

insider's guide

# THE THRILL OF THE HUNT

## SHOPPING VINTAGE IS ALL ABOUT KNOWING THE 65 BEST PLACES TO GO AND WHEN TO STRIKE.

The most envied homes and wardrobes feel as though they've been assembled over time. Often, they have. But it's also possible to create a layered, one-of-a-kind look by taking advantage of the Twin Cities' many standout antique and vintage stores. No one knows that better than designer, TV personality, and avid collector Nate Berkus, whose latest book is *The Things That Matter*. Some of the TC native's favorite things are little treasures he collected as a boy, hunting through antique stores in Hopkins and Stillwater. His design and shopping philosophy can be summed up like this: "If your mother gave you a teapot, it should sit out. If she didn't, you should get one." We hunted down the best spots to do just that.

BY ALLISON KAPLAN AND JENNIFER BLAISE KRAMER

### the experts

When it comes to finding vintage gems and decorating with them, these locals know their stuff.



ROBB WHITTLEF

Robb Whittlef, a former HGTV host, runs HISTORIC studio, a Minneapolis-based design firm. His showroom is filled with century-spanning furnishings and art from around the world. He also designs products and looks for Restoration Hardware.



DENNY KEMP

Denny Kemp has been an avid collector since he was a kid in Iowa, tagging along to antiques sales with his aunt. The owner of Denny Kemp Salon Spa says he has been addicted to objects of every time period. Recently, he swapped Empire and French for midcentury modern.



KI NASSAUER

Ki Nassauer is a nationally recognized collector, retailer, author, entrepreneur, and authority on repurposing junk. The founder of Junk Bonanza and editor-in-chief of *Flea Market Style* magazine, she's launching FleaQuest.com this month. It's a guide to the best flea markets, antiques shops, and sales nationwide.



JIM NOBLE

Jim Noble, owner of Minneapolis-based Noble Interiors, draws from 20 years of expertise in the design business, including work at Holly Hunt showroom. Antiques and "older pieces with patina" are a staple in his distinctive interiors.



GWEN LEEDS

Gwen Leeds is a respected fashion stylist who has worked in movies and magazines and with A-listers on both coasts. She showcases vintage fashion collected from all over the world, and mixes old with new, at Guild Collective in St. Louis Park.

VINTAGE



trend  
CAROUSEL  
HORSES



FINDFURNISH

Marie Zellar and Brian Wilcox have been finding, restoring, and selling vintage furnishings for more than a decade. They recently moved to a new storefront, which they stage each week with the latest finds, from Danish dining chairs and teak tables to art deco-style sofas. Looking for something not on the showroom floor? Give them a budget and a time line, and they'll track it down. 13 NE 5TH ST., MPLS., 612-730-3389. [findfurnish.com](http://findfurnish.com)

**VINTAGE** The word "vintage" has become so ubiquitous that it can be tough to discern the really good resources. Both by time period, and attitude, we tend to think of this category as less formal and sometimes quirkier than traditional antiques. We have our standby sellers, but also an ever-growing list of new must-shop stores.

ANTIQUIFIED

You know you're in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District when you spot the distinctly southwestern stone building affectionately referred to by neighbors as the Alamo. This single-owner shop, filled with collectibles, art, and plenty of small treasures, is a trip through American history, and it's one of the only places in town to find black Americana. 1519 CENTRAL AVE. NE, MPLS., 612-789-1989. [antiquified.com](http://antiquified.com)

CLASSIC RETRO AT PETE'S

Danish modern furniture, 20th-century decorative art, and home accents from the art deco period are just a few of the treasures hidden in this fun and funky St. Paul shop. 2145 UNIVERSITY AVE. W., ST. PAUL, 651-224-5235. [facebook.com](http://facebook.com)

**DENNY KEMP** goes for interesting glass objects and odd pieces at Pete's.

The showroom at Danish Teak is lovely, but don't quit there. "The lower level is really where you find things," says DENNY KEMP.

DANISH TEAK CLASSICS

They were restoring midcentury Scandinavian furniture long before it became cool to do so. This is one of the Twin Cities' premiere resources for upscale vintage modern furniture, lighting, and ceramics. 1500 NE JACKSON ST., STE. 277, MPLS., 612-362-7870. [danishteakclassics.com](http://danishteakclassics.com)

GUILD COLLECTIVE

This collaborative of stylists, designers, and retailers has become a hotbed for unique and chic shopping. Not everything is old, but vintage fashion and furniture are a highlight. With experienced stylists such as Gwen Leeds running the store alongside owner Pamela Mondale, you get top-notch merchandise as well as keen design advice. 4414 EXCELSIOR BLVD., ST. LOUIS PARK, 952-378-1815. [guildcollective.wordpress.com](http://guildcollective.wordpress.com)



