



ALL FROM INFINITY MERCANTILE

something old = something new

REWORKED, REUSED, RECYCLED GIFTS A PERFECT SOLUTION FOR STUMPED SHOPPERS By Adrienne van der Valk

When it comes time to make a holiday shopping list, three distinct categories of people are likely to emerge: Those untrusting of the gift-giving process who tell you *exactly* what they want, the pragmatic souls who would like nothing better than to receive a gift certificate and go shopping themselves ... and the high pressure "great expectations" types, the friends and loved ones who are undyingly smitten with the whimsy of holiday gift selection (or are just using the season to test you on how well you really know them).

For these Yule-time hopefuls, no Gap, Borders or Harry & David effort could possibly yield the "perfect" thing, that



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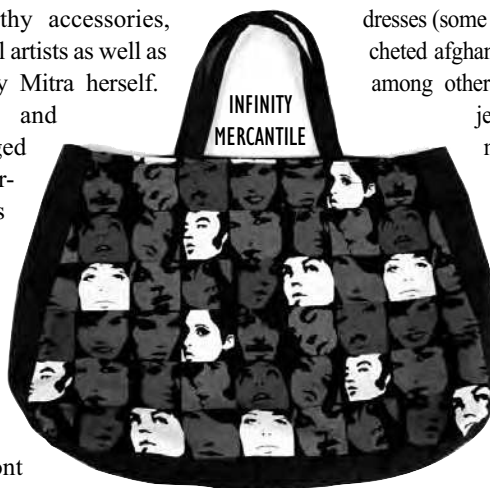
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item that is just so unique, so "them," they can't believe someone else picked it out.

So how can you find the holy grail of gifts without devoting all your free time to shopping for the quirky, stylish and utterly deserving free spirits on your list? Luckily, a handful of local Eugene shop owners have the answer.

The bold lettering of **Deluxe** fashion shop's sign has graced Willamette Street for a few years now, undergoing some changes in both content and management along the way. Owners Mitra and Aaron Chester stock not only funky and fabulous resale clothing for men and women, but also an assortment of gift-worthy accessories, some made by local artists as well as many redesigns by Mitra herself. Flowery earrings and hair wear, collaged belt buckles, leatherwork wristbands and a variety of bags and purses are among the irresistibly fun one-of-a-kind items waiting to tempt you as you approach the front check-out counter.



Another must-stop shopping experience for those on the hunt for something unique, recycled and affordable is **Infinity Mercantile** on 8th Avenue and Blair Boulevard. Owner Jane Ann Porter designed Infinity to provide not only quality used duds but a locally owned boutique experience featuring art, accessories and original clothing items shoppers won't find anywhere else. "Three generations of a family could come in here and find things," says Porter. "We have a large customer base. We're very well rounded." Designers Laura Lee Laroux and Manya Mankiewicz (who also woman and manage the shop, respectively) feature their handcrafted fashion belts, leg warmers, mittens, dresses (some redesigned out of crocheted afghans), clutches and hats, among other items. The fabulous jewelry selection complements a variety of soaps and candles and artsy screen printed tees and ties by Trinity Cross. Always part of the Last Friday Artwalk, Infinity also features a different artist each month, adding to the visual splendor of the shop's kaleidoscope-like atmosphere.

A very new addition to the world of Eugene resale is **Oak Street Vintage**. This is the store every kitsch lover in town wishes s/he had opened. Sitting stoically at 14th and Oak, this house full of "mid century artifacts" seems always to have been there, resplendent in its devastatingly tempting array of random, cool, old stuff. "When I was 14, my dad gave me my first record," co-owner Cora Frazer explains. "Ever since, I've liked retro things. But your house fills up after a while, so you have to bring the fun stuff to the people." In business just over a month, Frazer and partner Carl Ernst stock (and arrange beautifully) kitchen and dining items, furniture, clothing and accessories, lamps, clocks, phones, records, magazines and tchochkes galore, all harkening back to earlier times when orange and green ruled the decorating world and crinoline was everyday wear. If your hard-to-shop-for people don't think they have vintage taste, they might just need a set of sapphire blue highball glasses to bring them around to the fabulousness of life flavored with a dash of the past.



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