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From the Nov 2021 issue

TOPIC: TRAVEL

49 New England Craft Fairs & Artisan Galleries for the **Best Handcrafted Holiday Gifts** A festive sampler of craft fairs and artisan galleries for one-of-a-kind gifts.

Yankee Magazine · October 28, 2021 · 1 Comment

*** **4.60** avg. rating (88% score) - 5 votes

Bestowing a present made locally, and especially anything made by hand, is like

giving two gifts in one. It expresses both love for the giftee and support for the artists, crafters, and small businesses that help make New England so vibrant. Here, we've rounded up some favorite ideas for finding a gift as unique as the person it's meant for.

On the hunt for treasures at Maine Craft Portland. Courtesy of Maine Crafts Association

49 New England Craft Fairs & Artisan Galleries for the Best Handcrafted **Holiday Gifts**

 \forall = Shop or institution \diamond = Event

sense of place. *ctriverartisans.org*

CONNECTICUT ♥ 100 Main, Falls Village. If you love famed interior designer Bunny Williams's aesthetic, you'll fall hard for her luxury-level artisan gallery and its perfectly displayed furnishings, wall art, giftware, and fashions. She's transformed a grocery

NOTE: Since some businesses and event organizers may adjust their operations in light of Covid

concerns, please contact them or check online for updated information before making travel plans.

store in this Hallmark-movie village into a decor destination that will inspire your own holiday wish list. 100mainst.com ♥ Connecticut River Artisans, Essex. Connecticut's oldest continuously operating

artist cooperative is an exclusive showcase for Nutmeg Staters, many of whom employ area resources—woods, beeswax, oyster shells—to create gifts with a true

▼ Farmington Valley Arts Center, *Avon.* A 19th-century explosives factory is now home to 20 dynamite local artists and artisans, whose studios are open by appointment or chance, as well as during open studio events. The on-site Fisher Gift Gallery keeps regular hours and reps diverse regional creators, with a focus on finely made pieces at giftable price points. artsfvac.org

♥ Gallery 53, *Meriden*. Teddy Roosevelt was president and "Silver City" Meriden was

a hub of industrial design when this enduring arts organization originated. Park free across the street, and step into the Romanesque-Revival building that houses its everevolving gallery and gift shop, filled with thoughtfully curated handworks from across the region. *gallery53.org* ♥ Guilford Art Center, Guilford. A premier spot for American-made artisan wares year-round, the shop at this multifaceted center doubles in size for the holidays. Art

glass and jewelry sparkle; hand-stuffed plush animals practically beg to be tucked

into stockings. Works by some 200 juried makers ensure you'll score treasures for

◆ New England Christmas Festival, *Mohegan Sun, Uncasville.* Bring your biggest

everyone—naughty or nice. guilfordartcenter.org

and international talents. wesleyanpotters.com

season; start date TBA. centralmaineclayartists.org

makers at their two galleries. islandartisans.com

alumni, faculty, and staff. 11/19–12/10. meca.edu/holiday-sale

your holiday shopping list. *mainepottersmarket.com*

by BIPOC makers. *mainecrafts.org*

shopping bag. As you wander this wonderland of 300 mini shops touting handmade gifts and gourmet foods, you'll pick up a bounty of presents to gift-wrap, plus everything you need to deck your own halls. 11/5–11/7. nechristmasfestival.com ♥ Wesleyan Potters, Middletown. Just as a zoo stirs wonderment at the sheer variety of creation, the Gallery Shop at this seven-decade-old artists' guild surprises with its wildly eclectic mix of ceramics, jewelry, handwoven gifts, and more. You'll see fresh

works by some of Connecticut's most accomplished artisans, plus regional, national,

