

RARE BREEDS

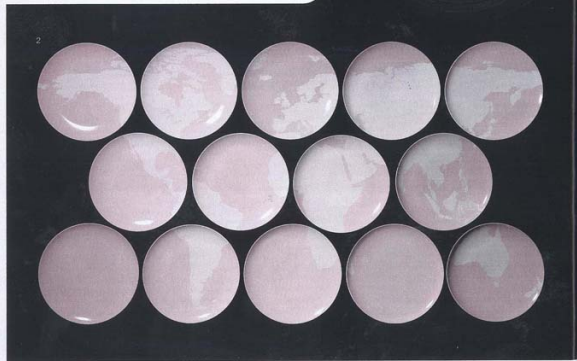
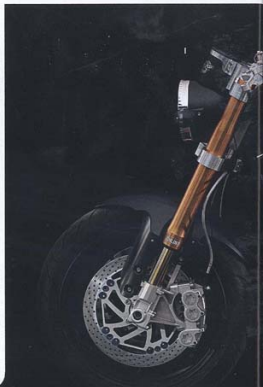
Specialising in exclusive, hard-to-find objects, the website 20Ltd offers its customers the finest things you've never heard of. By Tamsin Blanchard

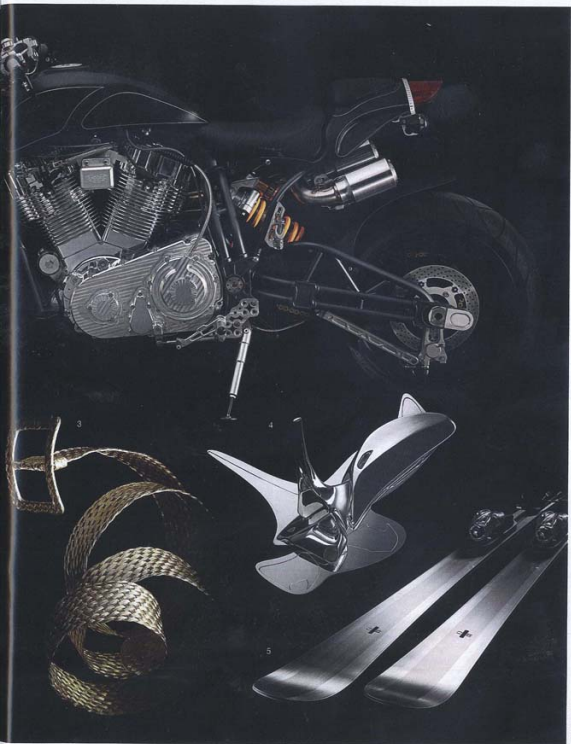
How do you package up 14 fine china plates, worth almost £7,000, to be sent to the other side of the world? This is one of the dilemmas facing Jolyon Fenwick and his team as his shopping website – which specialises in selling exceptional objects in very limited editions to the world's wealthiest punters – takes off.

The site, 20Ltd, went live on April 2 this year, with a selection of 20 random but luxurious objects chosen by Fenwick and his business partner, Marcus Husselby. They met while working in advertising and saw a niche for an online shopping experience combining luxury with product design – 20Ltd seeks out brands that are extremely specialist and don't have a wide distribution net. For example, Zai skis. 'They are a company that do one thing incredibly well, but are sold only in Aspen,' Fenwick says. And while they have asked each company to create exclusive products for them, they were keen that these did not end up being PR gimmicks. 'We want people to go to the website and see things they have never heard of before.'

And it works. 'We have sold more things in the tens of thousands of pounds bracket than the thousands,' says Fenwick, who has been pleasantly surprised by the

1 The 135hp konoclast motorcycle by Ecosse, the premier luxury marque of limited-production machines, costs £44,000, 11 editions. 2 The British designer Barnaby Barford collaborated with the German porcelain house Nymphenburg to create Global Service, a set of 14 plates that illustrate a world map. Now available in pink exclusively through 20Ltd, £6,900, 20 editions. 3 The prestigious jeweller Marie-Hélène de Taillec designed this hand-woven, 22ct-gold belt. £11,950, 20 editions. 4 This tea and coffee set, according to Zaha Hadid who designed it for Alessi, gives 'tea-time a whole new significance: it becomes a sculptural riddle.' £20,000, 99 editions. 5 Imagine veering off-piste with these cool Spada skis by Zai. They are the only skis to have a heart of Grison granite. £3,800, 20 editions.





COURTESY OF JALCO



6 'New tech, new ethics, new aesthetics' is the philosophy behind the Danish bike manufacturer Biomega, whose single-speed Boston special edition has exclusive raw-stitched leather saddle and handlebar grips. £950, 20 editions. **7** The British jeweller Theo Fennell designed this op-art heart pendant with an 18ct white gold bead-link chain. £6,000, 10 editions. **8** The Trigon watch is an exclusive offering from Linde Werdelin. This luxury analogue sports watch comes with a digital attachment that gives temperature and altitude readings, as well as warning of potential avalanche hazards. £4,200, 22 editions. **9** Odyssey has been producing high-spec putters for the discerning golfer since 1990. The Damascus Grand Putter promises to be the ultimate on-green machine. £950, 20 editions. **10** Stringing beads with his daughter inspired the Dutch designer Marcel Wanders to produce the Rare Bead Necklace. £2,000, 30 editions.

site's success. Their customers are, he says, all eminently Googable – not necessarily famous, but notable. In other words, successful and rich. What keeps people returning to the site is the unusual mix of objects, including golf putters (made by Odyssey, the putter brand); a belt woven from gold by the jeweller Marie-Hélène de Taillae; a motorbike by the American company Ecosse (£44,000); or a ten and coffee tower made by Zaha Hadid for Alessi – an extraordinary sculpture that comprises a teapot, coffee pot, milk jug, sugar bowl and tray pieced together in a complex jigsaw.

But the piece that I am fantasising about is a necklace by the Dutch designer Marcel Wanders. Called the Rare Bead Necklace, it is available in an edition of 30, with a price tag of £2,000. It looks like something a child might wear (he originally made it for his daughter) and is a collection of 31 beads including a black pearl, a hand-cut replica of a Baccarat crystal from a chandelier owned by Tsar Nicolas II, a gull bladder stone, a replica of the bead from inside Queen Elizabeth II's baby rattle, and a piece of rock taken from a meteorite. It is more than a piece of jewellery. It is magic.

The fine porcelain plates are designed by the ceramicist Barnaby Barford and hand-painted and crafted by Nymphenburg in Germany, a company that must be good because Böttger Veneta's Tomas Maier, with his exquisite taste, raves about them too (see page 22). They cost £6,900 for the set, which is not inflated above the usual price for a set of Nymphenburg plates. And Fenwick thinks he has solved the packaging problem: 'You put them in a wooden crate with enough layers so that if it fell out of a window, they wouldn't break.' Whether or not you dare to eat off them is entirely up to you.

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