These ovens are the ultimate piece of outdoor entertaining kit – and they make delicious pizzas to boot. Whether portable or permanent, they became must-have items over lockdown as our gardens took on greater importance than ever before.



BIG TVS

146%+

Well, we didn't have much else to do. Research from media regulator Ofcom found that Britons spent a third of their waking hours watching TV in 2020. We increased our range of 75"-plus screens by 40%. Our £10,000 TV sets sold out. The biggest screen we sell measures 86 inches corner-to-corner – that's almost the same length as a tournament-size table tennis table.

CROCS

58%+

They may be the Marmite of shoes but Crocs snapped back into fashion. Over the year they were worn by contestants on Love Island and even spotted on the Oscars red carpet. These rubber wonders are ridiculously comfy and easy to kick off.



TV

THE NEW SHOP WINDOW

We binge-watched our way through hours of fantastic TV over lockdown. With shop windows boarded up or left empty for much of the last year, our TV screens temporarily took their place: they became our shop windows into interesting fashion and lifestyle trends. Here are some of the products that saw sales rise thanks to our favourite blockbuster shows.

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NOV

COLOURFUL COATS AND NECK SCARFS

Nicole Kidman and Hugh Grant kept us guessing in *The Undoing*, a stylish psychological thriller set in New York high society. Kidman's glamorous coats and scarves were equally addictive. Sales of colourful coats rose by 49% and online searches for neck scarves increased by 148% as customers were influenced by her striking look.

DEC

MICROWAVES

It was in December last year when Nigella Lawson unveiled her unique pronunciation of this everyday kitchen appliance. A clip of Lawson saying "mee-cro-wah-vay" went viral. We saw microwave sales rise 30% this month. Changing behaviour in lockdown was partly behind the rise. But sales were nudged along by the self-styled Domestic Goddess.



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JAN

FOUR POSTER BEDS

We call this the *Bridgerton* Effect. Our new own brand four poster bed sold out as this racy saga set in Regency London hooked the nation. Sales of patterned tablecloths, cake stands and champagne also soared. Scandalous and sumptuous in equal measure, *Bridgerton* was the perfect escapism.



FEB

80S STYLE LOGO T-SHIRTS

It's A Sin, Russell T Davies's drama about a group of gay men in London during the HIV/AIDS crisis of the Eighties, was compulsive and moving viewing. Sales of 80s style logo t-shirts rose 74%.



MAR

SUNGLASSES AND FLARED JEANS

Sales of this Seventies trend rose thanks to *The Serpent*, a show about a serial killer on the hippy trail in Thailand in 1975 and 1976. Stars Tahar Rahim and Jenna Coleman rocked retro sunglasses and flares with panache in almost every scene. Customers loved this look. Sales of sunglasses rose 46% and online searches for aviator sunglasses were up 182%. Our AND/OR Belmont Flare Jeans proved particularly popular as we sold seven times the amount versus the previous month.

APR

ANIMAL PRINT

A year after Tiger King was a hit, we were treated to Louis Theroux's documentary Shooting Joe Exotic, which looked back at the life of former zoo owner and convicted felon Joe Exotic. We sold enough animal print women's slippers to stretch from London Zoo to Camden Town tube station, almost a mile away. We also expanded our range of cheetah styles. Sales of leopard print from the Somerset by Alice Temperley range rose by 27%.



MAY

WAISTCOATS

As the sixth series of Line of Duty reached its crescendo, you could forget 'H' – it was all about 'W'. Waistcoats. Sales of waistcoats rose 114% between May and August as Line of Duty fever swept the country. The nattily-dressed DS Arnott was to blame. We know the series was behind this trend: prior to it starting, waistcoat sales were tracking down by 75%.



JUN

THE RACHEL EFFECT

We all loved Friends: The Reunion, and the show created a wave of Nineties nostalgia. Sales of orange sofas – like the one the cast sit on in the opening credits – rose by 98%. Dark lip liner and nude lipstick sales also doubled. But it was the green dress that Jennifer Aniston's character Rachel Green wore in 'The One Where No One's Ready' episode that really struck a chord with viewers. Journalist and author Dolly Alderton spotted the resemblance to a green Whistles dress and sales at John Lewis flew up by 400%.



JUL

WELLIES

Jeremy Clarkson becomes a farmer. Clarkson's Farm proved to be fantastically entertaining television and was one of the most talked about shows of the summer. Sales of women's Wellington Boots increased 53% year-on-year and searches were up 28% online. Over the period we sold twice as many pairs of Barbour's Wilton ankle boots than Clarkson has acres on his farm.



AUG

SKATEBOARDS & KNITTING

The Tokyo Olympics had a direct impact on sales. After Gold medallist diver Tom Daley was seen knitting as he prepared to jump, sales of knitting kits rose 87 per cent. Crocheting needles rose 36 per cent and sales yarn rose 14 per cent. Meanwhile sales of skateboards rose 33 per cent in August compared to the month before thanks to Sky Brown from Team GB winning a Bronze medal.