**trend**  
CLASSIC  
AMERICAN  
BRANDS

MidNorth Mercantile

ESTATE SALES

When antiques dealers aren't at their stores, they're often scouring estate sales for treasures they can turn around and mark up for resale. At an estate sale, everything must go—quickly—so it's often the place to find the best deals on valuable furniture, décor, vintage fashion, and more. Estate sales are like time capsules—the trick is to find the era that fits your style. Because they shop so much, our panel of pros tends to get tipped off when a good sale is coming up. You can be a part of that club, too. "The reality is that if you are a consistent buyer, the people that run the sales will reach out to you," Robb Whittlef says. Here's more expert advice:

① **Know your neighborhoods.** Go to sales in areas that mirror your taste—Golden Valley for midcentury, Edina for traditional, north Minneapolis for urban vintage. For *Downton Abbey* fans who desire Edwardian opulence, Whittlef points to Kenwood, Summit Avenue in St. Paul, and Wayzata's Ferndale Road/Fox Street area.

② **Follow estate companies.** Dennis Hagen ([dennishagenestatesales.com](http://dennishagenestatesales.com)) has been known to conduct sales for some of the more prominent families in town. H&B ([handbgallery.com](http://handbgallery.com)) has a reputation for good sales, and Willmatt Hill ([willmatthill.com](http://willmatthill.com)) is another good resource. Scanning the newspaper for sales is a weekly ritual

for Gwen Leeds, who also subscribes to mailing lists for local auction and estate companies, which notify her when a sale is coming up. At [estatesales.net](http://estatesales.net), you can narrow your search by city and view pictures of featured items for sale.

③ **Timing is everything.** Go early or don't bother. That's generally the strategy of serious shoppers like Denny Kemp. But Whittlef suggests shopping late for big pieces, which sometimes do not sell as quickly as the items that fit in your trunk. As closing time approaches, you might be able to negotiate a lower price.

④ **Know the system.** At big sales, numbers are handed out to potential buyers an hour before start. But dealers and early-birds adhere to a pre-numbering system that determines the order of the line to get those "official" numbers. The first one to arrive posts the pre-numbers on his or her driver's side window, and takes No. 1. To get in line, find that car, take your number, and return to your car to wait. No driving away. If you leave, you lose your place.

⑤ **Strategize.** Leeds is always on the prowl for vintage fashion, so she heads directly to the bedrooms at an estate sale. Next step: She finds a spot with good lighting where she can give garments a quick but thorough inspection before buying. The thing about estate sales: There are no returns.

CLASSIC PLEASURES NEVER DIE. THEY JUST END UP SITTING IN COOL LITTLE STORES, WAITING FOR YOU TO FIND THEM.

**vinyl**



ECLIPSE RECORDS

Hymie's, Cheapo, and Electric Fetus may have larger collections, but vinyl hunters in the know make regular trips to Eclipse Records in St. Paul. There, an eclectic, ever-evolving selection of classic and indie rock, R&B, jazz, blues, and new vinyl awaits in a store that's just the right size for an hour or two of intense browsing. 381 N. Wabasha St., St. Paul, 651-224-2500, [eclipse651.com](http://eclipse651.com)

**video games**



CEDAR CLIFF COLLECTIBLES

Eager to fire up an old console and reminisce with some Blaster Master or Castlevania, or maybe go way back and dig into a little Zaxxon? There's no guarantee you'll find them at Cedar Cliff, but you're bound to find something worth trying in this extensive selection of vintage video games for the storied consoles of yore. It has comics, cards, toys, graphic novels, and more. 1960 Cliff Lake Rd., Eagan, 651-454-3400, [cedarcliffcollectibles.com](http://cedarcliffcollectibles.com)

**comics**



COMIC BOOK COLLEGE

If you're serious about collecting comics—that is, really serious—you need to graduate to Comic Book College, where you'll find thousands of issues of every comic imaginable from every publisher who ever inked a superhero. New comics arrive every Wednesday, and if you're into new comics, it has those, too. 3145 Hennepin Ave. S., Mpls., 612-822-2309, [comicbookcollege.com](http://comicbookcollege.com)

—Tod Simons

PHOTO COURTESY OF MIDNORTH MERCANTILE

ANTIQUES



**ANTIQUES** How do you know something's antique? The simple rule is that it's at least a century old. This "100-year rule" appeals to collectors who are searching for pieces from around the world that will hold value and appreciation, rather than shopping for repurposed furniture and accessories from recent decades. Great antiques can be found anywhere from grand galleries to estate sales to seasonal shows. The key is to find a good source and a good dealer who can tell you the story of the piece. Lucky for us, we have plenty of those around here.

