

ANTIQUO

FOR SUSTAINABILITY



▲ Czech It Out of Meaford carries an enormous selection of antiques, vintage items, collectibles, nostalgic toys and Indigenous works of art in many media.



▲ Antiques and collectibles including glass, pottery, paintings, primitives, clocks and militaria fill the 6,000-sq.-ft. Lakeshore Antiques & Treasures building in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

UES

BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT | PHOTOS BY MIKE DAVIS



▲ At 20,000 sq. ft. on two floors, with 255 vendors, The Freelon Antique Mall has an enormous selection.

Step into an antiques shop and you may be amazed at the selection of goods on offer. It can be overwhelming. There are so many items that you might wonder why there is still a manufacturing industry for small goods.

“A lot of people don’t want to buy brand new,” says Stefani Pelowich, general manager of The Freelon Antique Mall. “It’s about sustainability.”

Here’s a personal confession: I recently decided I did not want to buy and throw out watch batteries about every year or so. I don’t want to contribute to more unnecessary electronic waste, despite or even because of its tiny size. And I prefer a wristwatch to digging out my cellphone to see what time it is. Yet I couldn’t find a new watch that didn’t need a battery. A friend suggested an antique store, and there I found the exact kind of wind-up wristwatch I want, with a bonus second-hand inset dial, and a brand name that has meaning to me.

With the gift-giving season upon us, you might get inspiration from these three antique markets close to the Niagara Escarpment.



▲ Stefani Pelowich, general manager of The Freelon Antique Mall, can help customers find the perfect items.



▲ The Freelon mall showcased Edwardian glitter with this early-1900s platinum and diamond necklace.

◀ This handsome Caldwell grandfather clock was available at the Freelon mall.



▶ Decorative and useful: this vintage kitchen booth in Freelon sparks good feelings of home, cooking, and meals with loved ones.

The Freelon Antique Mall

Located in the small village of Freelon, near Hamilton, this mall is huge: 20,000 sq. ft. on two floors. With about 255 vendors, there is truly something for everyone here.

“It’s always a good idea to go around a place like this twice, in different directions,” says Stefani. “You’ll see different things. And if you

see something you like, take it to the front desk to hold it for you, as you may never find it again. If you don’t want it later, they’ll put it back.”

Locked glass display cabinets hold valuable small items, but staff are happy to unlock them and let you examine items. Large open spaces are stocked with vendors’ items, and

reflect their particular interests and passions.

At the upper end of the mall’s price range recently was a long case grandfather clock with “Wm. Caldwell” and “Gorbals Glasgow” on the face, marked at \$2,495. Even higher priced was an early-1900s platinum-and-diamond Lavalier handmade necklace, appraised at \$13,850



▲ This area in the Freelton mall is packed with charming primitives of all kinds.

► Heart-warming primitives like crocks, bowls and milk cans are displayed in this booth of a Lakeshore Antiques' vendor.



but offered for sale for \$3,850. Most items cost much less, fitting into the categories of vintage kitchen items, primitives, small furniture, costume jewellery, toys, tools, vinyl records, sports memorabilia and much more. "Everyone's got \$20 to spend," observes Stefani, and indeed many pieces are from \$5 to \$25.

Lakeshore Antiques & Treasures

Margaret Caswell is one of the 16 dealers in the 6,000-sq.-ft. building that houses Lakeshore Antiques & Treasures in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Run as a co-op, all of its vendors help manage and maintain the shop. Marg's own large area is filled with everything from antique oil lamps to vintage tools.



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One of the highest priced treasures in the store is a roughly five-ft.-tall hand carved wooden crane with a bronze head and neck and iron legs, at \$2,400. Another valuable item is a set of two carved Butler's Rangers uniform buttons from at least the War of 1812, found in Queenston. Military dealer Graham Bennett has the set marked at \$1,600.

Another piece of note is a large art nouveau-style chandelier from the 1950s, with gold-toned brass and glass straw and beaded fringe. This regal find is \$895.

Pre-used and pre-loved, the items here change frequently as dealers constantly add affordable and unique discoveries. Primitive crocks and milk cans are tucked in next to crystal goblets while rhinestones sparkle beside old hats.



▲ Marg Caswell indicates a favourite antique oil lamp hanging in her area inside Lakeshore Antiques & Treasures.



▲ Lakeshore's treasures include these tiny and rare historical uniform buttons that were found in Queenston. The left button has "Butler's Rangers" carved on it; the right one bears a crown.

Selling

If you would like to become a vendor at either of these locations, be prepared to fill out an application and get put on a waiting list.

Should you have one or more antiques or items to sell, you are welcome to contact the store directly. Individual vendors would get back to you if there's interest in buying your pieces from you.

If you're having trouble finding something specific, The Freelton Antique Mall keeps a "want" list. If a vendor comes across an item that could be of interest, you will be contacted.



▲ Part of the impressive collection of Indigenous art at Czech It Out.

Czech It Out

The eight small rooms packed with finds are "not big enough!" says Susan Bazant, owner of Meaford's Czech It Out. As Susan is the sole vendor, she knows the entire inventory of antiques, vintage items, collectibles, toys and Indigenous art.

The most valuable piece in the store recently was a tall, slender Narwhal tusk, scrimshaw and serpentine

► This rare, key-wound Breitling Laederich pocket watch from 1840-1860, in working order, was marked \$6,000 at Czech It Out.

carving by Moses Tuka Quinuajua. The art is signed and dated 1979 and carries a price of \$12,000.

Susan will take some items on consignment. One example is a 14-carat gold-filled pocket watch and key, that still works, and was priced at \$6,000.

Displayed prominently are the works of many First Nations artists, including paintings and prints by Charmaine Jenner, beadwork by Nia Jones of Cape Croker, and pottery from Six Nations near Brantford. **NEW**





▲ A magnificent wooden, bronze and iron crane stands guard behind a fine chair in Lakeshore Antiques.

CZECH IT OUT

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