

Couture de France!

Mélanie Boulch will always have Paris, but now she brings Europe to Atlanta, one designer at a time | *By Danny Bonvissuto* | *Photography by Angela Morris* |

FRENCH PRESS

Boulch sits and sips at the Roche-Bobois showroom in Buckhead



Mélanie Boulch has a B.A. in business from Glamorgan in the U.K. and a master's from internationally acclaimed French fashion institute, Esmod. Her mentors have trained under Jean Paul Gaultier, Pierre Cardin and Yves Saint Laurent. So what could possibly lure this 28-year-old Parisian-born beauty out of the *République Française* and into the dirty South? "The climate, of course!" Boulch jokes.

Actually it was love—Boulch's husband, Stephane, was relocated from France—and timing. Despite the economy, Boulch saw Louis Vuitton and Hermès flourishing in Atlanta and knew there was room for more. Today she's the sales director for Audace et Insolite, an Atlanta-based distributor that brings more of her beloved European brands into the states. "At the moment, consumers are looking for dreams and emotion at a fair price," Boulch says. "There is a return to the traditional *savoir faire*—products that are well-made and will last beyond one season."

When the downtown loft-residing Boulch isn't scooting all over the city in her Audi TT introducing trendy ATL boutiques to clients, including U.K. label Rocio and French ring designer Nathalie Dmitrovic, she's tracking trends at Paris fashion shows and working them into her covetable wardrobe.

Boulch has also found little pieces of Paris on Southern soil, including Anis, Joël, the recently closed *Louvre Atlanta* at the High and her latest crush: the leopard-print Charme Louboutin boots at Jeffrey. "Anyone can wear clothes," Boulch says in a clipped accent that makes every word sound precious. "Fashion gives you an identity." **A**

Boulch's Hots:

Wooden clutches; the aromatherapy treatment at Blue MedSpa; spontaneous weekend trips; Social restaurant downtown; playing tennis at the Concourse Athletic Club; the Hermès Brides de Gala scarf

Boulch's Nots:

Red leather pants on men; scary movies; pointy shoes; counterfeit products