**ABIGAIL PAGE ANTIQUES**

Stillwater gets all the attention, but across the St. Croix River in Hudson, this two-story mall in the historic Taylor and Gross building is worth a visit. Nearly 20 dealers sell primitive and rustic furniture, retro décor, pottery, and much more—with old-fashioned country charm. 503 2ND ST., HUDSON, WIS., 715-381-1505. [abigailpageantiques.com](http://abigailpageantiques.com)

**ANTIQUE MANOR**

"Packed" is an adjective that comes up frequently when describing antiques stores. Here, it's an understatement. There's just enough room to enter the International Market Square showroom, which sells to the public. Follow the narrow path to discover a fantastic array of fixtures, furnishings, and accents, from period to midcentury modern. 275 MARKET ST., STE. 319, MPLS., 612-333-1685, [facebook.com/antiquemanor](https://www.facebook.com/antiquemanor)

**ANTIQUES BEL AIR**

As much as we love the retail evolution in the North Loop, we miss Antiques Riverwalk. Good news: Many of its top vendors have reunited in Hopkins, where the parking is easy. A popular resource for the trade, Bel Air features 22 upscale dealers selling furniture, art, jewelry, silver, glass, period pieces, and lighting from Residential Relics. 152 BLAKE RD. N., HOPKINS, 952-935-1771, [antiquesbelair.com](http://antiquesbelair.com)

**ANTHONY SCORNAVACCO ANTIQUES**

From the owner of H&B Gallery, this new store in the former Nakashian-O'Neil space showcases Tony Scornavacco's personal collection of 18th- and 19th-century antiques. The dramatic two-level storefront in the historic Hamm Building is a perfect backdrop for the fine art, furnishings, chandeliers, silver, and more. 23 W. 6TH ST., ST. PAUL, 651-222-0046, [anthonyscornavacco.com](http://anthonyscornavacco.com)

"If you are on a search for a particular item, broaden the definition of the item," says JIM NOBLE. "If you want a great unusual wastebasket, don't look for a wastebasket—look for a jardinière or tole painted storage box. If you want to find a pair of great lamps, look for two vases and have them made into lamps."



PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE COLGAN

**CLAIRE STEYAERT ANTIQUES**

To collectors and dealers on the coasts, she's a secret source for fine antiques. We've been enchanted by Claire Steyaert's impeccable taste since her earliest days at Antiques Riverwalk. Her store above Art & Architecture is filled—never cluttered—with a broad range of furniture, lighting, art, and décor from the 1850s to more contemporary treasures. 3338 UNIVERSITY AVE. SE, MPLS., 612-339-7396, [clairesantiques.com](http://clairesantiques.com)

**CHELSEA ROSE ANTIQUES**

Even Stillwater's antiques dealers rave about this 15-year-old gem, just a quick trip down Highway 95 in the historic Afton House Hotel. The owners are particular about their small space, furnishing it with a mix of English and French furniture, décor, and estate jewelry. Call before making the trip—hours vary. 3291 ST. CROIX TR. S., AFTON, 651-436-6812

**C.W. SMITH COLLECTION**

Considered the grande dame of Asian—and colonial—antiques importers, C.W. Smith features pieces mainly from the late 17th to 19th centuries from China, Thailand, Morocco, and India. 4388 FRANCE AVE. S., EDINA, 952-922-8542, [cwsmithinc.com](http://cwsmithinc.com)

POP-UPS  
&  
EVENTS

SOME OF THE BEST LOCAL VINTAGE RESOURCES DON'T HAVE REGULAR HOURS OR EVEN A PERMANENT STREET ADDRESS. HERE'S HOW TO FIND THESE ONLINE AND OCCASIONAL SHOPS.

**trend  
BARN  
DOORS**

**SHOP 501**

"I'm so excited for the opening of Shop 501—an awesome collaboration by talented vintage lovers," says Ki Nassauer. This new occasional store brings together dealers including Mustard Moon and Petunia's. Their next sale is May 16-18. 501 N. Chestnut St., Chaska, 612-991-0625, [facebook.com/shop501](https://facebook.com/shop501)

**trend  
RIVETED  
SOFAS**

**OMFORME  
DESIGN**

Carter Averbeck loves transforming discarded objects into something funky and fresh. Think hot pink upholstery on French provincial armchairs, or a graphic design painted on a midcentury dresser. Shop the one-of-a-kind collection online and watch for news about a spring pop-up shop in Minneapolis. 855-663-6763, [omformedesign.com](http://omformedesign.com)

