



Southern & Eastern Kentucky Tourism Development Association

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SHOPPERS FIND TREASURES OF ALL SORTS

Whether you're searching for Appalachian arts and crafts, Mennonite quilts, small treasures from the past, or great big custom houseboats, the Highlands and Waterways Region of Kentucky offers some unusual shopping experiences.

What sets this region apart? Maybe it's the friendly nature of the folks you meet. Appalachian hospitality is a way of life. Folks here have a tradition of neighborliness. Shop owners, many of them artists and craftspeople themselves, display a simple, straightforward hospitality that often seems to be missing elsewhere. And they welcome the chance to talk about their work.

Maybe it's the many fine historic buildings that have been given new life as shops in communities throughout the region. It feels good to buy from friendly people in an interesting old place that you remember as much for its character as for what you bought.

And, it could be that shoppers never know what surprises await them along the scenic byways. Pull over at a log cabin with quilts hanging on the porch and baskets lining the steps, all surrounded by redbuds in bloom, and discover that once-in-a-lifetime find that makes every shopper's heart beat faster in anticipation.

Long known for its tradition of handicrafts, southern and eastern Kentucky is home to artisans who seem able to create something beautiful from almost anything. That's part of the pioneer mountain heritage of "using up, making do or doing without." Unique crafts can be found at many shops, galleries and festivals throughout the region.

Most of these are found along or near major corridors crossing the region. At Renfro Valley, US 25, stop at the shops along main street. This is one of the best places to buy recordings of mountain music, bluegrass, gospel, and country and western music, along with vintage recordings of performances at Renfro Valley.

South of Livingston on US 25 on the banks of the Rockcastle River is the Rockcastle River Trading Company, the best gift store in the state! A little bit of the Napa Valley in the hills of Kentucky. The gardens are fabulous, too, designed by the son of the owner. The owner, Lucille Carloftis, and her husband originally founded the Indian Village in

the 1950s. This was an early tourist attraction along US 25, the old route to Florida before the interstate. When her husband died, Mrs. Carloftis opened this new shop with a fabulous collection of soaps and scents, furniture, linens, gardening items, weavings and much more.

At Barbourville, Kentucky Communities Crafts on US 25E has handmade mountain crafts by local folks along with homemade fudge in a variety of flavors. The Red Bird Mission in Beverly, a little to the east of Pineville, specializes in hickory bark furniture, very high quality willow and honeysuckle baskets, carved coal figurines, handmade candles, birdhouses and hand-woven rugs. West of Middlesboro the Henderson Settlement & Log House Craft Shop in Frakes also has traditional mountain country crafts by local craftspeople.

At Cumberland Gap National Historic Park, visitors will find many interesting books on the history and culture of the region, and the gift shop is an outlet for the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild's Blue Ridge Parkway store.

Hindman in the mountains of eastern Kentucky, just off the scenic Daniel Boone Parkway, is home to the Marie Stewart Craft Shop, which carries only juried items to ensure the highest quality. The Kentucky Appalachian Artisan Center on main street in downtown Hindman has a gallery and retail store providing displays and an outlet for the work of artists and craftspeople from all over southern and eastern Kentucky. And, while you're in Hindman, don't miss Yoder's, which sells cheeses and wonderful fresh-baked bread, cakes, and cookies made by a local Mennonite family.

A little east of Hindman, separated by some very scenic backroad driving, is David Appalachian Crafts in the tiny community of David. This co-op has nice braided rugs and quilted throws, wall hangings and bed covers, along with split oak baskets, handmade stick furniture and more. Northeast of Davis is Prestonsburg where the Mountain Arts Center has changing displays of local artists. Ten miles west, watercolorist Tom Whitaker has a studio and gallery in an old service station.

