



FASHION RETAILERS OF CANADA

Fashion is an ever-evolving industry that constantly introduces new trends, styles, and designers. Canada, known for its diverse cultural background and unique fashion sense, has a large number of fashion retailers, catering to a wide range of consumers. From luxury brands to streetwear labels, the fashion industry in Canada offers a plethora of options for consumers to choose from. This article discusses some of the top fashion retailers of Canada.

by **SANJAY BAKSHI**

The apparel market in Canada—the world's second-largest country by area—is estimated to be worth US\$39.63 billion in 2023, according to Statista. The market is expected to grow annually by CAGR 2.49 per cent during the period of 2023-2027. Of this, women segment is valued at US\$21.87 billion – a good 55 per cent share. In volume terms, apparel market will be trading 1.9 billion pieces by 2027.

For this article, a total of 30 Canadian fashion retailers

have been grouped into Corporate, Legacy and Millennials. The Corporate retailers are the big companies having huge operational infrastructure, scale, and penetration in Canadian market, and/or having strong brand portfolio. The Legacy section glances at those specialty retailers who came into being before 2000, while the Millennials segment studies those retailers who emerged on the Canadian national scene after 2000.

CORPORATE

CANADA GOOSE HOLDINGS

Sam Tick, an immigrant to Canada, founded Metro Sportswear Ltd in 1957 that specialised in woollen vests, raincoats and snowmobile suits. In 1970s, his son-in-law David Reiss joined the company, bringing along a volume-based down filling machine and established Snow Goose label, which later became Canada Goose. In 1997, his son Dani Reiss joined the company who, as company's President and CEO, pledged to remain 'Made in Canada'. In the same pursuit, Canada Goose acquired a Winnipeg-based manufacturing facility to meet increased product demand. Canada Goose opened its global headquarters in Toronto in 2014, significantly increasing manufacturing capacity. The company was recognised by the federal government for employing six per cent of the cut & sew labour industry in Canada. Two years later, the company opened its first two flagship stores in Toronto and New York city, followed by launch of knitwear in 2017.

Today, Canada Goose Holdings (CGH) is a lifestyle brand and a leading manufacturer of performance luxury apparel. The company, along with its subsidiaries, designs, manufactures and sells collections for men, women, youth, children and babies that includes various types of parkas, lightweight down jackets, rainwear, windwear, fleece, knitwear, footwear and accessories for fall, winter and spring seasons. The company also owns Baffin – a Canadian designer and manufacturer of performance outdoor and industrial footwear.

The 'Made in Canada' company is known for its premium down-filled jackets owing to its in-depth expertise in down manufacturing. It is one of the largest apparel manufacturers in Canada with 8 operating facilities across the country. In calendar year 2021, it either made or purchased 84 per cent of its units that helped it insulate from the global supply chain disruptions.

TABLE 1 CANADA GOOSE HOLDINGS

Performance (in Ca\$ million)	FY20	FY21	FY22	9-month FY23
Revenue	958.10	903.70	1,098.40	923.80
Gross profit	593.30	554.00	733.60	624.90
Net income	148.00	70.30	94.60	78.90

Source: CGH

In 2022 fiscal, the CGH turned a billion-dollar company when it touched a revenue of Ca\$1.098 billion. Two-third of this revenue was contributed by its direct-to-consumer (D2C) channel while rest was driven by wholesale. Its D2C comprised 56 national e-commerce markets and 45 retail stores as of October last year. Asia-Pacific is its largest market with 30 per cent contribution to revenue, followed by the US which contributes 28 per cent, and only 20 per cent is generated domestically within Canada.

In 2020, CGH announced Humanature, its purpose platform that unites its sustainability and value-based initiatives. By doing so, it reinforced its commitment to keep the planet cold and the people on it warm.



ROOTS CORPORATION

Roots was founded by two city kids – Michael Budman and Don Green in 1973, who met at summer camp in Algonquin Park near Toronto. Starting from a little cabin, today it is a premium outdoor lifestyle brand that embodies a comfortable cabin-meets-city style, made for everyday adventures. The company designs, markets and sells a broad selection of products in different departments including women's, men's, children's, and gender-free apparel, leather goods, footwear and accessories.