**trend  
NEOCLASSIC  
FURNITURE**

**trend  
VINTAGE  
ENAMEL-  
WARE**

**GOLDEN AGE  
DESIGN**

This Minneapolis husband-and-wife team finds and restores midcentury and Danish modern furnishings. See their latest on Facebook and Twitter, and make an appointment to buy. 612-408-6896, [facebook.com/goldenagedesign](https://facebook.com/goldenagedesign)

**HAUPT  
ANTIQUARIAN  
MARKET**

After years of selling European flea market finds out of her garage, Debbie Haupt opened a store, which has grown exponentially and moved a couple of times in the past 10 years. Now settled in Apple Valley, the market features other vendors who work together to set antiques to a different theme every month. This month is Vintage Garden, May 16-19. 7570 W. 147th St., Apple Valley, 651-329-3871, [hauptantiek.com](http://hauptantiek.com)

**trend  
TEAK  
ACCENTS**

**RETRO REHAB**

The Golden Valley-based dealer actually asked not to be mentioned here—for fear of appearing too mainstream. That just made us more eager to share the hipster resource for midcentury furnishings. Follow its daily product posts on Facebook and call or text to order. 612-239-6453, [facebook.com/retrorehabmpls](https://facebook.com/retrorehabmpls)

**trend  
EXOTIC  
ANIMAL  
PRINTS**

**EDITOR'S PICK: RETRORAMA**

Hosted by the Minnesota History Center, Retrorama is a great excuse to show off your favorite vintage dress (and bag!). The evening includes a vintage fashion show, cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and shopping.

May 17. 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, 651-259-3000, [minnesotahistorycenter.org](http://minnesotahistorycenter.org)

**trend  
BRIGHT  
COLORS**



Vintage Pins from the Pros! Check out our guest pinners at [pinterest.com/mspmag](https://pinterest.com/mspmag)

SALVAGE



Architectural Antiques

**SALVAGE** Nate Berkus and HGTV's Genevieve Gorder have shopped far and wide, but the star interior designers always return to their hometown for architectural relics. Some of the best salvage resources in the country are located in the Twin Cities. That tin ceiling panel, brass door knob, or old marble column could be the element that adds character to your space, often at a price much lower than it would cost to buy new. Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty—the best stuff isn't always in view.

When NATE was hunting for an antique mantel for his bedroom fireplace, he found it online, from Architectural Antiques in Minneapolis. Berkus says the marble piece, originally from a Summit Avenue mansion, is easily the nicest of the three salvaged mantels in his home, and it cost half as much and the ones he purchased in New York (shipping included).

HGTV host Genevieve Gorder says Architectural Antiques is "hands down, the best salvage store in the country."

**ARCHITECTURAL ANTIQUES**

The original Twin Cities salvage shop. Come here for bigger, more unusual items, as well as the standard salvage fare. Owner Scott Anderson travels around the country looking for original, high-quality, unique finds. Browsing is half the thrill—Anderson's deft merchandising of misfit objects has elevated this warehouse to a space where hipsters love to put on parties. 1330 NE QUINCY ST., MPLS., 612-332-8344, [archantiques.com](http://archantiques.com)

**ART & ARCHITECTURE**

In a high-profile location along a bustling thoroughfare, this shop boasts many windows and natural light that let the merchandise really shine. Find hardware, lighting, windows, doors, and more. Cupcake, a funky coffee shop next door, adds to the experience. And be sure to go upstairs for Claire Steyaert Antiques and Spinario Design. 3338 UNIVERSITY AVE. SE, MPLS., 612-904-1776, [artandarc.com](http://artandarc.com)

**BAUER BROTHERS SALVAGE**

From windows and fireplaces to kitchen supplies and furniture, this 40-year-old business has thousands of items in its 93,000-square-foot salvage shop. It's not heated so best to go in summer. 2432 N. 2ND ST., MPLS., 612-521-9492, [bauerbrotherssalvage.com](http://bauerbrotherssalvage.com)

**CITY SALVAGE**

The guys here mix antiques from around the country with the usual suspects in this two-story salvage haven. Discover an eclectic collection of fine architectural antiques, including stained glass, custom bars, millwork, and chandeliers. 507 1ST AVE. NE, MPLS., 612-627-9107, [citysalvage.com](http://citysalvage.com)

**GUILDED SALVAGE ANTIQUES**

At this off-the-beaten-path mom-and-pop, peruse the well-organized salvage inventory that includes lighting, kitchen cabinets and hardware, and a fun assortment of other items. 4430 LYNDALE AVE. N., MPLS., 612-789-1680, [guildedsalvage.com](http://guildedsalvage.com)

PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE COLGAN

