



Cloverdale Arts Alliance

## Fine Art Gifts

I'll move this right into purchasing art that not only adorns bodies, but also decorates walls and windows, etc.

Just like there are antique collectives where individuals share a common space and expenses, art gallery groups do the same thing. In Cloverdale there's the Arts Alliance with Bill Lambert at the helm. Once a year they invite anyone who wants wall and floor space to purchase it by the square inch and it gives even children a chance to exhibit. It's a clever way to spread art around as well as expenses.

My two favorite gallery groups in Healdsburg are the Healdsburg Center for the Arts and Upstairs Gallery in the bookstore on the east side of downtown's plaza. They each have many artists from jewelry designers to painters and sculptors, so there's not only plenty to look at, but also plenty to buy.

What's important to both art lovers who are economically challenged and artists in the same boat, is that there are reproductions: prints, posters, greeting cards, etc. so that even broke people can have fine art in their lives.

Santa Rosa has actually created an Arts District...not that it was created



Patty Bird at Russian River Gallery

by the City...it was formed by people who gravitated toward each other, as creative people tend to do. South A Street near Julliard Park has become a creative neighborhood.

Petaluma's art galleries are scattered about, but the main gallery groups line both sides of Petaluma Boulevard where Dimensions Galleria morphed into a collective over time, to Riverfront Gallery. And of course Sebastopol is one of those vortex sites for artists with gatherings at Sebastopol Center for the Arts and Sebastopol Gallery, both downtown.

In Guerneville, Russian River Gallery has the tiniest spot in town (on the plaza) and it throbs with the beat of artists hearts. Their enthusiasm has kept this gallery vital through the hardest economic challenges.

I guess you could say that for all the gallery groups, really. The shared efforts, money and responsibilities maintain a place where their creations can be on display and sold. Without that they have to wait their turn at traditional galleries and that's probably one of the reasons these groups formed. They have a perpetual gallery show.



Mylette Welch at Graton Gallery

Some of my favorite people/artists gather at Graton Gallery. As in all these groups, each member sits the reception desk as part of their contribution to the whole. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet each artist over time depending upon when you visit. You get to put a face to a name and artistic style.

Out in Bodega Bay there are several groups as well, formed by one or two of the artists who gathered others over time. Local Color Gallery is one of that has been a wonderful place to see and purchase local artists work in a full range of media for a long time.

I don't want to leave out traditional art galleries here. People like Khysie Horn of Quicksilver Mine Company in Forestville is very much this venue. She carefully chooses artists, and because her taste is clearly defined, people have come to respect her work

I'm almost forgetting! While I was doing research for the Thrifty Shopping Guide in the November edition, I ran across some antique and consignment shops that have plenty of items to dress up home! For the longest time I passed a place called The Find as you head west from Petaluma. I stopped to satisfy my curiosity and met Janet Highfield who takes old furniture and dresses them up in color. She also carries consignment antiques, art and gifts so there's plenty to explore when you stop by. She's a delightful person to chat with, so take your time.



The Find west of Petaluma

Just up the road you'll meet Dave of Richardson's Antiques who spent more time extolling the talents and of his wife Colleen's skill at restoring dolls than selling his own wonderful old stuff. He has a building half full of his items and half full of dolls, doll furniture and clothing that gets you lost in time. He's right, his life-partner is a remarkably talented woman!



Richardson's Relics antique dolls

As I introduce the next category of shopping, I want you to appreciate the cleverness of these retailers. We're about to enter the world of fashion and accessories, but some of these stores combine dressing up home with dressing up people. Thea Doty at Enduring Comforts in Freestone is a master of this combination. Her store is filled with high quality antiques as well as jewelry, hats, scarves and clothing along with the music CDs.