

October 21, 2012.
Megan Chase
The Which and The Wardrobe

Location: 79 Yorkville Avenue

City: Toronto, Ont. (Canada)

Neighbourhood: Yorkville

Best Buy: Cozy knits in over 140 different styles along with everything you can think of to style any outfit you can concoct.

Price range: \$6-1100

Rating: 4.5/5

Story:

In West Philadelphia, back in the 1970's, Dick Hayne opened a store called Free People. It cultivated the young people who shopped and lived there who wanted more freedom in the clothes that they wore. As the store grew to two locations the name was changed from Free People to Urban Outfitters.

Dick's wife Meg eventually was brought on to tend to Urban's private label division (which supported Urban Outfitter's exclusive product. The demand for the products was so extreme that the husband and wife duo expanded to incorporate a whole sale line. The line took on many personas: Bulldog, Ecote, Cooperative, Anthropologie, and then in 1984, new life was respired into the name Free People. 2001 was the year that the company realized that it was Free People which invoked their favourite images of femininity, spirit, and courage.

To get back to their roots Free People took on a more mature, contemporary brand and shed it's junior image. It allowed for 20-something women to have a line that catered to their intelligence, individuality, and creativity while maintaining quality that won't break the bank.

Today the line sells in over 1000 speciality stores worldwide, and have three wholesale showrooms – in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. They launched their website FreePeople.com in October 2004 and opened their first boutique in Canada on August 2nd, 2012 in Toronto, Ontario.

Collection:

Free People wants to reach a specific boho-magent audience: a girl who is comfortable in all aspects of herself, adventurous and free, tomboy to romantic, sweet to tough. A girl who likes to push life to the limits, keeps busy, and does everything from engaging in travel to hanging out, and everything in between.

They strive so that no one will look a like and offer a variety of options, from lingere to accessories, to dresses and every day looks. The brand has divided their clothing into multiple collections that cater to girls' individuality.

FP One: An exclusive collection that comes from India that is defined by bold embellishments and natural feeling fabrics that also bring a modern twist to old world techniques.

FP Beach: Designed for the year-round beach girl this collection keeps it cool and effortless with casual knit dresses, easy breezy rompers, and light weight cardigans.

We The Free: This is their collection that goes back to the all-american roots that started the brand with casual cottons that are lightly distressed and have the perfectly worn-in feel.

FP Movement: The athletic collection that can go from gym-to-street with the array of comfortable cotton and fleece garments provided.

FP New Romantics: Dreamy fabrics and slubby textures are what make this collection, as it grew from the love of the ocean, beach dreams, and that summer feeling. Light crochet and intricate woven pieces mixed with sheerness help to make this collection delicate and whimsical.

Testimonials

“One of my favorite stores! The sales rack is great. The staff is super friendly; they even remember your name! Who doesn't like to be remembered?”

Brooke Devlin, 24 years old
North York, Toronto

“One of my favorite brands and I finally get to step foot in an actual store! They really have the cutest, coolest clothes you'll ever find, if you have a classy but funky style, definitely check out this brand.”

Grace Martell, 19 years old
Toronto, Ontario