SEP

MARTINI GLASSES

Bond is back. And so was his favourite drink: a Martini, shaken not stirred. As 007 fans flocked to see No Time To Die in cinemas, sales of Martini glasses rose by almost 50 per cent. Bond films may have been around for almost 60 years but the spy remains as influential as ever.



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WHAT WE LEFT BEHIND IN 2021



FILING CABINETS

Delisted

We've stopped selling filing cabinets as the demand simply isn't there anymore. The world is going digital and paperless, with storage happening in cloud servers. As a result, customers no longer need to print their documents to store in hanging A4 folders.



CHILDREN'S PARTY CLOTHES

-27%

The pandemic was the ultimate party pooper. Sales of kids' party clothes dropped by 27% and sales of shoes for special occasions halved. Don't worry though – things have picked up again since lockdown eased.



TRAVEL ACCESSORIES

-83%

We didn't travel this year so we didn't need 'em. It was as simple as that. Sales of passport covers fell by 83% while sales of travel adaptors plunged by 74%. And pity the poor suitcase: millions of them sat at home gathering dust all year and sales of new ones fell 64%.



2-IN-1 LAPTOPS

-27%

Portability became less important this year as most people were stuck in one place. This meant that sales of 2-in-1 laptops – that's laptops that become tablets when their keyboard is detached – fell by 27%. Conversely, we doubled the size of our range of laptops with bigger screens.



BRIEFCASES

-22%

Demand for these classic office accessories was down due to the Working From Home trend. Briefcase sales fell by more than a fifth. Laptop bags were down by a quarter. Sales of other types of business bags fell by 56%.



THE THONG

-6%

The thong made a brief comeback in 2018. But sales fell 6% this year as customers grew tired of the item. Instead, they opted for more comfortable and practical underwear. This year was all about loungewear.



NECK TIES

-75%

Up until July, sales of men's ties were down by three quarters compared to the year before. Formal workwear simply wasn't required: it was all about dressing casually. But sales bounced back strongly (200%) post-July, due to the return of weddings, the re-opening of some offices and Southgate effect - wearing his navy polka dot lucky tie during the Euros led to sales of a similar John Lewis style doubling in one week.



MAKE-UP BAGS

-50%

With nowhere to go, the demand for make-up bags subsided. Due to 'tech issues, my camera isn't working, sorry!' there was no need for make-up, let alone transporting it somewhere else. Once restrictions eased in April and people found the joy in make-up again, sales of make-up and make-up bags shot up.

HOW WE SHOPPED



THE ONLINE TURBOCHARGE



The pandemic has turbocharged changes that were already happening in the way we shop. Over the last financial year, our JohnLewis.com website grew by a staggering 73%. It now accounts for between 60 and 70% of our sales, up from 40% before the crisis. This stands to reason: with non-essential shops closed for large periods of the year, customers didn't have much choice.

Throughout the year we continued to expand delivery options for customers. Across the Partnership, our Click & Collect service is now available at over 1,000 locations to enable fast pick-up. Some 400 of these were added in a little over two months as lockdown took hold. As well as being able to collect their products from John Lewis and Waitrose stores, customers can

pick up their goods from 650 Co-op stores, 80 Shell forecourts and branches of Booths. Convenience is key. Many of these Click & Collect points are still open at midnight. And Click & Collect is not a closed shop: customers who buy things from Boden, Sweaty Betty and Nespresso can also pick up their goods in our shops.

But even though we had more time on our hands this year, many of us were still last minute buyers. We saw a rise in last minute Mother's Day, Father's Day, Valentine's Day and Christmas gift buying. Sales of perfume rose strongly on the day before Mother's Day and Valentine's Day. The most popular brands were Viktor & Rolf, Mugler and Giorgio Armani. Some habits never change.

Website growth

73%+

25% of sales come from our mobile app, up from 15% pre-pandemic

OUR THREE MOST SEARCHED PRODUCTS ONLINE:

Maison Francis Kurkdjian
Baccarat Rouge 540 Eau de Parfum



133,446
Searches

CHANEL Coco Mademoiselle
Eau De Parfum Spray



76,817
Searches

Dior Sauvage
Spray Eau de Toilette



66,323
Searches

RIGHT SPACE, RIGHT PLACE



Retailers should adapt to customers' way of doing things, not the other way round. Before the pandemic, we estimated that £6 in every £10 spent online was driven by our shops. Today, we estimate that figure to be £3 in every £10. So we're changing the shape of our business accordingly. We call this our 'right space, right place' strategy. Last year, we made the difficult decision to close eight John Lewis stores. We still remain the UK's biggest department store group, with a nationwide chain of destination stores that will continue to showcase our inspiring products. We're also putting John Lewis shopping areas in Waitrose stores. It's our job to be agile, fleet of foot, and fit for the future. We'll continue to adapt as shoppers' behaviour changes.

SOCIAL SHOPPING

Social media platforms are no longer simply places for posting pretty pictures. We use them to browse, to share, to discover, to converse and to shop. Our John Lewis & Partners Instagram account has close to 1 million followers, an increase of 200,000 followers over the year.

