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Last-minute shoppers have plenty of creative options in downtown Lancaster



KATHY DAMINGER | Staff Writer Dec 20, 2018



Debbie Serdy works on her pop culture-inspired jewelry at My Aunt Debbie, 336 N. Queen St.

This is it folks — the final weekend before Christmas.

Right now, some of you are listening to sounds of the season and sipping eggnog while leisurely finishing up the last of the wrapping.

The rest — and you procrastinators know who you are! — look like reindeer caught in the headlights.

Luckily, Lancastrians don't have far to go to find an incredible variety of handcrafted, one-of-a-kind gifts for everyone on the shopping list.

While downtown Lancaster boasts scores of shops, our recent foray focused on finding original art and crafts for gift giving.

Ten Thousand Villages

Just steps from Penn Square is the Ten Thousand Villages pop-up store, (4 W. King St.), which will be there only through the end of the month.

Everything in this 2,000-square-foot store is handmade by artisans in villages around the world.

A fair-trade pioneer, Ten Thousand Villages offers everything from tree ornaments and jewelry to pottery and glorious room-sized rugs, with price points from under \$10 to several thousand.

It's a no-brainer first stop.

Cross Keys Wood Works

Very few locals haven't stopped in to Cross Keys Coffee & Teas for a cup of joe and a little conversation with owner Jerry Keys.

After all, up until August when he closed the business, he'd been serving folks in his 34 N. Queen St. location for 35 years.

But Cross Keys is open again. This time it features Keys' woodworking, including raised pet bowls of his own design, trays, cutting boards and other items. If you stop by, you may catch him creating in his workshop toward the rear of the store.



Display in the front window of 10,000 Villages, 4 W. King St.

[Buy Now](#)



Raised double dog bowl by Jerry Keys.

[Buy Now](#)

a collection of mugs.

Art & Glassworks

Another Lancaster City mainstay is Art & Glassworks at 319 N. Queen St. The store, which has been around for decades, is a heavenly opiate for anyone enamored with sparkle and shine.

As its name implies, glass is everywhere.

From owner Karin Meacham's stained glass pieces that gleam in the shop windows to the myriad handcrafted balls, baubles, and sculptures from artisans across the continent, the glistening effect is intoxicating.

If you have a sparkle lover on your list, this place is a must see. Price points run the gamut.

P.S. Probably not the best place to take young children.

My Aunt Debbie

"After having friendships with so many customers over Cross Keys Coffee & Teas' 35-year span, it has been great to have them still come in to shop and/or just touch base," Keys says.

He drew upon his decades-long customer relationships to invite four other artisans to display and sell their works at Cross Keys Wood Works.

Visitors will find beautiful glass pieces, reclaimed metal sculptures, pottery and more. And for the coffee and tea lover —



Glass ornaments at Art & Glassworks, 319 N. Queen St.

[Buy Now](#)

The tag line on the My Aunt Debbie website (myauntdebbie.com) says “Handmade. Vintage. Happy.”

It also should add “quirky.”

Do you have someone who marches to a different beat on your list? Stop in to see Debbie Serdy’s small shop at 336 N. Queen St.



Vintage remake purse by Debbie Serdy at My Aunt Debbie, 336 N. Queen St.

[Buy Now](#)

Not only does she sell her own pop-culture inspired jewelry and vintage-inspired wearables and handbags, but she represents a variety of other makers as well.

“I like taking vintage things and turning them into something different,” she says.

Visitors often find her busy making her eclectic jewelry, but she always has time for friendly conversation.

It’s a fun stop.

Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen

Lucky for Lancaster, the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen moved its main office downtown more than a decade ago, and it expanded to its current location at 335 N. Queen St. in 2012.

Local shoppers have the unique advantage of having handcrafted wares from guild members across the state (and beyond) available to purchase at the downtown location.

The Fine Handmade Craft Store is set up like a gallery with carvings, glassware, pottery and other works displayed everywhere you look.



Carvings by S. Arthur Shoemaker at Pa. Guild of Craftsmen, 335 N. Queen St.

[Buy Now](#)

Queen St., the store has a variety of art and crafts, in addition to such things as vintage clothes, collectibles and the just plain funky.

Pottery, jewelry, woodworking and paintings were among the fine art and craft offered inside. And like so many other listings in this roundup, there are price points for every pocketbook.

So what are you waiting for, Lancaster? Get out there and get it done.

And while you're at it, have a Merry Christmas, too!



But everything is available to buy —right off the wall. And according to staff there, the inventory changes daily.

It's a great way to be assured of quality workmanship in the gifts you purchase.

Building Character

The final stop on our holiday shopping expedition was at Building Character, a huge warehouse filled with vendors of handmade, recycled and vintage wares.

Located through the archway at 342 N.



Ceramics by Joshua Hemschel at Building Character, 342 Rear N. Queen St.

[Buy Now](#)

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