

# COOL HUNTING

May 23, 2016

## Made in Spain, Qüero Shoes Land in NYC

by Nara Shin

Customize Chelsea boots, monk-strap shoes and more, most at \$200 or less, online or in-person at their pop-up



Customized products do not have to equate with heart attack-inducing prices anymore. In the world of shoes, companies like Atlanta-based start-up [Cobbler Union](#) and [Quoddy](#) (who hand-sew moccasins and loafers in Maine) are making bespoke available for more people, with streamlined online ordering and prices hovering around \$400. Brand-spanking-newcomer [Qüero Shoes](#) is bravely offering custom shoes, made in Spain using Italian and French leathers, at an even lower price: most at \$200 or below.



About a year and a half ago, Monica Shuken and Randy Shuken were in Madrid when, by chance, they strolled into a boutique store run by Eugenio Saiz and Alvaro Sasi. The two friends—around 21, 22 years old at the time—were working on a neat idea: offering customers the opportunity to design the shoes they wanted in-store, at direct-to-consumer prices. "When we were looking for shoes, we couldn't find any shoes that were affordable for us and beautiful," Saiz tells CH. "There were shoes that we liked but couldn't afford. And the ones we could afford, we didn't like. We decided to look for a factory that could make whatever we want; here we are."



Saiz and Sasi had built relationships with Spanish factories and shoemakers; the Shukens helped them take it the next level, aka the web. Qüero, now an American-based company with the four working as a team, launched online last week. To spread the news, Qüero has taken over Refinery Hotel's rotating pop-up space, the Hatbox, just below Bryant Park in NYC until 26 May—where they're showing the shoes off in person, despite being an e-commerce brand.



"We're trying to make sure you don't pay for expensive stores and we're not going to spend a lot on traditional advertising," Shuken tells CH. With a cheaper custom shoe, he's noticed customers buying their favorite styles in multiple colors, for example. Online, one starts with basic styles like the Chelsea boot, monk-strap shoes, multi-colored oxfords and loafers (men have a lot more options than women at the moment). The best part is what follows: all the features that you can fine tune, from the toe pattern to sole and an assortment of leather or suede colors. Some of the larger boot styles lend themselves to a really loud clash of both fabrics.



Check out the details and quality of the shoes (especially the subtle differences between the black, dark green and dark blue shades of leather) in person from now until 26 May (11AM-8PM). The pop-up is adjacent to the Refinery Hotel, 63 W 38th Street, New York, NY 10018. Those not in NYC can tinker with (and purchase) their own customized shoes [online from Quero](#).