SOCIAL MEDIA HITS

The top 4 John Lewis products that people clicked through to on social media were:

Increase of Instagram followers over the year **200k**



John Lewis Loungewear



Kin Dress



AND/OR La Galeria Elefante Dress



Albaray Dress



MORE THAN A SHOP

Our fast-growing Services division is expanding in myriad exciting directions. This is because we're planning for 40% of the Partnership's profits to come from outside of traditional retail by 2030. Why? Because ownership can take many forms and not all important things in life can be bought over a counter. It's part of our mission to be there for all our customers' big life moments. As part of our services drive, for example, we've pledged to build 10,000 rental homes over the next decade.

EMBRACING GENERATION RENT

You don't have to buy furniture to experience and enjoy it. So we've launched a furniture rental service with Fat Llama, the peer-to-peer rental marketplace dubbed 'the Airbnb for things'. It's all about usership as well as ownership. We offer over 500 products, including beds, desks and bar stools. It's an affordable and sustainable choice, whether people are furnishing rented accommodation or furnishing a new home that they've bought. We're here for them. Always will be.

The response to the furniture rental was extremely positive. 86% of the available products were rented out in the first 48 hours.

TOP RENTAL PICKS



£48 per month

ANYDAY Anton four-seater dining table and two-seater bench



£21 per month

Brooks velvet office chair, rose



£11 per month

Swept armchair, Harriet orange



£45 per month

Hairpin desk, dark oak



£18 per month

BIG LOVE FOR PRE-LOVED



Searches on johnlewis.com for 'sustainable home' **650%+**

We've teamed up with vintage and antique marketplace Vinterior to sell an exclusive range of vintage furniture, from mid-century desks and sideboards to drinks trolleys and occasional chairs. Each piece is carefully sourced and handpicked by experts and lovingly restored to the highest standards to bring the customer a truly unique product. Searches on johnlewis.com for 'sustainable home' are up 650%, 'vintage' up 77% and 'antique' up 55%.



FINANCIAL SERVICES

Investments can be confusing and daunting. We know this: our research found that 40% of people would like to invest their money but don't know where to start. Our aim is to demystify investing and prove that you don't need a pinstripe suit or a job in the City to get involved.

We want to offer financial services where trust really matters to customers. So as well as relaunching our home insurance and retail credit offers in our financial services division, we've launched a range of easy-to-use investment products.

The three new products are: a junior ISA allowing parents, guardians and grandparents to make regular contributions of up to £9,000 a year for a loved one under the age of 16; a stocks and shares ISA; and a general investment account for people who've used up their £20,000 ISA allowance. We've teamed up with Nutmeg, the UK's largest wealth manager, to offer these. Just like with internet banking, customers can check and update their investments at any time online. We know that some people have saved more over the pandemic and we're here to help them. We believe we can quadruple our financial services business in the next five years.

The number of people saving £1,000 or more each month has increased by 17%

Those saving £2,000 or more has increased by 58%

52% of people have reassessed how they spend and save money as a result of the pandemic

36% of people say that investing in stocks and shares is only for 'Wall Street Banker' types*

*OnePoll research for John Lewis & Partners

MAKING IT PERSONAL

When it comes to fashion, your home or your child's nursery, we offer free one-to-one personal styling and advice sessions in-store or through video call appointments. Why? Because we're here for you. And we want to be here for every milestone of your life.

On fashion, our Personal Stylists will find brands and pieces that suit you down to the ground. The service isn't just for fashionistas – we can help you with anything from a new gym kit to jeans. If you're in a store, you can relax in our Style Studios. The Stylist can also act as a wardrobe consultant to offer advice on how to style your existing clothes in different ways. Customers who take part will receive a personalised wish list and can stay in touch with their Stylist via email. There's no minimum spend or obligation to buy.

We also now hold the Guinness World Record for most tickets booked to an online make-up masterclass with Charlotte Tilbury. The same principles apply when it comes to advice for your home or your little one's nursery. Wallpaper or paint? Floor lamp or pendant light? Moses basket or crib? We offer a home design service to help you navigate the dizzying labyrinth of home improvement. We have three services: Refresh for Less, for those looking for an instant update; Style Advice, for customers who are looking to update one room; and Design Consultation, for people looking to go the whole hog and create a dream home. All consultations end with personalised lists, with digital mood boards, 3D imagery and fabric samples included in the latter two.



'Over the past year I've noticed 3 main things from my home design appointments. Firstly, customers are breaking away from the typical use of rooms - the guest bedroom is now a TV room, a space for crafting or a yoga studio. Secondly, they are prioritising their comfort in rooms with cosy textures and fabrics instead of curated displays. Finally, the lockdowns truly made us realise the effect that the four walls that surrounded us have upon our mood. Customers have been seeking help with how to respond to this, asking for colour psychology advice, rather than just opinions about what may look good. Because of this, I've noticed people being a lot braver and bolder with colour choices, and being more fulfilled at home as a result.'