South of Hindman on SR 15 is Pioneer Village, an 1816 log cabin in a hollow (pronounced "holler") beside a stream. It features quilted handbags, handmade beeswax candles, rag rugs, baskets, and wooden accessories. Farther along 15 is the Cozy Corner in downtown Whitesburg, a community at the foot of Pine Mountains. This is the place to come for very high quality quilts, baskets, and other regional folk crafts. There's also a great selection of books about Appalachia. Right next door is the Courthouse Café, one of the best restaurants in the region. Whitesburg is also the home of Appalshop, which has recordings of mountain music and videotapes of mountain lifeways for sale.

Cross over Pine Mountain and you're on the Kingdom Come Parkway (US 110). Here you'll find a collection of great places to buy mountain memorabilia. The Pine Mountain/Letcher County Crafts Co-op features work by more than 40 area craftspeople. The Valley of the Winds Gallery in Eolia has magnificent paintings by Kentucky artist Jefferson Chapman-Crane and 3-D "constructions" or sculpture by his wife, Sharman, using found-objects and representing endangered animals. The penguins of discarded white-out bottles is funny and moving. Heading east, there's the Oven Fork Mercantile at Oven Fork and Poor Folks Arts & Crafts in Cumberland. The Godbey Appalachian Center at Southeast Community College in Cumberland has displays of Appalachian arts

and crafts and leads to some local crafts studios. The Artists Attic in Harlan features fine art, including the paintings of Jefferson Chapman-Crane.

North of 119 and the Daniel Boone Parkway and running roughly parallel to them is State Road 30, an older east-west corridor. Be sure to stop at Quilts Plus just outside Jackson, Morris Fork Crafts a little way beyond Booneville, and Appalachian Fireside Crafts in Vincent.

West of I-75 Casey County is home to a Mennonite community a few miles south of Liberty. The Bread of Life Café & Sweet Shop on US 127 has quilts and foodstuffs, not to mention some great home cooked food at the café. The Mennonite community is spread out along the South Fork of the Green River. There are vegetable and produce markets, furniture makers, a leather-maker, quilt makers, and other home craftspeople.

Campbellsville and Columbia, farther west, are the center of small cherry furniture industry with a number of outlets in these communities. In Columbia be sure not to miss Sirius Coffee Café & Espresso Bar with handmade ceramics by Lori Sargent, a potter at Lindsey Wilson College, and homemade baked goods you can eat there or carry out. Upstairs is Arnold's Upstairs Gallery with some good landscape painting and other art work by regional artists.

Huge regional craft fairs and art festivals are held throughout the year in almost every big city or small town. These are a good place to see crafts, as well as hear mountain country music and sample mountain country cooking. Some favorites are the Kentucky Highland Folk Festival and the Jenny Wiley Pioneer Festival in Prestonsburg, the Kentucky Apple Festival in Paintsville, the Daniel Boone Festival in Barbourville, the Festival of the Mountain Masters in Harlan, the Black Gold Festival in Hazard, and the Kingdom Come Swappin' Meetin' in Cumberland. Morehead is host to three annual festivals showcasing traditional arts and crafts, including the Appalachian Festival in June, the Rowan County Harvest Festival in September, and the Christmas Appalachian Arts & Crafts Market in early December.

It's not certain when or where the first "country store" made its appearance, but Kentucky country stores come about as close to perfection as can be found for these old community mainstays. Probably for as long as settlements have sprung up, the country stores have been there to provide necessities, luxuries and social outlets. They still do today. Pull up a wooden rocking chair by an old pot-bellied stove or set a spell by a checkerboard or an ever-full coffeepot and see why country stores still survive.

Nestled between Pine and Big Black mountains, Short Stop Grocery & Grill in Eolia is the perfect place to pause for a snack, catch up on the "latest" or pick up the weekly *Mountain Eagle*. Hardware, picnic items, candles, deli sandwiches and gifts are available. It's also home to the community thrift store where shoppers can find clothes and the occasional treasure. Eolia got its lovely name from the Cherokee word meaning "Valley of the Winds."

