

# ST ALBANS FASHION WEEK 2014

## **CATHEDRAL COUTURE AT ST ALBANS**

**Move over New York, Milan, Paris and London, St Albans is sealing its stylish city status with the return of the hugely popular St Albans Fashion Week this autumn**

- **St Albans Fashion Week 27 October – 2 November**
- Cathedral Catwalk Show – a spectacular transformation of St Albans Cathedral into the longest indoor catwalk in the UK
- Evening Luxury Wedding Event with champagne reception at Hatfield House
- Luxe Fashion Show with live swing band and Martini bar at Porsche Centre Hatfield
- Next Generation – a new initiative to unearth, nurture and promote burgeoning new fashion talent with masterclasses, a presence in the catwalk show and a Young Designer of the Year award for design students and graduates
- A full week of fashion and beauty events throughout the stylish city of St Albans
- Super Shopping Saturday on 1 November – up to 20 per cent off purchases from participating retailers
- For tickets to any of the shows and for more information about the event, visit [www.stalbansfashionweek.com](http://www.stalbansfashionweek.com)

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St Albans Cathedral will transform into a fairytale catwalk, transporting guests to the exhilarating and glamorous world of fashion and beauty, with a stunning show profiling local retailers. A 30m runway along the cathedral's nave makes it the longest indoor catwalk in the UK, placing St Albans firmly on the fashion map.

Held from 27 October – 2 November, St Albans Fashion Week (SAFW), which boosted shop sales and attracted more than 2,500 visitors to its debut last year, will add to its spectacular Cathedral Catwalk Show with two further shows. A 1930s-themed Luxe Show will take place at Porsche Centre Hatfield and Hatfield House will be the setting for a Luxury Wedding Event.

Numerous fashion and beauty events will take place in the city, which is only an 18 minute train ride from London. Visitors of all ages can be in vogue with a styling seminar and high tea run by John Lewis, a charity swap shop, pop up beauty and hair stations and a pop up barbers and bar. The event is held during half term week and childcare facilities will be available throughout the week, so mums can enjoy being styled and pampered too.

This year's SAFW will have a special focus on design students and graduates, with fashion business masterclasses, a presence at the Cathedral Catwalk Show and Young Designer of the Year awards. The award will be one of 10 presented in December in a celebration of excellence at the Fashion and Beauty awards.

## **Cathedral Catwalk Show**

The Cathedral Catwalk Show on Friday 31 October is a stunning union of St Albans' magnificent architecture and its vibrant fashion and beauty industry. More than 40 high street retailers, award winning independent boutiques, vintage specialists and young designers are taking part in the show.

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Headlining retailers include local boutique The Dressing Room. Owner Deryane Tadd, winner of five *Drapers* awards and Everywoman Retail Ambassador 2013, says: "St Albans Fashion Week 2013 was a fantastic way to celebrate all that is great about the fashion and beauty scene in St Albans. Just a stone's throw from London, St Albans has a diverse and market-leading selection of multiples, independent boutiques and salons and the event was a brilliant showcase for us all. The 2014 event is set to be even bigger and better and we're thrilled to be involved."

Similar praise came from Rebecca Grey, store manager of Hobbs. "In the month of St Albans Fashion Week 2013, St Albans Hobbs was number one in the area. And we were the number one store in the whole company when comparing takings with 2012, which were up a massive 38 per cent."

## **Luxury Wedding Event, Hatfield House**

The success of last year's wedding sequence at the Cathedral Catwalk Show has led to the launch of a Luxury Wedding Event, to be held at Hatfield House on the evening of Wednesday 29 October. In contrast to a traditional wedding fair, guests will be part of the entire wedding experience. A catwalk show will profile every aspect of a wedding, from beautiful gowns by designers including Jenny Packham, bridesmaid dresses, grooms' tailoring and bridal accessories, through to outfits for guests, honeymoon attire and swimwear. Guests can meet stylists and the people behind all the other elements of a wedding at a champagne reception, while listening to music from wedding bands and performers. Portions of the room will be styled with a variety of themes so guests can experience the different types of wedding they could have. The event is sponsored by destination specialist Kuoni, with the opportunity for guests to win a luxury trip.

## **Luxe Fashion Show, Porsche Centre Hatfield**

A live swing band and Martini bar will transform the showroom at sponsor's Porsche Centre Hatfield into a scene from the 1930s. Elegance and sophistication will be the theme on the evening on Monday 27 October, as cocktail dresses, tailored tuxes and beautiful lingerie are modelled in a Luxe Fashion Show. Mike Murphy, principal of Porsche

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Centre Hatfield says: "We're committed to supporting our local community and had a very positive experience sponsoring the inaugural St Albans Fashion Week last year. This year we're delighted to be able to increase our involvement as a headline sponsor of this event and build on our association with what's growing towards being a highlight in the regional calendar. We're also very much looking forward to being a host venue for one of the evening events and welcoming everyone to our flagship Porsche Centre."

## **Promotional campaign**

A 'Lose yourself in the Fairytale of Fashion' promotional campaign for SAFW 2014 began in August. Well-loved fairytales have been updated with fashion, hair styling and make up from St Albans businesses, while iconic landmarks in St Albans provide the backdrop and showcase the city's heritage. The stunning images include Dorothy at Heartwood Forest, Rapunzel at the Old Monastery and Red Riding Hood at Verulamium Park. The Cathedral Catwalk Show will open with a fairytale sequence where guests can decide for themselves who is the fairest of them all.

SAFW 2014 is proud to have Stila as the colour sponsor for the Cathedral Catwalk Show and the Luxury Wedding Event. Stila products were also used on the models in the fairytale photo shoot. Tracy Douglas, of Glorious brands, says: "Stila is delighted to be make-up sponsors for St Albans Fashion Week." Echoing the ethos of SAFW, Tracy continues: "Every day's a chance to create a new story and put your best face forward. You are your own artist; celebrate your individual style."

## **About Ellena Ophira, the organiser**

Organiser and founder Ellena Ophira, director of events and consultancy company Style in my City, says: "I'm so proud that we have three shows this year. The climax of the week will still be Cathedral Catwalk, which will focus on high street fashion, young talent and local designers, but each show will be a spectacle in its own right with its own unique style, atmosphere and ambiance. I want to showcase the incredible fashion and beauty and young and local talent we have on our doorstep and give St Albans a week that people will never forget."

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St Albans Fashion Week evolved from Ellena Ophira's fashion blog, Style in my City. Having grown up in St Albans, she wanted a platform to promote the lifestyle, fashion and beauty within the city. In 2012, she created a blog and within months was receiving thousands of hits a week. Realising there was an eager audience for a combination of these elements, Ellena decided to launch St Albans Fashion Week in autumn 2013. The event's success has led to Ellena being shortlisted for a Chamber of Commerce community business award for outstanding contribution to the community.

As well as the blog, Style in my City is now an events and consultancy company, offering marketing consultancy in the fashion sector and for fashion show events – from launching new collections to sector-driven shows, such as the Luxury Wedding Show.

Ellena is a regular on Jo Good's show on BBC Radio London, where she offers fashion advice, and has her own show on Radio Verulam called *Out and About*. Ellena will be revealing the latest SAFW 2014 announcements, offers and details of celebrity FROW guests on her show, blog and Twitter.

## **SAFW's sponsors**

Porsche Centre Hatfield  
University of Hertfordshire  
Alam & Alam Accountants  
Stila (colour sponsor)

## **Further info**

[www.stalbansfashionweek.com](http://www.stalbansfashionweek.com)

Twitter: @StAFashionWeek

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