WIL LAW
Partner & Home Design Stylist

'There has been a huge shift in the way people live their lives this past year and this has definitely been reflected in their clothing choices. Clothes that previously were for work, now don't fit into the more relaxed dress code and whilst people are still loving loungewear, they seem tired of wearing joggers and hoodies and want to elevate their casual look. I used to have customers either coming for a work wardrobe or a weekend wardrobe whereas now people are hoping to purchase pieces that work for both, this is due to the lifestyle changes and customers waiting to make more sustainable choices.'

EMILY GRAY
Partner & Personal Stylist



HOME AND TECH



ZOOM BACKGROUNDS...

It was the year of the background. Specifically, the background of our friends, colleagues, families and – yes – ourselves as we Zoomed, Google Met and Microsoft Teamed our way through the year. But those bookshelves didn't curate themselves, those hydrangeas didn't artfully arrange themselves in that vase, and that drinks cabinet didn't carefully position the pineapple ice bucket just so. The windows into each other's lives have never been so limited and yet so important and, frankly, tantalising. We all pimped our backgrounds accordingly. We weren't just looking at one another on those screens; we were looking at each other's self-image. House-barrassment be damned. Sales of flower vases rose 21%, Bar Carts rose 27%, decanters were up 42% and highballs and tumblers rose by 60%.

Highballs and tumblers

60%+

...AND WFH

But this was also about comfort and order as much as showing off. We saw an increase in demand for those little things that made our Working From Home space feel extra special. Desk rental through our partnership with Fat Llama proved particularly popular. Sales of statement desks rose 65% and at peak popularity we sold the equivalent of seven desks an hour. Other popular WFH pieces included ergonomic chairs, which rose 85%, stationary organisers increased by 10% and we sold enough pen pots to hold 180,000 pens. Our Home Edit range of fuss-free storage items sold strongly. We couldn't do anything about what was going on in the world outside. But we could make our desks the most ordered and organised places imaginable. And, my goodness, we did.



OUTSIDE IS THE NEW INSIDE

For those lucky enough to have outdoor space, their garden became their sanctuary and entertaining space over lockdown. Gardens were people's parks, their gyms, their campsites, their festival fields, their outdoor cinemas and extensions of their kitchens and dining rooms. Modular outdoor sofas sold strongly as people lounged outside. Sales of outdoor rugs rose 50% and due to demand we have doubled the amount we now offer. Fire pits and garden heaters rose by almost 1,000% in October and November 2020 as lockdown rules meant we could only meet outside. Even the terrible British weather – the summer of 2021 was one of the wettest in recent memory – couldn't stop people doing up their gardens. Outside genuinely became the new inside.

HOME AND TECH

COTTAGECORE

The trend for traditional touches took over our feeds this year. Cottagecore evokes countryside scenes and the simpler, more sustainable existence of rural life. It's romantic and nostalgic and its popularity is probably the result of us dreaming of moving to the middle of nowhere (which, let's be honest, many of us have done anyway). Sales of rattan products rose by 154%, while floral print dresses rose 32% and floral print blouses up 78%. We launched Ixia dried flowers in February and now dried flowers account for 10% of our total flowers range. We also saw a surge in interest in crafts such as knitting and embroidery. Can we have jam tarts for tea please?



ANYDAY
JOHN LEWIS
A PARTNERS

We like to keep it simple for our customers. This year we launched the ANYDAY brand of everyday essentials: from homewares and nursery furniture to kitchen appliances and fashion. The idea is to offer good-quality products at affordable prices. The range is bursting with easy style updates that won't break the bank. Some of our most popular lines were the rattan folding chair, the upholstered bed frame and the microfibre pillow. We believe ANYDAY will account for 20% of all our sales over time.