♥ **Archipelago**, *Rockland*. Whether crafting felted sand dollar ornaments or carving intricate oyster platters, Maine's artisans are a creative lot. This shop, associated with the nonprofit Island Institute, gathers the work of 300-plus artists and makers from the state's islands and coastal communities. thearchipelago.net ◆ **Designing Women Craft Shows,** *Freeport and Portland.* A nonprofit bridging art and community, Designing Women celebrates New England's women artists while

also working with organizations that benefit local women and girls. Its holiday shows

offer both heirloom crafts as well as smaller, more affordable gifts and decor across a range of materials: glass, metal, fiber, pottery, and more. 11/20, Freeport; 12/11, Portland. designingwomen.org

MAINE

◆ Holiday Pottery Shop, *Gardiner*. Hosted again this year by the artisan-leaning gift shop Monkitree, the annual Holiday Pottery Shop is a magnet for fans of the Kennebec County–based Central Maine Clay Artists and their work. Browse elegant platters perfect for company and sturdy, pretty mugs meant for everyday, and maybe meet one of the local folks who bring them to life. Runs throughout the holiday

♥ Island Artisans, Bar Harbor and Northeast Harbor. Embossed paper art, handspun

glass work, artisan-crafted kids' clothes—and that's just what Island Artisans' owners

♥ Lisa-Marie's Made in Maine, Bath and Portland. Launched in Bath in 2003, Lisa-

in Portland—plenty of room for its inventory of souvenirs, foods, and crafts made

Marie's now occupies four storefronts in its hometown and also has a second location

and hand-dyed yarn, one-of-a-kind clocks, wearable fiber art, regionally inspired

make. They also provide a showcase for more than 100 other Maine artists and

exclusively in Maine and representing 400-plus artisans and small businesses. lisamariesmadeinmaine.com ◆ Maine College of Art & Design Holiday Sale, *online*. Browse for unique and unexpected arts and crafts at this cult-favorite shopping experience, which—as it was last year—has been reimagined as a virtual event in 2021. Hosted annually by the state's oldest arts school since at least the 1980s, it features juried work by students,

♥ Maine Crafts Association Galleries, Portland and West Gardiner. Dedicated to

advocacy and professional development for the state's craft artists, the Maine Crafts

Maine Craft Portland, and the Center for Maine Craft—as well as in its online store,

Association puts Pine Tree State talents in the spotlight at two robust retail galleries—

Shop Maine Craft, which lets you search not only for specific media but also for work

♥ Maine Potters Market, Portland. From the whimsical painted stoneware of Robbi

Portela to the mesmerizing organic shapes of Barbara Walch's pinch pots, the 14

Maine pottery pros at this co-op have an array of creative options for wrapping up

◆ United Maine Craftsmen Shows, Augusta, Brewer, and Portland. For crafts fans, a

UMC show is a don't-miss proposition. The state's largest nonprofit craft organization

has been putting on shows for 50 years, and today it boasts a deep selection of highquality handcrafted gifts and stocking stuffers from juried Maine artisans. Augusta Arts & Crafts Show, 11/13–11/14; Thanksgiving Arts & Crafts Show (Brewer), 11/26– 11/27; Holiday Arts & Crafts Show (Portland), 12/4–12/5. unitedmainecraftsmen.com **MASSACHUSETTS**

◆ Castleberry Fairs & Festivals, Worcester, Topsfield, Wilmington, and Hanover.

Castleberry's juried art and craft fairs are some of the best-attended in New England. For the holiday season, its efforts are focused on Massachusetts, where four events including the 26th annual, 250-vendor Castleberry Faire in Wilmington make holiday shopping less of a chore and more of an adventure. 11/6–11/7, Worcester; 11/12–11/14, Topsfield; 11/26–11/28, Wilmington; 12/4–12/5, Hanover. castleberryfairs.com ◆ CraftBoston Holiday, online. The Society of Arts & Crafts was founded in 1897, the

first American organization of its kind, which in turn organized the first formal crafts

exhibition on these shores. Now, more than 100 years later, it's still running our region's granddaddy holiday event—though this year, as in 2020, the browsing and buying of top-tier, giftable handcrafts will happen online. 11/12–1/30. societyofcrafts.org

◆ FRUITLANDS HOLIDAY ARTISAN MARKET, Harvard. Quality juried crafts,

museum exhibits, and gorgeous views are among the lures for this festive event at

