

ONE-OF-A-KIND

Putnam's plethora of unique shops | BY WILLIAM GUILLE

NAYSAYERS WILL STATE that “there’s no place to shop in Putnam County,” but a short hop from chain stores and “big-box” outlets you’ll find a variety of smaller-scale speciality shops and boutiques offering one-of-a-kind products and services for suburban families *and* the homes they live in.

As the following examples will reveal, a veritable cornucopia of opportunities awaits the eager savvy shopper.

At a friendly, old-time lumber yard in Mahopac (**Mahopac Railroad Tie**) you’ll find railroad ties to enclose that “raised herb garden” you’ve always wanted to build. And nearby, there’s a blacksmith shop (**By Hammer By Hand**)—one of the few remaining in the Hudson Valley—that makes hand-wrought fencing for just such gardens. Need a piece of artwork restored or re-framed? Head for the fine-arts conservators (**Merritt Art Conservation**) who work their magic in Brewster. Just to the north in Patterson, you’ll find a somewhat related form of expertise—an establishment that specializes in custom refinishing of fine furniture and antiques (**Hudson Valley Furniture Service**). In Brewster, the greenhouse at **Venamy Orchids** is a riot of color. Or, peruse exquisitely crafted, hand-blown glass flowers at **Burchetta**

Glassblowing Studio and Gallery in Carmel. Want to browse through rare and collectible books? Visit the bibliographic shop at Garrison’s Landing (**Antipodean Books/Maps/Prints**). Tempted to try your hand at the calligraphic writing and design? You’ll find the tools, along with lessons and expert consultation at a gallery in the village of Cold Spring (**Heaven & Earth Works**).

Given the wide range of recreational and sporting opportunities that abound in Putnam County, it’s no wonder there are

goods (**The Country Goose**); still others stock kitchenware and home decor—and a growing number offer nutritional products and health-food items (**Amber Waves of Grain**). There are art and antique shops galore in the county, but perhaps less well-known are the shops for hobbyists and craftspeople whose projects range from quilt-making to designing needlepoint (**Galli Mods Hobby Shop**).

The list of speciality-item purveyors extends to farm stands and farmers’ markets (**Salinger’s Orchards**), gourmet, organic and ethnic-foods shops, and even Putnam’s savvy wine merchants.

Interestingly, the more we delved into this subject (fortified with some wine and cheese), the more we became aware that there’s something of an “uncommon” de-

Smaller-scale speciality shops & boutiques offer products and services that cannot be found in big chain stores

specialty retailers for every imaginable activity—from fishing to fly-tying, boating to biking; and, yes, from kayaking to kite-flying (**Tri-County Sporting Goods; Sportsman’s Den; Village Bikes**). Plus, there’s a speciality workshop in Mahopac (**Olson’s Trophies & Awards**) that makes trophies, plaques and commemorative souvenirs for all kinds of sporting achievements!

Putnam’s “one-of-a-kind” shops cater to many other interests and needs. Some stores feature fine gifts, crystal and party

nominator about the county’s one-of-kind shops. For the most part, they are family-owned and operated; and, given the spirit of customer service to which they’re fiercely dedicated, many have a long history in their communities. Experience, passion, customization and independence are their stock-in-trade. And with that thought—*bon voyage* on your next one-of-a-kind shopping spree!