As of October last year, the Roots Corporation operates 108 corporate retail stores in Canada, two stores in the US, and more than 100 partner-operated stores in Asia, a dedicated Roots-branded storefront on Tmall in China, in addition to its own e-commerce platform. Roots businesses are segmented into two – D2C, comprising sales through corporate retail stores and the company's e-commerce website; and, the 'Partners & other' segments consisting primarily of the wholesale of Roots-branded products to its international operating partners as well as select retail partners, the sales from B2C marketplace Tmall, royalties earned through the brand licensing to select manufacturing partners, and the sales of custom Roots-branded products to select business clients.

TABLE 2 ROOTS CORPORATION

Performance (in Ca\$ '000s)	FY20	FY21	FY22	9-month FY23
Revenue	329,865	240,506	273,834	160,655
Gross profit	176,189	139,739	162,857	93,992
Net income	(62,029)	13,080	22,763	(6,287)

Source: Roots Corporation

The company's philanthropic endeavour is called "Roots Cares". Since February 2020, Roots has donated approximately \$3.1 million worth of cash and in-kind donations to various organisations within the communities in which it operates. The company donates 1 per cent of the sales it earns from every online purchase to one of the many charitable partners it supports. The major social-impact areas where it works are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People Of Colour) and LGBT communities, sustainability, and mental health & well-being.

In early March this year, Roots entered into a multi-faceted partnership with Stadium Live – a leading platform for Gen Z sports, culture and entertainment fans. The alliance will deliver a collection of unique digital branded experiences for Stadium Live users who, starting from March, will have access to exclusive Roots branded activations throughout the platform.

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

Originally a British company of 17th century that traded in fur, Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) was pushed into retail trade by the end of 19th century owing to changing fashion trends that made fur trading lose its importance. Prior to that, Western settlement and The Gold Rush of mid-1800s had already introduced the company to a new type of client – one that shopped with cash. With the Deed of Surrender in 1870, the HBC relinquished its territories to the newly founded country – Canada, and shifted its focus to retail as it began transforming trading posts into sale shops, stocked with a wider variety of goods than ever before. In 1912, the company modernised aggressively giving birth to HBC's 'original six' department stores – Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Victoria, Saskatoon and Winnipeg. Subsequently, a countrywide retail expansion happened through a series of strategic acquisitions of Cairns (Saskatoon in 1921), Morgan's (Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto in 1960) and Frieman's (Ottawa in 1972).



Despite being the oldest operating company in Canada, it wasn't until 1970 – its 300th anniversary year, that HBC became a Canadian corporation. Its pace of retail acquisitions further increased with takeovers of Zellers / Fields (1978), Simpsons (1978) and Robinson's (1979). Later, the economic downturn of the 1980s left the company with major debt and caused HBC to rethink its priorities and return to its core business. Non-retail business such as the fur trade, wholesale and Northern Store departments were sold in 1987.

In its present-day avatar, HBC, headquartered at Toronto, is a holding company of investments and businesses at the intersection of technology, retail operations and real estate. It has majority ownership of iconic e-commerce companies: Saks – a leading online destination for luxury fashion, and Saks OFF 5TH – a premier luxury off-price e-commerce company. Its portfolio also includes The Bay, a Canadian e-commerce marketplace; Hudson's Bay, the operating company for Hudson's Bay stores; SFA, the entity that operates Saks Fifth Avenue's physical locations; and, O5, the operating company for Saks OFF 5TH stores, as well as its real estate and investments business – HBC Properties and Investments, that manages approximately 40 million sq ft of gross leasable area spanning top markets and prime locations across North America.

HBC launched its e-commerce business with introduction of hbc.com in 2000 and a year later, introduced its loyalty programme – HBC rewards. In 2005, HBC was selected as the National Premier Partner and official retailer for the Olympic and Paralympic games. In 2008, National Realty and Development Corporation (NRDC) Equity Partners purchased HBC and four



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years later HBC once again became a publicly traded company after being held privately from 2006 to 2012. The very next year, Hudson's Bay (formerly The Bay) had its first major logo rebranded since 1965 with the new name and logo reflecting the modern retail brand.