CRYSTALCORE

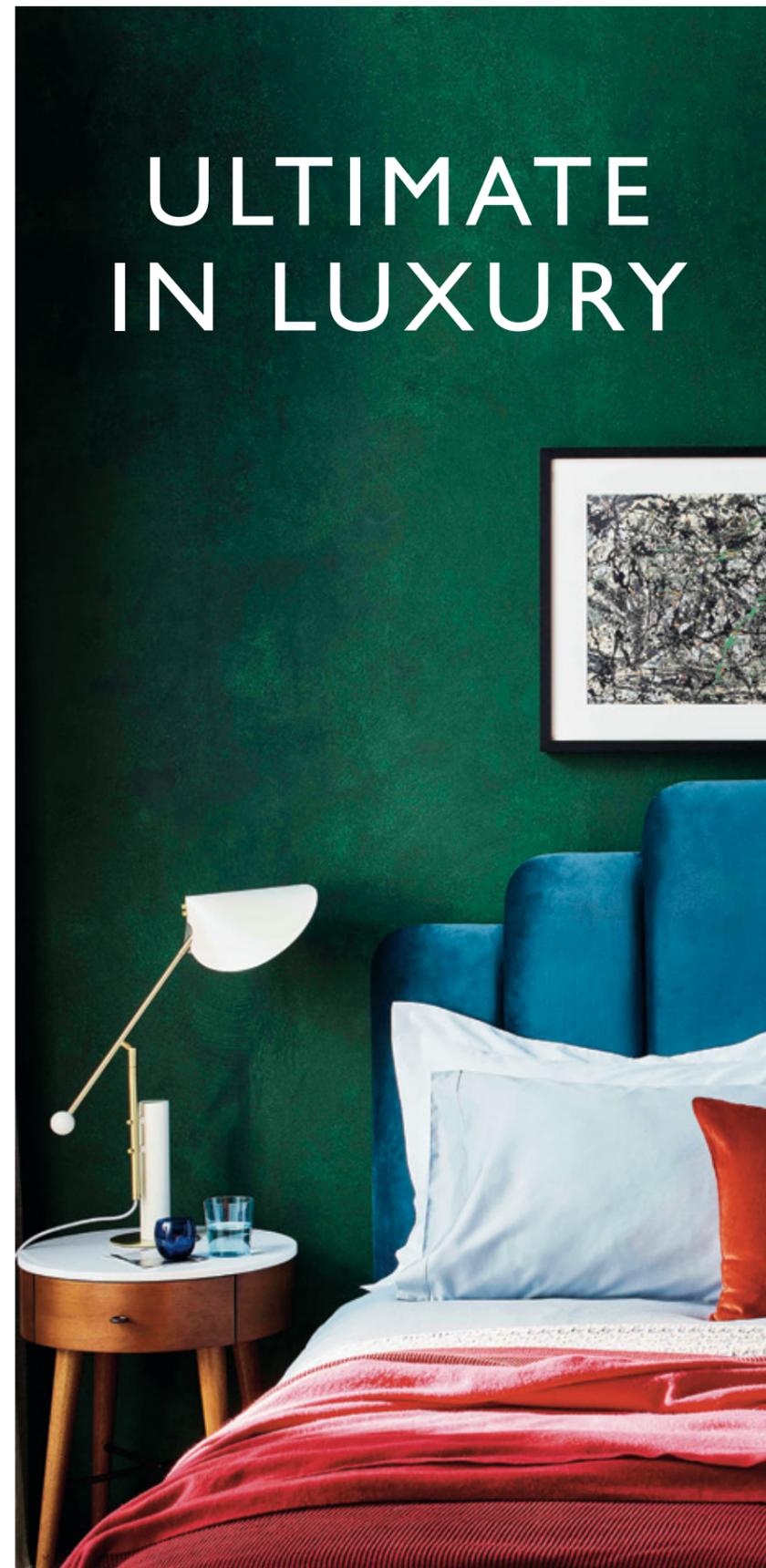
Also popular this year was Crystalcore, an aesthetic based around crystal shapes and gemstones. Crystals are associated with wellness, health and healing, so it's little wonder that consumers have embraced them over the year we've had. The trend grew massively in 2021 and we introduced Crystal Tealight Holders into our range.



FROM SHEEP TO SLEEP

The so-called circular economy – in which resources are circulated and waste is eliminated – is becoming a big part of how people live. And we are playing our part. Unwanted wool from lambs reared by Waitrose farmers in Wales and south-west England is being turned into environmentally friendly mattresses for John Lewis. As well as ensuring that high quality wool isn't wasted, the move supports farmers and helps to re-establish wool as a widely used commodity. Our sustainable mattress range launched in August.

LIFESTYLE



THE HOTEL EXPERIENCE AT HOME

We couldn't stay at hotels. So we brought the hotel experience to our bedrooms and bathrooms. Over 2021, Britons' homes became their Hiltons. Consumers took inspiration from their previous boutique hotel stays – from rural escapes or urban mini breaks – and amped up the five-star feeling under their own roofs. Sales of luxury towelling robes were up by 38% and silk pillowcases rose 50%.

IMPRESS THE GUEST

We all do it but never admit it. But when lockdown restrictions eased and we could finally have loved ones to stay, it seems we tried to impress our guests even more than we normally do. We broke out the posh stuff at home. Sales of chocolates rose by 40% over the summer, with people trading up to more expensive brands. Meanwhile premium branded hand soap sales increased by a quarter.



Chocolate sales over summer **40%+**

LIFESTYLE



WELLNESS

Lockdown saw a surge in people creating wellness routines, whether this meant using their lunch break for a yoga session or replacing their commute home with a pamper evening. We were all anxious this year: whether it was about Covid-19, how our friends and families were faring, our finances or our jobs. People therefore learnt to focus on what they could control. They found a routine that worked for them and their sense of wellness. Bathscaping became popular: people made their bath rack look stylish with a book and a candle, some spa products and a glass of wine. Sales of bath racks were up 65%, stemmed glasses rose by 25%, candles and diffusers rose 4% and sales of wellbeing brand Neom grew by a quarter. Meanwhile, sales of cosy weighted blankets rose by 74% as wellness rose up people's agendas. The blankets are a proven way of helping poor sleepers get a good night's rest. Experts believe the pressure from the blanket increases levels of serotonin, the chemical that makes our bodies feel happy and relaxed.

