

Avoid the Malls and Shop Locally This Season

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Succulent arrangements from Sanvitalia.

Waterford and Wedgewood at a Discount

For more than 17 years, **Hilton House Consignment and Design**, this upscale Orinda consignment store has been offering top brands, including Waterford, Wedgewood, Baccarat, and Ethan Allen pieces at discounted prices. You'll find furniture and rugs (in case you want to buy a gift for yourself), and an assortment of table-top items: candles, dishes and glasses, serving pieces, cutlery and, of course, holiday décor. All are high-end, name brands. "We're very picky about the items we take for consignment," said owner Cyndi Hilton-Girgis. She noted that they are also a jewelry store; beautiful pieces abound, some used and many new. "Our jewelry comes from three places: estates, private parties and jewelers wanting to rotate their inventory," Hilton-Girgis explained. "Our prices are so much lower than the jewelers." 21 Orinda Way, Orinda. Open Mon.-Sat., 10:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Beautiful Bird Feeders and Garden Supplies

Everyone driving from Moraga to Orinda has passed it a zillion times. **McDonnell Nursery**, family owned for over 70 years, is passionate about gardening and offering unique and lovely gifts. Manager Sarah McDonnell has turned the front of the store into a gift boutique, including adorable signs (a personal favorite: "when you stop believing in Santa you get underwear"), candles, decorative pillows, mugs, platters, holiday décor, and lighted prints. Then, of course, there are the beautiful garden items: bird feeders, bird baths, containers and pottery, and every type of plant you can imagine. If there's a gardener on your list, this is definitely the place to shop. And especially for the kids: "Sno to Go" an amazing powder that, when water is added, creates "an avalanche of cool, wet 'snow.'" 196 Moraga Way, Orinda. Open daily 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

An Artisan Beet Parchment Bowl

If you've been in the Rheem Shopping Center, you've no doubt seen the **Moraga Art Gallery**, a collective of 16 local artists and artisans, all creating amazing pieces and meeting high standards of workmanship and originality. There are incredible colorful paintings and photos, beautiful ceramics and glassware, hand-painted scarves, lamps, candleholders, unique statues and unusual jewelry



Clever travel valet from Parker-Thatch.

— all objects of true beauty. Margaret Dorfman, a current guest artist, became inspired while cleaning her kitchen — she makes art pieces from dried, pressed and aged fruits and vegetables; her beet parchment bowl is one of the more unusual items you'll see.

522 Center St., Moraga. Open Wed. – Sun 12 noon – 5 p.m. (Open every day in December.)

The Perfect Piece of Jewelry



A unique wooden salad bowl found at Orinda's Morrison's Jewelers.

For 93 years, **Morrison's Jewelers** has been making and selling exquisite pieces of jewelry — or, as they say, "love you can see" — at a variety of price points. There are necklaces, rings, bracelets and earrings. They have gold and silver, diamonds, pearls, sapphires, rubies, and just about any other stone you want. There is a case filled with watches (and even a watch winder, for those that perhaps don't wear their self-winding watch everyday). They also feature high-end elegant gift items, including picture frames, sterling silver baby cups, piggy banks, snow globes, music boxes and a magnificent wooden salad bowl set.

35 Orinda Way, Orinda. Open Tue. – Fri., 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Designer cufflinks

In 2009, designer **Natasha Grasso** took a metal-smithing class and created the first collection of Natasha Grasso Jewelry. Now, boutiques and museums in 14 states, as well as Canada and China, carry her fabulous pieces, all of which are made in the Bay Area. There are necklaces, bracelets, earrings and rings as well as men's gold cufflinks. She uses mostly semi-precious stones but does include some rare Box rough-cut diamonds, sapphires and fresh water pearls. Most pieces are hand-forged in a classic style. "I try not to do anything too trendy," Grasso said, believing that "if you're going to spend good money, you should be able to wear the pieces every season, year after year. Everything I make is meant to enhance what you already have." Everything she makes is beautiful!

