



Quilt Shop Hopping While on Vacation

Timeless Stitches – Quilt Capital of Kansas

Liz Granberg-Jerome

For those who know her and have followed her on social media the last few weeks, you know that Liz just returned from a three-week road trip from Kansas to California and back. Not only did she visit friends and family in six states along the way, attend her 50th class reunion in Pittsburg, California, but she also visited twelve quilt shops in six states! Taking slightly different routes out and back through Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California, she was able to explore many shops she had not visited before on previous trips west.

When traveling, whether long distance or just within your home region, it's not hard to find quilt shops on your route. The recent All Kansas and Nebraska Quilt Shop Hop gave quilters an opportunity to visit any or all of the 79 participating shops across the two states. While the hop is now over, the magazine with information about all those shops is still a great travel guide! Shop Hop, Inc., now has expanded to nine hops including All Iowa, All Carolinas, All Kansas & Nebraska, All New England, All Missouri, All Florida, All Minnesota, All Illinois, and All Texas, each with their own magazine with maps and details on participating shops. Find out more about these wonderful shop hops at <https://allkansasnebraskashop.com/shop-hop-expands-9-events/>.

Over 40 states/regions in the US and Canada now have independently published Country Register newspapers for their area. Quilt shops and other specialty shops advertise in their regional bi-monthly newspapers and offer them free to their customers. These are a great resource in finding quilt and other specialty shops in your travels. Find more information at <https://www.countryregister.com>.

Websites such as [QuiltingHub.com](https://www.quiltinghub.com) have links to many shops across the country and even around the world! Plan ahead so you can take alternate routes to find particular shops that might not be right off the interstate. Plus, taking the scenic route may surprise you and help break up the monotony of those long drives along the interstate.

Another way to find shops along the way is to pull up Google Maps on your GPS or smart phone and type in "quilt shops" or "quilt shops near [city]". You can refine the search to a particular city or you can shift the map to a larger area you will be driving through and have Google Maps search the area selected. Many small shops have been found this way that may not advertise in the Country Register or participate in shop hops. A small shop in someone's garage with treasures to be found might show up in the Google Maps search but not in a Country Register or website.

One thing to keep in mind is to check shop websites or even call to be sure they are still open. Many shops close early on Saturdays or are closed on Sundays and Mondays. Unfortunately, the pandemic has hit quilt shops and other specialty shops hard with many closing over the last couple of years. A quick phone call can

help you plan your days on the road and keep you from disappointment if you drove out of your way for a shop that is no longer in business.

The best part of visiting shops outside your home area is the fabrics in each shop are so unique! Every owner selects fabrics that they prefer to stock in their stores. One shop may feature regional favorites like the southwest shops and their Native American themed fabrics or the shops along Historic Route 66 that have fabrics featuring the cities and the various tourist attractions along the route. Other shops may specialize in fabric panels, Asian fabrics, or batiks. Most will carry at least one line of solids or tone-on-tone blenders so those may repeat between shops; however, the rest of the fabric will likely vary widely. With the wealth of fabric companies and fabric designers to pick from, no two shops the same. Finding special fabrics in another region or state can be exciting.