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JOHN RYAN'S STORE OF THE WEEK

J Crew Lamb's Conduit Street, London

The build-up has been substantial but J Crew has arrived in the UK at last, following an awareness campaign that included a pop-up at Central Saint Martins art college and a fascia on Regent Street with life-size black cabs bearing the retailer's name. Yet travel to Lamb's Conduit Street and the store that has opened is so un-J Crew in appearance that you might actually be unaware that this US fashion retailer has made UK landfall at all.

A small, stylish shopfront with a black, retro-looking delivery bicycle in front of it has only the legend 'Number 38' on its frontage.

This is the J Crew menswear standalone store, but it looks like one of the several menswear independent retailers that are located on this narrow, upscale street.

J Crew has precedent for opting to blend in with the local retail panorama. In the TriBeCa district of Manhattan, the 'Liquor Store', also a J Crew menswear shop, works by not shouting about the retail provenance on the store's exterior. And like the



New York store, the Lamb's Conduit Street shop fulfils the vintage promise of the exterior inside, mixing light-grey painted wood perimeter and mid-shop fixturing with a long, glass panelled counter. The effect is part old-fashioned haberdashery, part tailor-cum-general store. Shopfitter

Bridgford has clearly been busy on creating this interior.

The retailer is to open a much larger and more obviously J Crew store on Regent Street next month that will principally target women. For the moment though, London's male shoppers wishing to sport a preppy

appearance have the lead over the opposite sex. This is a good-looking shop, inside and out, and one that will function effectively as a faux-indie.



For more images of the J Crew store visit the website at retail-week.com/sotw