Established in 1933, the C.B. Caudill Store & History Center in Blackey has carried mule feed, brassieres, bologna, soda pop, gasoline and plumbing supplies. And over time, thanks to hundreds of unsolicited donations from people in the area, it has become Blackey's memory bank, containing the area's history through Indian marbles and hornets' nests, cricket cages and coal miners' hats.

At Webb's Grocery in Butcher Hollow, you can enjoy a Moon Pie and RC Cola and listen to Herman Webb reminisce about growing up a little ways down the road with his

sisters, country music legend Loretta Lynn and singer Crystal Gayle. Webb even takes tours to the old homeplace he shared in the holler that was made famous in the song, book and movie, *Coal Miner's Daughter*. When he was growing up, the country store was the coal company commissary, old No. 5 General Store, where coal miners shopped for everything from shoes and medicine to hardware and groceries. As a youngster, Webb's favorite was Payday candy bars because "seems like they lasted longer than other candy."

Of course, with hundreds of antique shops through the region, just about every small town Main Street or country road is an antique lover's paradise. Shaker baskets, Depression glass, family quilts, crocks and jugs, grandfather clocks still ticking away the minutes, hand-carved chests, family heirloom jewelry, and revered rocking chairs are just some of the finds. From affordable whatnots to museum quality pieces, the Highlands and Waterways Region offers intriguing finds.

Increasingly popular are "antique malls." Nicholasville in Jessamine County has four of these multi-dealer emporiums of the old and curious. The Lancaster Antique Market in Garrard County has 20,000 square feet of showrooms. Plan to spend some time when you pull up to one of these beauties. Plan also to chat and discover the interesting history behind some of the items.

For shoppers looking for special clothing from comfortable jeans and moccasins to eveningwear and lacy shawls, there are more choices than you can shake a stick at. Whether you prefer the comfort and convenience of a major mall, the charming atmosphere of downtown shops, or the off-the-beaten path boutiques, local merchants offer something for everyone. From clothes with that big city look to charming country styles, Kentucky has a store that carries what shoppers really want. National clothiers to consignment shops, browsers can find a full line of clothing guaranteed to tempt. At vintage clothing shops, you can step into walk-in closet heaven and find everything from bell-bottoms and big collars to low-riders and psychedelic colors. Or you can choose a handmade vest, skirt or appliqued bag that wasn't churned out by a factory.

Scattered from one end of the Commonwealth to the other, farmers' markets and roadside stands are a sure bet for finding fresh fruits and vegetables, along with pleasing local products like honey, flowers and plants. You can pick up a handy state guide to the markets and roadside stands which are identified with a commemorative sign.

Markets usually get into full swing around July 4 and continue through early fall, depending on weather conditions. A hot house tomato seems tasteless compared to one of the big red or yellow beauties grown with the sunshine, rain and fertile soil of Kentucky. Mounds of pole beans, green onions, cucumbers and radishes are a picture-perfect still life. Opulent orchards also have neat sales centers for crisp apples, pumpkins, gourds and surprising taste treats like fresh baked apple turnovers, homemade ice cream, squeezed cider, caramel apples and jars of jam and jelly. Roadside markets sometimes have unexpected arts and crafts, like handsewn sunbonnets and aprons, gaily decorated birdhouses and comfortable lawn chairs, or realistic paintings of pastoral hillsides and mountain streams.

The area's most popular visitor attractions also display unusual items in their shops. Art museum jewelry, botanical treasures, science gifts and educational toys are just some of the gifts you'll find in dozens of museum and historical attractions. At Cumberland Gap National Historic Park the visitor center includes the newest outlet store of the

Southern Highland Handicraft Guild. Some of the best crafts from the mountains of eastern Kentucky as well as adjacent parts of Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia can be found here. Visitors can also browse through a large collection of books about Appalachian history and folk culture.

Mountain HomePlace in Paintsville features homemade lye soap, sorghum suckers from a local mule-driven sorghum mill, and granny's fly swatters made from the tongue of a shoe put in a split stick. Regional cookbooks also are popular items at visitor attractions.

