

The Boston Globe

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Have you seen a new store, restaurant, gallery, bar ...?
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Walk by Absolutely Fabulous in Inman Square and try not to peek in. Best of luck. If you are among the evening flow of Inman Square foot traffic, you are likely to be slowed, and then you will stop to gawk.



First there are the window displays, which Salvador Dali may have returned from the dead to design. A bicycle sports flaming fenders and twin devil heads perched on the handlebars. Mannequins done up in service-station apparel and white vintage gowns stare past you. A chrome mini-bar beckons, that is if you're in a tilted, "Blue Velvet" sort of mood.

The insides of this curio boutique yield more eye candy. Lanterns dangle, chandeliers quiver, fur stoles wait to be draped. The black velvet canvas of Muddy Waters' guitar is something you might picture above your bathtub. Many of the offbeat objects are made by local artists. An entire case of martini glasses is not.

The store, which is next door to a cobbler's shop, is the perfect addition to what is becoming Cambridge's own raffish version of the East Village. Other recent arrivals include the Zeitgeist Gallery, Bukowski's Tavern, and a swank antique shop. Unlike Harvard Square, where corporate chain stores have roosted, Inman is cluttered with one-of-a-kind places.

That certainly goes for Absolutely Fabulous' owner and spirit, Mara Loeber. She carries her own Inman Square pedigree. Three years ago she was a hepcat coffee barista at the nearby 1369 Coffeeshop. Her far-out clothes caught the eye of a patron (and renowned antique dealer), who urged her to put her flair to commercial use.

Loeber has done exactly that. Her taste, for a very reasonable price, can become your taste. No need to tell your friends how your crib got so cool. TED WEESNER, JR.

ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS 1309 Cambridge St.,
Cambridge. 617-864-0656.



GLOBE STAFF PHOTOS/EVAN RICHMAN

Absolutely Fabulous on Cambridge Street is jammed with one of a kind finds, which makes it a lot like Inman Square itself.