Saks Fifth Avenue: Like HBC, Saks Fifth Avenue (SFA) also has a long story of exchanging hands. Originally born in the US, SFA is the premier destination for luxury fashion that offers curated assortment of fashion and highly personalised customer service. Its journey began in early 1900s when Horace Saks and Bernard Gimbel dreamt of opening a specialty store while operating retail stores on NY's 34th street at Herald Square. Through combined finances of both merchant families a site was purchased between 49th and 50th street on upper Fifth Avenue, where a dream store was opened on September 15, 1924. Thus, Saks Fifth Avenue became the first large retail store in what was then primarily a residential district. Between 1924 and 1972 and after the demise of Horace Saks in 1926, Adam Gimbel (Bernard's cousin) continued expanding Saks empire reaching from coast to coast up till his retirement in 1969. Within a period between 1972 and 1989, around 20 new stores opened throughout the country and eight old were replaced by new ones. Renovation also began in NY flagship store in 1978, escalator installed in 1979 and the construction of a 36-floor office and retail complex directly behind the store completed in spring of 1990 – increasing nearly 30 per cent selling space. It was done in partnership with the Swiss Bank Corporation.

In 1973, Saks & Company was acquired by BATUS – a subsidiary of B.A.T. Industries PLC, through its acquisition of Gimbel Bros., Inc. Later in July 1990, affiliates of Investcorp, S.A. and a group of international investors acquired Saks from B.A.T. In late 1994, SFA acquired four former I. Magnin stores in Beverly Hills, Carmel, San Diego and Phoenix, and in 1996 Saks turned public company as Saks Holdings, Inc. (NYSE: SKS). In September 1998, Saks Holdings, Inc. and Proffitt's, Inc. – a leading regional department store company, completed a merger that made SFA a division of Proffitt's, Inc., whose corporate name also changed to Saks Incorporated. In summer of 2000, SFA launched its website saks.com, offering in-store categories as well as exclusive products and content. Finally, on November 4, 2013, Saks Inc.

TABLE 3 HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

Sales (in Ca\$ million)	Q1, FY19	Q2, FY19	Q3, FY19	Q4, FY19
Hudson's Bay	938	599	620	657
Saks Fifth Avenue	1,087	879	827	799
Saks OFF 5TH	388	311	315	327
Others	35	42	63	35
Total	2,448	1,831	1,825	1,818

Source: HBC's last reported figures

was acquired by HBC which, in 2021, partnered with Insight Partners to establish Saks Fifth Avenue's e-commerce business as a standalone company known as Saks.

Today, Saks Fifth Avenue defines the luxury shopping experience through a seamless connection between e-commerce and stores. It offers digital customer experience with a strong connection to a network of 41 extraordinary stores across North America for seamless all-channel shopping.

Saks OFF 5TH: An off-shoot of SFA, Saks OFF 5TH started as a pilot model in 1992 when SFA came up with the outlet store in Franklin Mills, Pennsylvania (US) under the name of Saks Clearinghouse. Tasting the success, the company expanded its off-price concept and renamed the business Saks Fifth Avenue OFF 5TH in 1995. In the fall of 2013, Saks OFF 5TH launched SaksOFF5TH.com, offering a broad assortment across all categories and opened its NY flagship store in 2016. In 2021, HBC partnered with Insight Partners to establish Saks OFF 5TH's e-commerce business as a standalone company.

Today, it is the premier destination for luxury off-price fashion that reimagines traditional off-price retail with a digital-first model focused on delivering a superior customer experience. In its approximately 100 stores across the US and Canada, and online, it offers a compelling assortment of high-end designers and everyday favourites at the lucrative prices attached to the best names in fashion.

The Bay: The Bay is the e-commerce marketplace by HBC. It operates thebay.com – one of the largest premium life and style digital platforms in Canada, with a seamless connection to a network of 85 Hudson's Bay stores. The Bay offers assortment of products and categories including fashion, home, beauty, food concepts and more, and is an official style partner of the Toronto Raptors. The Bay (digital) and Hudson's Bay (stores) were established as distinct businesses in 2021.

The Bay is the first Canadian department store to sign the Fifteen Percent Pledge. In early February, Hudson's Bay unveiled SHOP_BLK – a new destination on TheBay.com, that empowers customers to discover and support Black-owned and led brands of apparel, accessories, beauty and home in one location, year-round. Among the brands included in SHOP_BLK's assortment are Balmain, Brillcool, City Chic, Ellie Bianca, Good Man Brand, Heron Preston, Israella Kobla, Kaela Kay, Loola Cosmetics, Maison Jiji, Monoxide, Oma The Label, Saint Lyon, Simkha Biocosmetiques, Skindew, Sully & Son Co., Yo Mama's Foods, LaQuan Smith, and more.