For a delightful shopping experience, stop by one of the region's custom houseboat builders. Turning dreams into reality are such manufacturers as Somerset Custom Houseboats and Sharpe Houseboats in Somerset; Stardust Cruisers, Fantasy Custom Yachts, Sunstar Houseboats, Lakeview and Horizon Yachts in Monticello; and Jamestown, Fun Time Houseboats, Navigator Houseboats and Admiral Houseboats in Russell Springs.

You can pick out such luxuries for your houseboat as the latest electronic gizmos, a sophisticated home office tucked into a houseboat cuddy, a relaxing holographic fireplace, cedar closets, hot tubs, full-size pool table, and shuffleboard court. Even if such wish-list purchases are out of reach of your pocketbook, the friendly folks at these unusual companies are so delighted to share their exciting creations that they'll make you feel like a million just for visiting.

It's no wonder shoppers return again and again to the Highlands and Waterways Region of Kentucky. Get a paper and pen, make a shopping list of what goes together to make the perfect shopping foray, and it's all here. Slip on your comfy shoes and get ready to find everything your heart desires. Regardless of what you end up purchasing, memories of those special shopping jaunts are truly priceless.

A short list of shopping opportunities includes:

~ Lancaster Rug Hooking and Candles in Lancaster has primitive candles and rug hooking kits from tradition passed down through the family.

~ In Somerset, Chris Ramsey creates some unusual and intriguing art works at his Knothead studio. Ramsey's wooden hats, bowls and other creations show true craftsmanship and can be found in high-priced markets.

~ Cicero Glass in London features the glassblowing art of Jonathan Stokes whose whimsical pieces seem to defy the laws of physics.

~ Michael's Attic Antiques in London offers a great selection of furniture, pottery and crystal.

~ Flea Land in Laurel County has more than 300 booths in 70,000 square feet of covered area that is heated in the winter.

~ Renfro Valley in Mt. Vernon has a quaint main-street shopping village where you can enjoy an old-time soda shop and see authentic crafts. Renfro Valley specializes in both vintage and modern recordings of mountain, country, bluegrass, and country and western music, along with Christian music and literature.

~ Friendship Mountain Crafts in Williamsburg specializes in willow furniture and patchwork with demonstrations given.

~ Kentucky Hills Crafts Co-Op in Pine Knot has a wide selection of mountain crafts.

~ Old Craftsman in Columbia produces beautiful cherry reproduction furniture.

~ Appalshop in Whitesburg is the place to find audio and video recordings of mountain music and mountain artisans.

~ Pine Mountain/Letcher County Crafts Co-Op features a variety of work by more than 40 area craftspeople.

~ Sirius Coffee Café & Espresso Bar in Columbia carries gift items including teapots and other ceramic items made by a potter at nearby Lindsey Wilson College.

~ Gerald Myers, a portrait painter in Campbellsville, does genre paintings of Southern Kentucky figures.

~ Past Times Antique Mall in Corbin has 16,000 square feet of antiques and collectibles.

~ E. Martin Pottery Co. in Wilmore shows the potter at work making tableware, ornaments, lamps and other items.

~ Rebecca's Antiques in Pineville has treasures from the past as well as crafts and collectibles.

~ Red Dog and Company in London uses essentially the same chair construction techniques and workworking processes that Michael Angel's ancestors have used for generations.

~ Ceramic Cellar in Louisa offers all types of handmade ceramics and unpainted furniture.

~ Art On Main and Artrageous in downtown Irvine have baskets, woodwork, ceramics, and other crafts by local crafters.

~ Baskets & Things in London offers hand-woven traditional baskets, mixed arrangements, freeze-dried fruits, flowers and vegetables.

~ Cedar Forge in Nicholasville has traditional iron work: gates, railing, hardware and more.

~ Another Era in Edmonton carries musical instruments, harps, weavings, tartans and tapestries.

~ Evercare in Monticello has weavings, wall hangings, some ceramics.

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