386 Park St., Suite A, Moraga. Open Tue. – Sat., 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

A Bag for All Seasons

We all know someone that could use a personalized beautiful canvas bag — for their cosmetics, tennis racket, kids' toys or glasses. **Parker-Thatch** offers heavy-duty canvas bags of every shape and size for carrying anything and everything. Their most popular item is a tote bag, personalized with the recipients' initials, birth or anniversary date, and favorite design. According to co-owner Irene Chen, many people customize the bag even further by including a personal note printed on the inside of the tote. "We have printed some incredible notes — from the kindest to the most emotional," Chen said. "The tote then becomes more than just a bag, it becomes its own special piece." Chen reported that another popular item is the customized valet tray, often personalized with a wifi passcode. "It's a great item for a guest room," she added.

19D Orinda Way, Orinda. Open Mon. - Fri., 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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Home Composting for Busy People

- Reduced cost compost bins
- Free workshops
- Vermicomposting & Bin Building Workshops
- CompostSMART Advanced Training
- Republic Services garbage bill discount
- Free guides and resources



www.RecycleSmart.org

Offer available to RecycleSmart residents within Orinda, Lafayette, Moraga, Walnut Creek, Danville and unincorporated Central Contra Costa County (Alamo, Blackhawk, Diablo) and residents within the City of San Ramon.

HOLIDAY SALE

30-60% OFF

All Fine Jewelry

DIAMOND SOLITAIRE PENDANT NECKLACE

1.7 ct tw	reg \$12,999	SALE \$5,999
1.54 ct tw	reg \$9,999	SALE \$3,999
3/4 ct tw	reg \$5,000	SALE \$2,499

DIAMOND STUD EARRINGS

2.0 ct tw	reg \$13,998	SALE \$6,999
1.5 ct tw	reg \$9,200	SALE \$4,599
1.0 ct tw	reg \$5,000	SALE \$2,499

MORAGA JEWELERS

562 Center St., Rheem Valley Shopping Center (925) 376-1283

OPEN M-F 10AM-5:30PM, SAT 10AM-4PM

SPECIAL SUNDAY HOURS: 12/11 & 12/18 10 AM TO 4 PM

CHRISTMAS EVE 9 AM-4 PM

FULL WATCH & JEWELRY REPAIR SERVICES ON SITE.

Stay Home For the Holidays

You have seen the posters and stickers all over LAMORINDA. Shopping Local is not simply a marketing campaign, it's a state of mind. For years your local Chambers of Commerce has been reminding you the many reasons why supporting local merchants makes sense. Whether it's buying holiday gifts, using local services or meeting friends for dinner, shopping local does matter. Consider this: When you stay in town and shop...

- You appreciate the cultural value of a vibrant downtown filled with a wide variety of unique businesses and boutiques.
- You saving on gas and time
- You help create a strong tax-base by circulating money in town versus sending it elsewhere. This helps pay for police, road repairs and other essential services you count on
- You are supporting the businesses that generously donate to local schools and non-profits throughout the year

When you think about it, isn't it more fun to do business with people you know, like and trust? Your local merchants work hard for your loyalty. So please remember them this holiday season. There are more choices in Lamorinda than ever before. So Relax! Stay away from the crazy malls and enjoy the season. We live and work in this amazing place called Lamorinda. Happy Holidays from the Orinda, Moraga and Lafayette Chambers!

Jay Lifson, Lafayette
Kathe Nelson, Moraga
Sophie Braccini, Orinda



You're Invited*
To Take a Photo
with Santa
So Bring Your Camera!

Saturday, Dec 10th
Noon - 3:00 p.m.

Holiday Clowns · Balloon Art

In the suite directly next door to Starbucks.

*With your Rheem Valley Shopping Center receipts totaling \$25.00 or more
Or visit us online at rheemvalley.net

(While supplies last)



Rheem Valley Shopping Center
...a Moraga tradition