Fitness machines **79%+**

EXERCISE

Estimates vary, but three-quarters of the nation took up at least one new form of exercise during lockdown, according to one major study. With gyms closed, popular exercises included power walking, jogging, yoga, cycling and weights. It seems the spectre sofa-induced weight gain was too much for people to contemplate. The study from Nuffield Health found that almost two-thirds of those exercising often did so at home. This chimes with what we saw: all our weights sold out (with Bala bangles, hand weights and resistance bands proving particularly popular). Sales of Peloton home treadmill and bicycle products, which we launched in August 2020, now account for 15% of our total Sport sales. Fitness machines rose as a category by 79% in the first half of 2021: we recently launched a range of Hydrow rowing machines. Exercising at home? No sweat.



THE RISE OF ATHLEISURE

This was the year of the 'two-mile wear', casual clothing that's comfortable enough to wear at home but stylish enough to venture out in. Athleisure was a staple part of this – it allowed us to move seamlessly from inside to out, from desk to coffee shop and from kitchen to park. Sales of athleisure brands skyrocketed. Sweaty Betty accounted for 88% of all sales, while sales of new brand Girlfriend Collective were up 65% against its plan. Other popular brands were Adidas by Stella McCartney, Ninety Percent, Hush and Athleta. Leggings were the most popular items, accounting for 38% of all athleisure sales. Over this most unusual of years, athleisure proved so hot as a category that it became a fashion trend in itself.



THE POOCH CONUNDRUM

A total of 3.2 million UK households bought pets over the pandemic, according to research from the Pet Food Manufacturers' Association. This means that the country has 17 million pet-owning homes, accounting for well over half of all households. Our pets business saw sales rise 113%. But this rise has led to a dilemma for animal lovers: what to do when offices reopen full-time? Nearly two-fifths of pet owners who've been working from home are planning to request a change to their working hours so they can look after their dog, research from John Lewis Pet Insurance found. A quarter said they'd look for a new job with more flexibility. And nearly one in ten said they'd resign outright if their employer asked them to return to the office five days a week. The conundrum is real: only a quarter of people told us they've got someone at home they can leave their dog with. Which leaves us with two conclusions. Firstly, dog walking and doggy daycare are set to become growth industries. And secondly, the pandemic has changed Britons' lifestyles in unforeseen four-legged ways.

Pet business rises **113%+**



LIFESTYLE

MAKE A MEAL OF IT

Britons really made a meal of it over lockdown. With more time on their hands, homeowners were dressing their tables for dinner every day of the week for no special reason. Vibrancy was the watchword. Sales of coloured dinnerware rose by a third over the year, overtaking demand for white dinnerware. Tablecloth sales increased by 79%, napkins increased by 97% and old school napkin rings increased by 22%. To give the table a finishing touch, candle stick holders were up 13% and candlesticks up 34%. Not only did tablescaping provide a break from the monotony of life but it provided a cheerful focal point to the evening. The #tablescaping hashtag on Instagram has had over 50,000 posts. Sales of carafes and jugs rose by a quarter, with beer glasses up by a fifth. A survey in the spring found that a third of us took up a new hobby during the pandemic, with the majority doing things connected with mindfulness. Sales of sewing machines at John Lewis & Partners rose by 9%, with many people no doubt creating tablecloths and napkins for future tablescaping photos.

Instagram
#tablescaping

50k



CULINARY DELIGHTS

Scratch cooking became the norm over lockdown as we all became the resident chefs in our own homes. We saw record sales of cookware at John Lewis this year, with sales up 23%. As people were not eating out, they experimented more with the dishes they cooked. Pasta machines and pasta-making accessories saw sales rise by 42%. We got creative in the kitchen too, finding ever new ways to experiment with new flavours, use leftovers and break the monotony of our daily routines.

Pasta machines

42%+



WEDDING BELLS

Inevitably, with weddings unable to go ahead or subjected to severe restrictions, sales of wedding products took a hit. Clutch bags, bridal jewellery and court shoes all experienced noticeable sales declines over the various lockdowns. But when restrictions were eased in July, love was back in the air with a vengeance. Sales of seasonal wedding products bounced back by 255% over the summer months. The Katie Loxton range of bridal accessories saw sales rise by almost 300%. Meanwhile the Rainbow club bridal shoe had a sales uplift of 168%. Fascinators and hats rebounded too. Pass the confetti!

Seasonal
wedding
products

225%+



FASHION AND BEAUTY



SLEEP TIGHT

It was the year we hunkered down, cuddled up and focused on sleep. Sales of women's nightwear rose by 80%, with pyjama sets performing particularly well. Dressing gown sales rocketed and we couldn't get enough of slippers. We now stock over 200 styles and increased the range by 21% this year. Our best-selling slipper was the UGG Scuffette in chestnut and our own brand slippers, meanwhile, had a record Autumn-Winter season. Aaaaand relax.

