



The Joy of Visiting Quilt Shops

Timeless Stitches — Quilt Capital of Kansas

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Many, if not most, quilters have a local quilt shop they frequent. As we saw during the recent Jingle All the Way Shop Hop, quilters also love visiting other quilt shops around their region to find new and different fabrics or notions. How many have spent time on vacations further afield from their home region visiting shops across the country? As an avid road-tripper, I love visiting quilt shops as far from home as I can to see what shops in different regions have to offer.

Over the last 10 years I have driven to California and back at least seven times, plus multiple trips to Mississippi to visit family and friends. As I planned each trip, I looked for quilt shops to visit along my routes. On subsequent trips, I have returned to some shops that truly made an impression with their selection of fabrics, while adding other new-to-me shops as I varied my routes.

This past week my husband (also a quilter) and I drove south to Mississippi to visit his son and family, for me to teach two classes at a shop we had previously visited, and to see other family and friends. We stopped on the way down at two shops he had not been to before and we both found goodies there for our stash! It was also exciting to find that one of the shops had my GDQ-60R triangle ruler hanging on one of their displays next to a One Block Wonder book that had two of my quilts included in it. Seeing either my pattern or my ruler in shops is always exciting.

Visiting shops along Route 66 from Kansas to California was great fun. My granddaughter got to select a fat quarter at every shop we visited that reflected something she had seen along the way. By the end of our trip she had enough fabrics to make a “Road to California” quilt that truly tells the story of our adventures. The following year with both my granddaughter and grandson, we did the same and both kids made quilts with the fat quarters they collected after we returned home.

Each region features fabrics that reflect where they are. Shops in the southwest feature fabrics with Kokopelli, Native American images, desert/cactus fabrics and more. Traveling to the Gulf Coast we found fabrics with Mardi Gras themes and more. Along the east coast I found lighthouse panels that were stunning. Texas shops have wonderful fabrics of bluebonnets and other regional nature images. Colorado shops have more mountain images that you might not find elsewhere. It’s amazing how much variation there is by region!

Beyond region, even closer to home you won’t find two shops alike ever. The personality and fabric choices of each shop owner make every shop unique. Whether you shop close to home or venture further away and plan your trips around shops along your route, you’re always in for a treat!