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LULULEMON ATHLETICA

In 1998, Chip Wilson founded Lululemon in Vancouver. What started as a design studio by day and yoga studio by night became a standalone store in November 2000 on West 4th Avenue in Vancouver's Kitsilano neighbourhood. Earlier styles by Lululemon were made for women to wear during yoga which, through regular feedback from brand's customers (internally addressed as guests), ambassadors and elite athletes, are now designs for yoga, running, cycling, training and most other sweaty pursuits for women and men. This has practically transformed Lululemon into a technical athletic apparel, footwear and accessories company of today.



Lululemon's design and development team sources technically advanced fabrics having new feel and fit, and craft innovative functional features for its products. Its vertical retail strategy and, direct connection with guests and their constant feedback enable the retailer to incorporate unique performance and fashion needs into its design process. This helps the brand to address the needs of its consumers, advance product lines and differentiate itself from the competition. In order to strengthen its digital sweatlife offerings and to bring immersive and personalised in-home sweat and mindfulness content to new and existing Lululemon customers, the brand acquired Curiouser Products Inc., dba Mirror – an in-home fitness company with an interactive workout platform that features live and on-demand classes, during Q2, 2020.

TABLE 4 LULULEMON ATHLETICA

Performance (in Ca\$ '000)	2020	2021	9-month, 2022
Net revenue	4,401,879	6,256,617	5,338,680
Gross profit	2,463,991	3,608,565	2,964,721
Net income	588,913	975,322	734,989

Source: Lululemon Athletica

In 2021, its women range contributed 67 per cent to net revenue. North America is the retailer's largest market that represented 85 per cent of net revenue the same year. The international markets, including China, rest of Asia-Pacific and Europe, are under expansion mode. Its two major business segments – company-operated stores and D2C, together comprised 89 per cent of 2021 revenue. Among 574 (623 as on October 2022) operational stores as of January 30, 2022, 324 are located in the US and 63 in Canada.



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REITMANS



Reitmans was founded in 1926 by Herman and Sarah Reitmans as a modest beginning. Since then, it has evolved from being a one women’s clothing store on Boulevard St. Laurent in Montreal to one of Canada’s largest women’s specialty retailers. Present day Reitmans (Canada) Limited is a family-controlled and publicly traded company listed on the TSX Venture Exchange.

TABLE 5 REITMANS

Performance (in Ca\$ million)	2020	2021	2022	9-month, 2023
Net revenue	705.50	533.40	662.00	588.70
Gross profit	363.90	246.30	353.20	340.10
Net income	(87.50)	(172.20)	158.20	50.20

Source: Reitmans

Following decades of growth and transformation to adapt to the ever-changing retail landscape, today it operates three different brands: Reitmans, Penningtons and RW&CO., together serving women and men with more than 400 stores and e-commerce channels.

TABLE 6 REITMANS STORE COUNT

Brand wise store count	No. of stores (Jan 29, 2022)
Reitmans	237
Pennington’s	90
RW&CO.	77
Total	404

Source: Reitmans

Reitmans: The flagship brand offers a unique combination of superior fit, fashion, quality and value. With stores across Canada, Reitmans is the renowned destination for women looking to update their wardrobe with the latest styles and colours for an affordable price. Having the largest number of stores among company’s brands, Reitmans is the main driver of the company’s business.

Pennington’s: Pennington’s is in the women’s plus-size segment that offers trendy styles and affordable quality fashion in the size range of 14-32. For 70 years, Pennington’s has honed its craft resulting in an incomparable fit based on real women and countless body shapes. The signature ‘Pennfit’ expertise can be experienced through its extensive selection of wide-width footwear, denim, lingerie, activewear and much more. The brand operates stores averaging 6,000 sq ft in power centres across Canada as well as an e-commerce website.

RW&CO.: RW&CO. is an aspirational lifestyle brand that caters to the need of men and women with an urban mindset. This is why its stores, averaging 4,500 sq ft, are located in premium locations in major malls. The brand’s offering is apt whether for work or for weekend. In addition to stores, it operates e-commerce website rw-co.com. The brand story began in Montreal in 1999.

