

## ROAD TRIP!

Summer is on its way and many families find themselves making road trips for vacations. How fun! While you're traveling the country make sure and take time to visit quilt stores in other areas. Most likely you frequent one or two local quilt stores in your area. However, you'd be amazed at the variation in merchandise you can find between a store in Kansas, and one in California, for example. Taking the time to visit other quilt stores will fill you up with inspiration and might even get you involved in a new project!

Before you head out on your travels try and plan your quilt store stops accordingly. There are many guides out there to help you with this task. One of the most popular is the *Quilter's Travel Companion* from Chalet Publishing. This handy guide includes maps, hours, and phone numbers of quilt stores in the United States, Canada, and even one in the Bahamas! There are other guides available, and many quilting magazines put out an edition once or twice a year that highlight quilt stores to visit while you're traveling. Scour these resources for those shops you want to visit.

Another fantastic resource is the Internet. Using your favorite search engine, browse for "quilt stores in Anytown, U.S.A." This will most likely give you more results than you planned on! View the results closely, as you might end up finding businesses that are open by appointment only, are not true quilt stores, or are web-based businesses. Read the information carefully, then call the stores you are most interested in before your arrival.

Fabric is the one merchandise item that drives most quilt stores. Visit the websites of your favorite fabric manufacturers. In these sites you will likely find a list of stores that carry their fabric. Avlyn, Marcus Brothers, and Moda Fabrics are just a few companies that maintain a Store Locator feature. Check these sites for quilt stores in your destination city that carry your favorite fabrics.

When you arrive at your destination don't forget the best business finder in any community, the phone book! Check for quilt store listings under various categories such as quilting, crafts, fabric, etc. Make sure to call ahead and inquire about their inventory, so you aren't disappointed when you get there.

Another great resource to pick up in many communities is the Country Register newspaper. You can find more information on this publication by visiting [www.countryregister.com](http://www.countryregister.com). This newspaper is published in various communities in the United States and Canada, and highlights gift shops, quilt stores, tea rooms, and more for consumers who are traveling. Since the paper is published bimonthly you'll always see the most pertinent information regarding sales, events, specials and more.

As quilt store owners we always find ourselves shopping in other stores across the country, and around the world. We simply can't carry everything there is to offer, so it's fun to see what is popular in other areas. We think you'll agree, when you take the time to plan a visit to a quilt store in your destination city. You might find a new fabric you've never seen before, or a charming pattern you simply must have! So gather your resources and information, and have fun shopping!

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