Fruitlands Museum, a 210-acre Trustees property that includes the nation's first Shaker museum, a Native American museum, and an art museum. One price covers both the market and museum admission, so bring the family and make a day of it. Pre-registration strongly recommended. 12/4–12/5. thetrustees.org • Old Deerfield Holiday Sampler, West Springfield. More than 240 local and national artists make for a merry showcase of traditional crafts and holiday

decorations—carved Santas, ornaments, candles, and so on. Be sure to present your

parking receipt at the information booth to receive BOGO admission to 2022's Spring

◆ Paradise City Arts Festival, Marlborough. It's a visual feast when 175 best-in-class

artisans converge for this annual kickoff to the holiday treasure-hunting season. It

furnishings, and fine art with such imaginative style, you won't see work like theirs

takes more than talent to earn a spot among them: These folks create fashions,

Sampler. 11/20–11/21. deerfield-craft.org

hours of buy-local bliss. sawmillriverarts.com

duplicated. 11/19–11/21. festivals.paradisecityarts.com **♥ Salmon Falls Gallery**, *Shelburne Falls*. The walls, shelves, and pedestals in this sprawling, barnlike gallery routinely sport new work by close to 100 artisans—all living and working within a 50-mile radius, including Shelburne Falls' own glass artist extraordinaire, Josh Simpson. salmonfallsgallery.com ♥ Sawmill River Arts, Montague. "Local" is the watchword at this winsome little co-

op, whose 15 members and 18 guest artisans hail exclusively from Western Mass. The

other draw is its location, in the picturesque Montague Bookmill, home to one of the

state's best used-book shops. Throw in the indie record store Turn It Up!, and enjoy

◆ Snow Farm Annual Seconds Sale, Williamsburg. A major fund-raiser for this

school of traditional crafts, the highly anticipated "seconds" sale invites savvy shoppers to adopt those slight misfits, artist oopses, and abandoned experiments that are part of the artistic process and still—to the untrained eye or even to the discriminating one—as worthy as "firsts" (which will also be featured in the sale). Fridays–Sundays 11/12–11/28. snowfarm.org

• **SOWA WINTER FESTIVAL**, *Boston*. Discover a trove of handmade treasures in

food vendors gather at the SoWa Power Station to help holiday shoppers fill their

for the partaking. 12/3–12/12. sowaboston.com/sowa-winter-festival

SoWa, the city's arts and design district, as 100 of the region's makers and specialty-

bags. Food, winter cocktails, and seasonal craft brews and wines are also available

♥◆ Western Avenue STUDIOS, *Lowell.* A sterling example of how New England's industrial past can incubate its creative future, this old mill building is now the bustling domain of more than 350 artists and makers. Come see what they're up to during the **Holiday Art Market** shopping event (12/4 and 12/11), or swing by the year-round Loading Dock Gallery and browse its stock of jewelry, prints, pottery, and more. westernavenuestudios.com

♥◆ Worcester Center for Crafts, *Worcester.* Yes, you can buy artisan-quality,

community-based arts organization seeks out emerging and established ceramic,

and definite splurges. And mark your calendar for the center's annual **Holiday**

fiber, paper, wood, and jewelry artists whose work includes both affordable pieces

Festival of Crafts (11/26–11/28), which brings together an estimated 60 artisans with

American-made gifts for less than \$50. The Gallery Store at this nonprofit,

an enthusiastic audience of buyers. worcestercraftcenter.org

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Exeter Fine Crafts, *Exeter.* For more than half a century, this nonprofit organization has been working to keep traditional handcrafted art a visible and vital part of the community. Visit its retail gallery in the heart of downtown Exeter to peruse wares from northern New England artists, such as the richly textured pottery of Massachusetts's Roger Cramer and the graceful beach-stone jewelry of New Hampshire's Blair LaBella. exeterfinecrafts.com ◆ Great New England Craft & Artisan Shows, *Hampton and Milford*. Door prizes,

demos, and live music are further enticements to browse these two holiday shows

filled with artisan foods, candles, soaps, jewelry, metal art, and everything else to