MILLENNIALS

HAVEN



ESTABLISHED: 2006

HEADQUARTERS: Vancouver

Brothers Arthur and Daniel Chmielewski-founded Haven is a specialty retail format. Unlike larger departments stores of the past, Haven shops are small and highly curated with top niche brands from Asia and around the world. Inspired by Canada’s four seasons, Haven applies a functional design approach to modern, everyday clothing and has manufacturing partners in Canada and Japan. In addition to brand’s e-commerce website, Haven has two retail stores in Vancouver and Toronto, which also offer a carefully selected range of products from top Japanese and international brands such as On, The North Force and Stone Island.



HAVEN

NOBIS



ESTABLISHED: 2007

HEADQUARTERS: Toronto

The Canadian luxury outerwear brand Nobis – Latin for “Us”, takes performance textiles and technological innovations for outerwear, footwear and accessories and applies them to timeless silhouettes designed to embrace all the natural elements. The brand is among the most sustainable and ethical brands having all collections made with sustainable and traceable materials. It uses premium Canadian origin white duck down that is ethically sourced and processed. It purchases fur through the NAFA under very stringent regulations. It operates one flagship store in Toronto and is available online on sites like Ssense, Matches Fashion, Nordstrom and Sporting Life, apart from selling from its own e-commerce site.



NOBIS

LEGACY – AT A GLANCE

S. No.	RETAILER	NO. OF STORES* (2021)	HEADQUARTERS	DESCRIPTION
1.	Mark's & L' Équipeur	381	Calgary	Established in 1977; A member of the Canadian Tire Group of Companies; Offers casual clothing, footwear, work wear, scrubs and accessories in-store and online
2.	Ardene	362	Montreal	Started as jewellery and accessories retailer in 1982; Launched ardene.com in 2012; Offers clothing, shoes and accessories for men, women and kids
3.	Blue Notes	141	Toronto	A denim retailer; Incepted in 1942 as Thrifty's in Toronto; Exclusive Canada licensee of Aéropostale USA; Operates online and physical stores
4.	Northern Reflections	135	Toronto	Womenswear retailer; First store opened in 1985 in Guelph, Ontario; Online-offline operations
5.	Ricki's	131	Winnipeg	A retail-brand of Comark (est. 1975); Women's clothing and accessories retailer; First store opened in 1939 in Brandon, Manitoba; Partners with Canadian Women's Foundation; Donated \$1.9 million for the cause of women poverty; operates online and through stores
6.	Bootlegger	79	Winnipeg	Another of Comark's retail-brand; Retailer of denim and jeans; Founded half a century back in Vancouver, British Columbia; Online-offline operation
7.	Urban Planet	120	Toronto	Established in 1975; Fashion retailer offering apparel, footwear and accessories for men, women, boys and girls in the age group of 12 to 24 years; Operates e-commerce website and physical stores spread across Canada
8.	Dynamite + Garage	117+116	Montreal	Established in mid-1970s, Dynamite group owns both brands of womenswear; Has online presence as well as sells through brick & mortar stores in Canada and the US
9.	Suzy Shier	116	Montreal	Born in 1966; Offers workwear, casualwear and weekend wear for women and accessories such as belts, perfumes and sunglasses; Partners with iconic Canadian legacy brand Le Chateau; Operates online & offline
10.	Moores	113	Toronto	Menswear retailer; Launched in 1980 as a family store in Mississauga, Ontario; Became part of Tailored Brands (formerly The Men's Wearhouse, Inc) in 1999; Employs 1,000+ people; Donated >\$1 million to True Patriot Love; Has stores and online presence
11.	Laura - Laura Petite & Melanie Lyne	>140+	Laval	Family-owned women's fashion company; Founded in 1939 by Laura Wolstein; Produces 1.5 million items and uses 2 million metres of fabric per year; Launched laura.ca in 2012 and melanielyne.com in 2014
12.	Warehouse One	92	Winnipeg	Affordable designer-style jeans retailer; Founded in 1977 by Max Maryk; Launched own online e-commerce store in late 1990s, revamped in 2017; Acquired by Bob Silver and the Stern Group in 2002; Partnered with Dauphin Country Fest and Children's Wish (now Make-a-Wish), introduced rewards programme – Warehouse One Perks in 2010; Iconic private label from 1980s – Grand Beach Club, launched in 2021
13.	Eclipse	87	Newfoundland	Women's fashion and accessories retailer founded by Cyril and Pam Bulgin when they opened first store in 1974; Carries sizes 0-17 and XS-XXL, and brand names like YMI, WallFlower and Almost Famous; Online-offline operations
14.	Cleo	86	Mississauga	Comark-owned retail-brand, Cleo is operated by Cleo Clothing Co. Ltd.; Women's fashion retailer having three brands – Dex/Black Tape, Yoga Jeans and Noize; Offers Petite collection in sizes 0-20 and XS-XXL for women 5'4 or under; Operates e-commerce website as well as physical stores
15.	Boathouse	83	Welland	A fashion multi-brand retailer offering apparel, footwear and accessories for men, women and kids; Began operations as Arlies in 1963 in St. Catharines, Ontario; Launched boathousestores.com in 2008 and operates brick & mortar stores as well

