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High Heels and High Style

Dallas women experience shoe shopping at Linus Lounge.

I feel as if I just stepped into the pages of a fashion magazine. To my left there's a pair of lime green lizard sandals; to my right, cobalt blue booties. Then I spot a cobbler's *Mona Lisa*: white patent leather pumps with 4½-inch heels.

My blissful shopping experience echoes that of all who enter Linus Lounge, and that's just what owner

Kristen Radakovich intends. Housed in half of a converted duplex on fashionable Routh Street, the store mingles style with imagination and luxury with practicality. It's where the shoes of your dreams meet your real feet.

Will Work for Shoes

Several years ago, Kristen, who studied to become a pastry chef, turned

from edible art to wearable art. She took a cobbling course at Prescott & Mackay School of Fashion and Accessory Design in London (where she lived with her husband, David, a digital marketing specialist). There, she found that shoemaking was like sculpting. "I think of shoes as pieces of art on your feet," she says. "If it's well made and well balanced, then a 4-inch heel can be comfortable, as absurd as that sounds."

Kristen travels to Europe frequently, working with a hand-selected roster of designers, in search of avant-garde styles exclusive to the store. Finds include shoes by Ruthie Davis, Scolah Pattullo, and Gil Carvalho.

Sole Searching

Here in Dallas, shoppers usually stay from a half hour to an hour at the lounge, where they can relax in over-size leather chairs or model in front of full-length mirrors. It's how Kristen familiarizes herself with each customer's style.

"If I know my clients, then I might see something when I'm buying and say, 'Oh my gosh, she is just going to love this.' And that's really my goal," Kristen says. "It's the idea of knowing people's tastes and being able to pick specifically for them."

ALLISON BARNES

Linus Lounge: 2724 Routh Street, Dallas, TX 75201; www.linuslounge.com or (214) 965-0180.

Don't ask Kristen Radakovich to pick a favorite pair of shoes. "It's like having children," she says. "They're all special."