Women's nightwear sales

80%+

THE BOLDER THE BETTER

People became more adventurous with their colour choices over lockdown. Colour matching with personal stylists grew in popularity. After all, no one wanted to see black jumpers and dull greys on Zoom every day. Imaginative use of colour was also a way of sparking joy at a time when life's textures had become all too predictable. The mantra, it seemed, was the bolder the better. Blue was the best-selling colour across our AND/OR and Kin ranges, with a 79% year-on-year increase, closely followed by pink and green.

Year-on-year increase of colour Blue

79%+



THE NEW SMART

Sales of tailoring almost hit the pre-pandemic levels of 2019 when lockdown ended – but consumers' definition of the word has fundamentally changed. Demand for formal tailoring and businesswear has been replaced by a desire for less formal occasionwear. Wardrobes have become flexible; smart outerwear, trousers and fine knits are the order of the day. Shoppers are coupling jackets with T-shirts and white trainers. Popular products include finer gauge merino and milano knitwear (worn as outerwear garments), unstructured blazers and semi-formal stretch trousers. We're calling this The New Smart. As a result of this trend, we've reduced the amount of space in store dedicated to pure, formal tailoring by 50%. In its place we introduced lines of smart separates. Customers want to feel confident and well-dressed without the need for full tailoring.



HAIRCARE AND SCRUNCHIES

With salons shut, customers turned to home hair treatments. These made up a third of all our haircare sales. Last October we launched Olaplex, a range of hair treatments such as maintenance conditioner, hair perfecter and bonding oil. It is now our biggest haircare brand. Hair care didn't end in the shower - sales of hair scrunchies rose 111% with pure silk options from Slip® being the most popular, due to them stopping hair breakage, damage and ridges caused by regular hair elastics.

FASHION AND BEAUTY

SWIMWEAR

Swimming was big news this year. Firstly, wild swimming proved to be one of the hits of lockdown. According to Outdoor Swimming magazine's annual report, searches for the term 'wild swimming' almost doubled between 2019 and 2020. The activity was an antidote to the loneliness of the pandemic. Wild swimming also has potential mental health benefits as well as obvious physical health benefits. Secondly, as soon as lockdown and travel restrictions were lifted, people couldn't wait to hit the beach, the lido or the indoor pool – and they needed something to wear. We saw sales of swimwear rise 147% in July compared to the previous year. Swimsuits were the most popular product, with sales growth ten times stronger than that of bikinis. One side-trend we noticed: sales of control swimwear (costumes which are flattering to the physique) increased by 41% over the year, perhaps as a result of people feeling that they'd put on weight over lockdown.

Swimwear sales rise from July previous year

147%+



SECOND-HAND JEWELS

Pre-loved jewellery had its moment in the sun over lockdown. Why? It seemed that love was in the air. According to various reports, the number of engagements over the pandemic rose by 40%. Vintage pieces grew in popularity. The attraction of such jewellery is easy to see: the pieces are classic, unique and good-value; buying second-hand jewellery is sustainable and chimes with the booming trend for re-commerce; they can be good investments; and the quality of the pieces is top-notch with any imperfections only serving to hint at a fascinating past. The most expensive piece we sold was a £9,750 diamond ring. In short, second-hand jewellery tells stories. And people love a story.

Number of engagements over pandemic

40%+

SKINCARE

In terms of beauty products, we saw a shift to skincare, which accounted for over a third of all our beauty sales. Customers became more interested in the ingredients in their products, with vegan and eco-friendly beauty lines remaining popular. Brands like Sunday Riley and Murad performed well. By contrast, sales of cosmetics fell by a fifth as people spent more time at home and left their make-up products in the drawer.

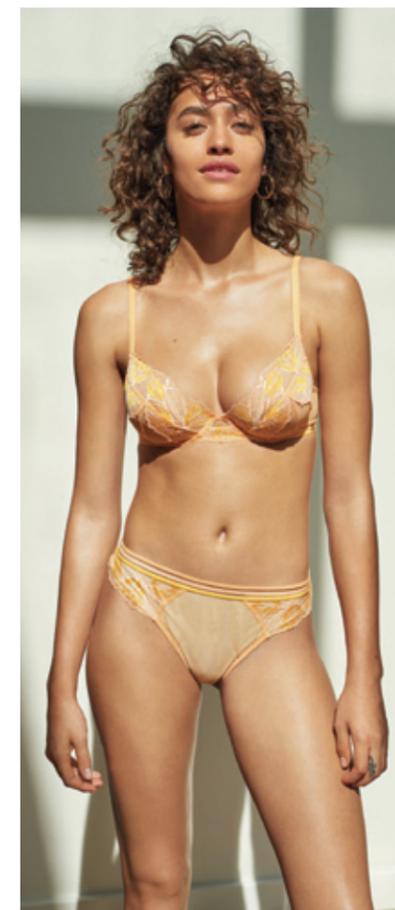


FEMININE LINGERIE

Hunker down or spice up? It seems that the lockdown option for millions was the latter: our AND/OR Lingerie line had its biggest ever year, with sales up 6%. But there was a subtle shift in emphasis. While sales of suspenders, bustiers and garters were down by a quarter, sales of more comfortable lingerie and crop top styles rose by similar amounts. There were particular surges in sales in the days following the announcements of the various lockdowns, according to reports in the trade. It seems that fashion experts were right when, back in early 2020, they predicted that three clothing trends would dominate lockdown: sporty, slouchy and sexy.