Source: Statista (only Canada stores) +includes >100 Laura and Laura Petite

NAKED & FAMOUS

ESTABLISHED: 2008

HEADQUARTERS: Montreal

Founded by Brandon Svarc – a fashion PR professional, Naked & Famous is a Canadian denim brand largely known for creating some of the most innovative and unorthodox raw denim products – such as the world’s heaviest jeans and scratch-and-sniff denim. The brand always uses Japanese raw denim which arrives as a blank canvas, ready to be transformed into customer’s dream. Today, Naked & Famous produces an array of denim and non-denim garments, including button-ups, knits, sweatshirts, and accessories like leather belts – all made in Canada. Besides e-commerce website, the brand has a store in Montreal – Tate + Yoko, that stocks the full N&F range as well as curated collection from brands like Kamikaze Attack, Studio D’Artisan and Momotaro Jeans, offering a free hemming service alongside.



NAKED & FAMOUS

ENCIRCLED

ESTABLISHED: 2012

HEADQUARTERS: Toronto

A Canadian-made workleisure clothing retail brand Encircled selects only natural and toxin-free materials for its clothes. Founded by a woman – Kristi Soomer, Encircled is a brand for women which is one of the few female-founded and locally made B Corp-certified apparel brands. The products are unique in some instances, for you can transform a single piece of clothing into tunic, a blouse and even a dress. The sustainable designs are created using local, small-scale, artisanal production and earth-friendly fabrics, manufactured in factories located within an hour’s bike ride from its offices in Toronto. Close proximity of factories helps in ensuring product excellence as well as monitoring of skilled workers’ safe and happy work environment. The workers are paid fair wage, well above the fashion industry average. The brand spends at least 50 per cent of non-labour expenses at local independent suppliers, which helps shrink its carbon footprint. Encircled products range encompasses tracksuits and jumpsuits, blazers & jackets, dressy sweatsuits, accessories and top & bottoms, and more. As of now, it operates online only which also offers virtual fitting and expert advice on making wardrobe combinations.



3.PARADIS

ESTABLISHED: 2013

HEADQUARTERS: Montreal

3.Paradis is a French-Canadian contemporary luxury ready-to-wear clothing brand by Creative Director Emeric Tchatchoua. Launched in Montreal, it is now jointly based in Paris. The brand has grown internationally through destination retail partners and their global e-commerce platforms. The brand is distinguished by easy-to-wear clothing, unconventional tailoring and graphic prints with all linked together by thought-provoking campaigns laced with spiritual and social commentary. Ever since its inception 3.Paradis has nourished a distinctive aesthetic influenced by pop culture and streetwear. The brand has been LVMH Prize nominee and Canadian Arts and Fashion Award winner.



3.PARADIS

KNIX

ESTABLISHED: 2013

HEADQUARTERS: Toronto

Founded by Joanna Griffiths, Knix was born with the idea to revolutionise the global underwear market, with particular attention to underwear designs for women and teenagers. Using patented technology, cutting-edge processes and human-centric design, it creates unique products such as lightweight anti-chafing shorts, wireless bras – sexy and supportive, overnight period protection and many more. With production based in China, Croatia and South Korea, the brand from Toronto offers a vast line of underwear, and also promotes plus sizes as regular everyday body sizes. In addition, it also offers postpartum support programmes. The underwear, bras, loungewear, pyjamas, swimsuits, shapers and maternity outfits comprise the wide collection of the brand, and also loungewear for every occasion – even period leakproof underwear. The brand merchandise can be bought online and even a virtual fit can be scheduled through its website. For personal touch and feel, the products are available in four stores in Canada: Calgary, Ottawa, Vancouver and Toronto.



