

It would be just another ritzy/VIP-only dinner in just another Hollywood Hills manse, hosted by just another millennial multimillionaire, if not for the inebriants carefully selected for each of the seven courses of this gala gourmet vegan dining experience. Each carefully cultivated varietal was chosen by a sommelier of sorts to enhance the specific taste buds of the designated diners as they munch through kale salad, roasted carrots, cauliflower steaks, broccoli rabe, citrus sorbet and Meyer lemon salad.

"The citrus flavors in this varietal really enhance the lime, pine nuts and papaya in the salad," comments the chef. This is not coincidental. We're talking taste buds in the literal sense. Because the plants being imbibed are not grapes harvested for fine wines—they are "flowers" cultivated and harvested from fine cannabis strains.

Welcome to the world of luxury pot, a far cry from the clumsily rolled, lipstick-edged joints puffed in his salad days tooling around L.A. That was kids' stuff.

Spurred by the legality of medical marijuana—current laws allow it to be smoked, vaped, and eaten in 28 states and 40 countries—marijuana is around a \$7 billion a year industry in the U.S. alone. And with the passing of California's Prop 64 last November, the Sunshine state will allow its citizens to legally possess up to one ounce of marijuana or eight grams of concentrate without a medical license. Attorney General Jeff Sessions might try to mess with the fun, but eight states in the U.S. have made marijuana fully legal—and by 2020, the U.S. legal pot market looks likely to smoke out \$22 billion in annual sales. If that doesn't demand some luxe branding and packaging—well, then we can't spell LVMH.

Today, if you're an urban sophisticate—a discerning aesthete into designer clothing, bespoke travel and the newest Apple tech toys—then this bud's definitely for you. While you've been desperately seeking ways to deal with mounting daily stresses of device addiction and a double-time-demanding job, cannabis has grown up, gone luxe, and morphed into a multibillion dollar luxury business that's infiltrated fashion, dining, drinking, grooming, wellness—and yes, even sex.

Fashion brands have been at the forefront of the movement to mainstream marijuana. In recent years, hippie-ish labels like Nomads and Ministry of Hemp have blazed the trail for high-enders like Stella McCartney, Ralph Lauren, and Saint Laurent in using hemp for clothing. Marijuana leaf T-shirts have long been a wardrobe must for more devoted stoners. But pot-leaf prints are now turning up on Stubbs and Wootton and Charlotte Olympia shoes, \$900 cashmere sweaters by Lucien Pellat-Finet, and designer duos by brands such as Creatures of the Wind, Jeremy Scott, Alexander Wang, Converse, and Vans.

The Apple Store of weed? MedMen on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood. It's a retail temple with long wooden tables holding iPads that list varietals, specialized cases displaying flowers with magnifying glasses to inspect color, and portals that let you catch a whiff. Notes on provenance and the equivalent of the wine world's terroir are extensive. There are also \$150.00 pipes by Tetra that are beehive shaped, and the highest-end

vape pens, bowls, lighters, and other accoutrements.

"What's happened in the last seven years is astronomical," says one high-end dispensary proprietor, who's raking in the dough while raking up the weed. "Stigmas are crumbling. The old pot dispensaries are morphing into luxury retail destinations. Palates have evolved. Now users want to know how high they'll get before they ingest—so ratios of THC to CBD are on every product."

Carefully served up by "budtenders" instead of mixologists, the myriad varieties of cannabis are divided into two major groups: those high in THC, or tetrahydrocannabinol, which gets you high; and those high in CBD, aka cannabidiol (another of the 100-plus chemical compounds, called cannabinoids, found in the plant), which gets you mellow and healthy.

Products with only CBD—oils, creams, foods—are



## Smoking Out in Style

STYLED BY TAYLOR BRECHTEL

1 HERMÈS  
Chakor change tray

2 HERMÈS  
Vintage ashtray

3 ALCHEMY BY  
DARK HEART  
Awaken sativa blend  
cannabis oil

4 SHINE PAPERS  
24k gold rolling papers

5 SHINOLA  
The Jackie Robinson  
Limited Edition  
Timepiece

6 VETEMENTS  
24k gold grinder  
chain necklace

7 A.M CLUB  
Silk palm print scarf

8 BACCARAT  
Harmonie tumbler

9 CHARLOTTE'S  
WEB Everyday plus  
mint chocolate hemp  
extract by the Stanley  
Brothers

10 BACCARAT  
Harmonie round  
whiskey decanter

11 SWOON  
BOX // CLUB M  
Actual box & heart  
shaped chocolate

12 CINNAMON  
PROJECTS  
Circa Mineral  
Incense burner

13 CHROME HEARTS  
Sterling silver joint  
cigarette roller

14 CLUB M  
Aphrodite 0316  
medical grade  
marijuana

15 SUMMERLAND  
Pleasure point bong

16 HERMÈS  
Cavales twilly box

17 CLUB M  
2WNTY Vape pen  
and refills

18 BACCARAT  
Havana ashtray

19 DUNHILL  
Agate table lighter

20 BACCARAT  
Cheval horse head

21 CARTIER  
Gold travel frame  
with clock

non-psychoactive, and have taken up residence in stores, bars, and restaurants thanks in large part to a groundbreaking 2013 CNN special called “Weed,” hosted by Dr. Sanjay Gupta. He pointed out positive effects CBD had on anxiety, depression, insomnia, pain, inflammation, arthritis, ADHD, acne, schizophrenia, and so on. And now reputable lines like Charlotte’s Web, Bluebird Botanicals and Healthy Hemp Oil are producing CBD oil extracts, flavored tinctures, gels and topical CBD skin salves, sold everywhere from doctors’ offices to grocery stores.