Shopping Extravaganza, 12/10–12/11 (Milford). gnecraftartisanshows.com

♥ League of N.H. Craftsmen Galleries, *Center Sandwich, Concord, Hooksett,*

help fill up Santa's gift bag. Holiday Craft & Artisan Show, 11/20 (Hampton); Holiday

Littleton, Meredith, Nashua, and North Conway. Famed for its annual summer fair,

League of N.H. Craftsmen puts a mind-boggling array of creations from its 700-plus

White Mountains to the Merrimack Valley, as well as in its online store. nhcrafts.org

members on display year-round at a collection of retail galleries that sprawl from the

which is one of the nation's oldest craft fairs and draws some 25,000 visitors, the

• Seacoast Artisans Holiday Fine Arts & Craft Show, North Hampton. This 22nd annual yuletide showcase not only delivers a range of locally made art, fashion, and home decor but also teams up with Meals 4 Kids, a program run by the hunger ... relief nonprofit Gather to help feed youngsters around the Seacoast. 11/20. seacoastartisansshows.com • Silver Bells Craft Fair & Holly Jolly Craft Fair, Tilton and Nashua. Stocked with a merry mix of crafts and products from New England and beyond, and with lots of

affordable treasures to find, these shows mark the annual year-end wrap-up for

11/6–11/7, Tilton; 12/11, Nashua. joycescraftshows.com

RHODE ISLAND

artprovidenceshow.com

Pawtucket. fieldofartisans.com

pop-ups. rilatinoarts.org

VERMONT

vtartisansgallery.com

collective-theartofcraft.com

veteran New Hampshire craft show producer Joyce Endee's busy calendar of events.

◆ Art Providence Show, Providence. When only ingeniously designed, one-of-a-kind

• Field of Artisans, South Kingstown and Pawtucket. From its wide-ranging lineup of

500 New England makers, Field of Artisans curates holiday pop-ups that are eclectic

Kingstown shows are at Whalers Brewing, and Pawtucket shows are at The Guild, so

you can sip a pint as you browse. Sundays 11/21–12/19, South Kingstown; 12/4–12/5,

◆ Foundry Artists Association Holiday Show, Pawtucket. For nearly four decades,

this show and silent auction has tapped an impressive roster of artisans for its wares

—paintings, photos, jewelry, leather goods, woodcrafts, and more. Of course, it helps

to have all those RISD grads in your backyard. 12/2–12/5 and 12/10–12/12.

gifts will do, spend a fall weekend buying direct from New England's top artisans.

Intensely juried, this high-end marketplace features about 150 booths that will

inspire you to reconsider how you adorn your home, life, and self. 11/12–12/14.

and fun, with handmade gifts for the hard-to-please at all price points. South

foundryshow.com ♥ Harbor View Artisans, Wickford. There's always a creator behind the counter at this harborside co-op gallery, and meeting the person behind the work—be it a local potter, painter, woodworker, or silversmith—adds meaning to gift-giving. Support 20plus artisans, whose leap of faith in spring 2021 brought this coastal-chic shop to life. Facebook

♥ La Galería del Pueblo, Central Falls. Members of Rhode Island Latino Arts'

network of artists show their work inside this 1900 colonial house turned cultural

shop for jewelry, hand-embroidered clothing, and art at La Tiendita @ La Galería

and fair-trade makers include organic clothing, beeswax candles, stained glass,

framed art, and leather journals. *millscreekmarket.com*

Proceeds help keep the fires burning. 11/27. waterfire.org

flower to brighter-than-life canvases of the Vermont countryside.

hub. During the holidays, support Latinx makers who live in Rhode Island when you

♥ Mills Creek Natural Market, Charlestown. A charming post-and-beam barn is the

backdrop for this eco-inflected gift shop, whose unique wares by 150-plus local artists

♥ **Ohanga**, *Newport and Cranston*. Originally a digital platform for connecting Rhode