AND/OR Lingerie Line Sales up

6%+



RETURN OF THE IT BAG

It seems counterintuitive: why buy smart handbags when there's nowhere to go? One word. Escapism. People wanted to treat themselves. With the ability to go on holiday or have the odd night out curtailed by Covid-19 (or indeed with no daily commute to pay for), some people found they had a little bit of extra money. Sales of premium handbags rose by over 5% this year. Green seemed to be the colour of choice and popular brands included Mulberry, Longchamp, Coach and See by Chloé.





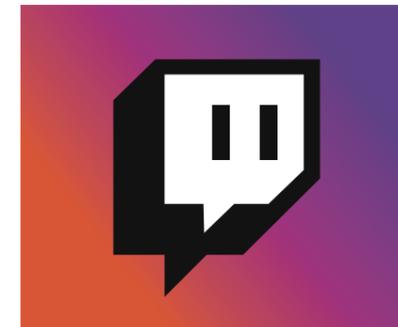
PREDICTIONS

The pandemic has accelerated a raft of changes that we were already seeing, such as the move towards flexible working and people's desire for more adaptable living spaces. But it has also thrown life's cards up in the air – and they are falling in some thrilling ways. People have identified scope for change, fresh starts and personal reinvention, which is always exciting. Consumers no longer need to buy things to possess them, and they're finding inspiration in the gloriously niche. Meanwhile people's increased savviness with the technology that became their lifeline during the lockdowns has led to a reimagining of barriers once assumed to be immovable. We no longer have to be in the same room to be together, and we don't necessarily go on holiday to relax. Here's what's new for '22.



JOHN VARY

Partner & Futurologist



TOGETHER APART

Online places where we can hang out with friends and family – rather than just talk at a screen – will go mainstream. This notion may have started in the gaming world, but platforms like Twitch will become as well-known as Zoom. Add to the mix a new generation of affordable virtual reality glasses, and a two-dimensional interface will be replaced by a 'world' you can actually be in with your loved ones...



HOME RESTAURANTS

Meal kits and takeaways were hugely popular during lockdown. They were little treats, they were easy to order and, well, there wasn't a huge amount else to do. However, when paired with people's love of experience and the popularity of tablescaping, the takeaway trend could reach new heights. Expect restaurant standard home meals – plus the look and vibe of an actual restaurant, its wine list and perhaps even its staff – to become the norm in the next stage of the takeaway boom.



NOSTALGIA TECH

First it was record players and vinyl. Then Polaroid cameras. Next it will be tape machines and the Walkman. Who knows? Perhaps even the portable CD player will make a comeback. In today's world, it's easy to feel snow-blinded by the mass of digital content raging around us. What better way to counter this than by harking back to the audio and photographic technologies of old?



'-CORE' VALUES

We've had Crystalcore, Cottagecore, Cabincore and Goblincore to name a few. We will see the continued rise of homeware and fashion trends that celebrate the everyday, the niche or the unexpected. Platforms such as TikTok and Instagram shine a light into all manner of lifestyle nooks, and these are quickly subsumed by the mainstream.

PREDICTIONS



WORK-CATIONS

It used to be that holidays were for lying on the beach and not thinking about work. No longer. The rise in flexible lifestyles and a general improvement in broadband provision mean that the hybrid work-holiday is gaining popularity. Yes you can relax. But you can also file that report or have that Google Meet with your colleagues too. The rigid distinctions of the pre-pandemic world are a thing of the past.



NO-SCAPING

And there'll be no escaping the '-scaping' either. The trend for summing up and capturing specific looks on social media with a single photo is set to grow. We've already had tablesclaping, bathscaping, mantlescaping and Christmas treescaping, but the -scaping trend can be stretched to cover pretty much anything. Themes are likely to get increasingly wacky and creative as time passes.



THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

One of the advantages of different generations living together over lockdown has been the transference of environmental concerns from the younger generations to the older ones. Adults have picked up tips on sustainability from their children, and – perhaps under a degree of pressure – have made little changes. Be it increased recycling, or using beeswax wraps instead of clingfilm, or the rise in composting or growing our own fruit and veg, we are seeing greater consciousness about our planet in Britain's households.

VIRTUALLY REAL

Going hand-in-hand with this trend will be an increase in the popularity of buying virtual products. Whether it's a new 'skin' on Fortnite, a new hat for a Roblox avatar or clothes from digital fashion houses like The Fabricant, consumers will increasingly purchase goods that exist only in the digital world.

PET CAMERAS

This report has already highlighted the rise in pet ownership during the pandemic. But we predict a rise in technology that allows you to watch your pet when you're out. Voice-activated feeders will become the norm.





WANT TO KNOW MORE?

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