Charlotte’s Web is a company founded in Boulder, Colorado, in 2011 by six brothers (referred to collectively as the Stanley brothers, though unrelated to the bluegrass legends), and in case you suspect CBD just might be snake oil, read on: Ashley Grace, Charlotte’s Web’s head of marketing, explains, “[The Stanleys] figured out the government-patented flavonoids [natural nutrients from plants] for Alzheimer’s—and realized the market could be higher for non-psychoactive CBD than THC.”



## Hipster brand Vetements sells a gold weed grinder necklace for \$750; Chrome Hearts makes a roller for \$1,265.

A girl named Charlotte Figi was plagued with crippling epilepsy until she was five when her mother, Paige, found the Stanley brothers. Doctors thought botanical CBD could help, so the brothers created an oil for the girl, who’d suffered up to 300 seizures a week. Now, at age ten, Charlotte’s healthy, and still taking 100 milligrams a day. “It also works well for migraines and knee pain,” adds Grace. “Charlotte’s Web uses the whole hemp plant, which makes us different from most CBD-based companies.”

A little THC cures all manner of ailments. Anti-inflammatory CBD healing creams are such a big business now that Doc Green’s, Cannabis Basics and Apothecanna, among thousands of brands—are taking the place of Tiger Balm. And CBD bath products and body scrubs, in Lavender Kush, Cannabis Rose and Yuzu are being used to treat everything from neck/back pain to chronic arthritis.

Four years ago, L.A. fashion journalist Cindy Capobianco quit the glamour biz to start a high-end topicals and edibles pot business with her filmmaker husband. They called their new brand Lord Jones. “We looked at each other and said, ‘Cannabis is coming.’” Now they do medicated sound baths at Neue-house with gongs and crystal bowls and produce high-end sea salt caramels and gumdrops.

Edibles have taken the idea of stoned snacking to a whole new level. MedMen’s food section is stocked with THC- and CBD-infused mints, chocolate red-hots, white chocolate with matcha, potato chips in

salt & pepper and salsa picante, popcorn with butter salt, peppermint patties, Weetos (like Cheetos), red velvet cookies, Rice Krispie treats, and cannabis-laced butters, cheeses and nut oils for cooking. And all of it is packaged as masterfully as anything out of Harrods or Dean and DeLuca.

For those who prefer their courage liquid, hundreds of THC-infused drinks are now available: root beer, green tea, pink lemonade, Cannabis Quenchers Subtle Teas, Catapult coffee pods infused with cannabis, and Canna Cola fizzy sodas. CBD-infused drinks—energy drinks, lemonades, iced teas—are hawked in health food stores and juice bars.

And there’s an even higher-end version of legal CBD beverages: West Hollywood’s Gracias Madre and DTLA’s Prank bar are both notorious for their cocktails infused with cannabinoid oil, which won’t get you high—but will get you feeling warmer and fuzzier. Gracias Madre’s have snazzy names: Stony Negroni, Rolled Fashioned, Sour T-iesel.

Yeah, good old-fashioned joints are pretty—well, old fashioned. Unless you use Shine x Tyga 24K gold rolling papers—named for Kardashian-adjacent rapper Tyga. Shine also makes gold vapes (around \$150), grinders, and rolling trays. Even a luxe hipster brand like Vetements sells a gold weed grinder necklace for \$750—and Chrome Hearts makes a roller for \$1,265 sold at Maxfield. And tattoo artist Scott Campbell—married to actress Lake Bell—just started a luxe line of vapes and edibles called Beboe, already the subject of celebration by Justin Theroux, Sharon Stone, and Orlando Bloom.

“When I started smokin’ weed, I had no idea if it was indica or sativa,” scowls a middle-aged pothead pal who is having a hard time adjusting to the Brave New World of weed. “And it had seeds. In the early days of weed stores, my guy was bringing buds down here the size of quarters. Now, high-end dispensaries have to have a certain size. It’s L.A., you know: The girls have to have certain size boobs, and dispensaries have to have certain size buds.”

Still, “flower sales are beginning to plateau,” a MadMen marketing exec reports. “Upscale vapes and edibles are the growth areas. It’s harder to brand the flower, easier to do with vape pens.” No wonder there are so many vape brands: Humboldt, PAX3, Firefly, and more.

“The chardonnay moms want slick-looking vape pens,” laughs the exec. “They want everything to be pretty. But the trajectory is just amazing in terms of what’s still coming. Now Sacramento is trying to make non-medical cannabis delivery legal.” And when that happens—look out. UberEats will turn into UberEdibles—and why not? “Weed is much better than alcohol,” he laughs. “The next day, you feel much better, and there’s no calories. We’re still trying to come up with that skinny strain with no munchies.” In the meantime, calories might be the only downside—along with the less urgent problem of where to spend all that crazy cash. ■