Island creatives with a community of fans, Ohanga opened its first physical location in May 2021 in Newport's Brick Market Place, followed by a seasonal pop-up this fall at Cranston's Garden City Center. Head to these one-stop destinations for handmadein-RI jewelry, textiles, ceramics, charcuterie boards, and wall art large and small. ohanga.com ◆ WaterFire Arts Center Indoor Holiday ArtMart, *Providence*. Spend Small

Business Saturday at this arts bazaar, where the array of handcrafted offerings is

testament to the capital city's love and support for all things creative. The WaterFire

Store is open, too, for souvenirs celebrating Providence's signature art installation:

♥ Artisans' Gallery, Waitsfield. Set in an 1830s storefront in historic Waitsfield

everything from hand-built ceramic birdhouses to collages of pressed leaves and

Village, this cheery artists' co-op represents 150-plus Vermonters whose work spans

♥ ArtisanS Hand, Montpelier. Founded in 1978, this nationally recognized craft center fills its walls and shelves with wares from more than 140 artisans, including Vermont landscape photos and prints, bowls and cutting boards made from locally harvested wood, and jewelry set with Lake Champlain beach stones. artisanshand.com ♥ Collective-The Art of Craft, Woodstock. Still run by many of the same artists who launched it in 2006—including founder Marcia Hammond, an acclaimed fiber artist

and painter—Collective keeps its lineup fresh with a rotating guest-artist program,

♥ Frog Hollow Vermont Craft Gallery, Burlington. Designated as the nation's first

state craft center in 1975, Frog Hollow exhibits the work of more than 200 Green

Mountain State artisans on a rotating basis and ranks as one of Vermont's largest

arts and crafts for sale, it also hosts artist demonstrations, lectures, and regular

nonprofit arts institutions. In addition to offering an endless array of locally created

while its setting, a picturesque 19th-century stone building, invites lingering.

curated shows. *froghollow.org* ♥ Gallery at the VAULT, Springfield. With "VAULT" standing for "Visual Art Using Local Talent," this nonprofit gallery in Springfield's historic 1908 Victorian Bank Block helped breathe new life into downtown when it opened back in 2001. Two decades on, it hums with the color and beauty of blown glass, origami, painted scarves, pottery, and more, all made by 160 local and regional artisans. galleryvault.org

▼ Northeast Kingdom Artisans Guild, *St. Johnsbury.* Stop into this homegrown

gallery, originally christened Kingdom Handi-Works, and you can expect to be

greeted and assisted by one of the friendly artists who help run it. Wood, fiber,

the nation's oldest continuous craft tour invites the public into the studios of

made by Vermont creatives. *nekartisansguild.com*

vermonthandcrafters.com

glass, iron, pottery, jewelry, fine art, paper, and photography are all here, and all are

• Putney Craft Tour, Putney. Now well into its fifth decade, the event renowned as

southern Vermont artisans practicing everything from glassblowing to woodworking

to oil painting. A portion of tour sales is designated to support the Putney Foodshelf. 11/26–11/28. putneycrafts.com ◆ Southern Vermont Arts Center Holiday Market, Manchester. On the hunt for handmade local gifts this season? Check out the SVAC's special shopping event spotlighting artisans and vendors from around the region. 12/4–12/5. svac.org ◆ Vermont Hand Crafters Fine Craft & Art Show, online. The state's oldest and largest juried craft organization takes its holiday-season spectacular online again this

year, letting you shop for handwoven shawls and scarves, nature-inspired art quilts,

terrariums, and more directly from the artists and crafters. Plus: studio

demonstrations, live video chats, and a chance to win prizes. 11/20–11/21.

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maine, maine artists, massachusetts, metal, mountains, new england, new england

Thank you for mentioning Farmington Valley Art Center! Many talented artist DO

craft fairs, new hampshire, newport, open studio, park, Pawtucket, portland,

mountains, vermont, wall art, white mountains, winter.

have studios within this historic charming old factory!

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Providence, rhode island, shopping, southern vermont, thanksgiving, the white

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