KNIX

NUMI

ESTABLISHED: 2013

HEADQUARTERS: Toronto

The retail brand was inceptioned out of personal necessity of its founder Michelle who was seeking a clothing that should be sweat stain-free and not expensive to dry clean too, resulting in a high-performance women's undershirt. After creating the first prototype of the original Numi undershirt, she launched a successful crowdfunding campaign to fund her first production run. Headquartered in Toronto, today Numi is one of many Canadian brands specialising in women's clothing made out of sustainable materials like silk, naia, Tencel and cotton. In addition to its flagship product—the undershirts that are designed to protect from sweat stains, the brand has collection of bras, loungewear and basic everyday outfits. Numi, however, does not have any physical shop and sells online only.



NUMI

Numi

SMASH + TESS

ESTABLISHED: 2016

HEADQUARTERS: Richmond

Smash + Tess is founded by a mother-daughter duo who aspired to sell comfortable clothing with manufacturing facilities being located in the south of Fraser river. Making all their products within the same area helps in ensuring the quality of every piece and working conditions they are made in. The brand is especially popular for its rompers and sweatpants, that are offered in ranges of sizes anything from 3XS to 4XL. The cozy clothing line, primarily made of bamboo and cotton composite materials, has designs that are community-led and aim at slowing down fashion cycle by making premium, coveted designs-on-demand which are created style-by-style in small batches of clothes that offer inclusive sizing to fit everyone – outfits for everywear. Owing to its commitment to comfort and environment, the brand uses incredibly soft, high quality, hand-selected fabrics. In addition to e-commerce site the brand has 2 pop-up stores in the Coquitlam Centre (3,500 sq metre) and Muskoka in the Ontario surroundings.



SMASH+TESS

SMASH+TESS

KOTN

ESTABLISHED: 2015

HEADQUARTERS: Toronto

Founded by three friends – Rami, Ben and Mackenzie, Kotn is an online retailer of basic clothes and streetwear, underwear, lounge, linen and sheets, all kinds of home décor and ceramic. It operates six physical stores including two in the US. Kotn started with a simple goal to create the perfect T-shirt and today, it is a certified B Corporation voted Best for World with the fourth highest B Impact Score of apparel brands in North America.

Despite being among the youngest retailers in Canada, Kotn has scaled up quickly to currently own over 2,390 cotton farms in Egypt's Nile delta and Faiyum regions where it also supports farmers. When market conditions are difficult, the retailer provides these farmers with subsidies like fertilisers and agricultural consultants. Owning the farms enables Kotn to propel 'farm-to-fork' style supply chain for clothes. The retail brand also makes an environmental and societal impact through the ABC project that focuses on investing corporation funds in education and building schools in Egypt.



KOTN

KOTN

ECOLOGYST

ESTABLISHED: 2017

HEADQUARTERS: Victoria

Ecologist, an online store, offers a wide collection of eco-friendly tops, bottoms, outerwear and accessories for both men and women. The company with two investors – Leon Li and Mirza Canada, closed its last funding round on January 20, 2022 from equity crowdfunding. Formerly known as Sitka, it changed the name to Ecologist in 2019 to avoid any potential legal dispute with the well-known brand Sitka Gear.

Ecologist's product line is made of wool – a 100 per cent organic material, and organic cotton material Ventile – a weather resistant sustainable fabric. The retailer has developed eco-programmes and supports second life by reselling used clothes. For Ecologist shoppers desiring real life retail experience, there are three stores and a factory showroom to serve them.

Last August, it acquired Frankie Collective – a producer of women's streetwear that uses upcycled materials. The purchase of Frankie is expected to increase the retail-brand's manufacturer-to-consumer (M2C) footprint across North America, its presence as the recognised authority in sustainable apparel, and become the market leader in upcycled apparel. **FF**

ecologist