



AMY CLANCY WITH HER HANDCRAFTED CREATIONS

Click, Click, Buy

To avoid holiday chaos, shop local
online BY VANESSA SALVIA

I hate the holidays. No, that's not quite it. I hate the shopping that comes along with the holidays. I hate circling the asphalt for parking spots. I hate bundling up against the cold, wind and rain, fighting crowds, waiting in line and feeling like I have to spend money I can't afford to spend. Sometimes I even hate having to remember my reusable shopping bags.

One thing I *love* is supporting local artisans. Luckily there's a way to avoid the holiday horrors and still shop locally, and it's Etsy.

From the Etsy home page, enter in your search for whatever you are looking for, such as jewelry or pet items. Scroll down and find the option for "shop location" on the bottom left. You can enter any city, and Etsy crafters from that area will pop up. A recent search revealed 430 items for pet products in Eugene, Oregon.

"You can shop locally from your computer," says Amy Clancy, who has made a lifestyle of crafting. Since 2009, she's had two Etsy stores selling custom-made fleece hats for babies and kids (**Swirly Hats**) along with hand-printed clothing and décor (**Fancy Clancy**).

Clancy also sells at Saturday Market, Holiday Market and at her downtown décor store, Nest. "It's

great to be at my booth and be able to hand someone an item, but if you buy from me online, I can ship it anywhere for you and include a card," Clancy says. "If someone tells me it's for their sister's birthday, for instance, I can make it fancy."

You can find just about anything on Etsy, from vintage one-of-a-kind items to hand-made anything. Eugene Etsy shop **Nalas Collars** offers hand-made leather cat collars with steel rivets and breakaway buckles. The fanciest cat collar is only \$15. It also offers a hand-knit, catnip-filled mouse with a pleasing long and swishy tail that would amuse any cat.

Jewelry is a perennial favorite item on Etsy. From upcycled items to semiprecious stones and metals, your choice for jewelry is plentiful. Jenni Babcock is a Eugene Etsy crafter at a shop called **Jennibjeweled**. She makes decidedly non girly-girl jewelry from rustic items such as scrap metal license plates, leather and antiqued chain. If you know a woman who's more comfortable in Frye boots than heels, she'll probably like this jewelry.

A shop called **UpcycleBebe** is hosted by a woman from Springfield named Shannon. In her bio she says she left her job as a preschool teacher and now lives with her partner raising their daughter. She makes cute

stuff for kids such as decorated onesies, headbands with animal ears and needle-felted critters.

Many items on Etsy are custom-made, so if you know you want something for a holiday occasion, order as early as possible. If you would like to have it by a certain day, just ask.

"For a custom order, which my swirly hats are," Clancy says, "I say one to two weeks, but I usually get it done in three or four days. The swirly hats get used in holiday productions or for Christmas cards, so people say, 'I'd like it by this day if you can,' and I always do."

With Etsy, even if you're not handing your money over in person, it's obvious that you're supporting a real person who has made something with care. Clancy says she earns 80 percent of her income from her swirly hats shop during the month of November.

"When people buy from independent businesses, they are supporting so much," Clancy says. "The money stays in your community. Some women are stay-at-home moms, and that's the money they'll spend on their kids, or dinner out or toys or presents. It really makes a big difference. When you spend money at the mall, Eugene sees none of that. That's like saying, 'Yes, bring more stuff from China.' Money speaks." **GG**



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