Insider trading: Queens

We tagged along with interior designers Tatiana Miron and Alexandra Pappas (alexandrapappas.com) as they revealed their secret sources for fantastic deals and unusual finds.

**Forest Hills**

Nestled in a quiet suburban area, Metropolitan Avenue is ripe with treasure-laden junk shops. Pappas and Miron always start at Frieda's Antiques & Collectibles (105-05 Metropolitan Ave, 718-757-5455). At first glance it seems devoted to undesirable trinkets, but on this most recent visit, Pappas unearthed a plate akin to a gold and turquoise pattern that she hit estate sales to collect, and Miron spotted two fabulous bird prints—from a wall piece of feathers against the wall in the back ($140 for two). Just across the street, beautiful gilded chairs, vintage jewelry and alabaster lamps abound at the well-curated Antiques Room in the Garden (105-22 Metropolitan Ave, 718-793-2384). "She knows what she has," explains Miron. "But her prices are still far better than anything you'll find in Manhattan—and she negotiates." Miron scored a metallic beaded tapestry ($125) from the 1880s, which she intends to have stitched into a footstool, while a lobster carved out of bone ($150) is similar to a crab on offer at Smith for many hundreds of dollars—tempted Pappas.

**Flushing**

Most of the shops here are jam-packed, which, combined with arbitrary pricing (one store owner sized us all up before asking $300 for a vase—as we left, he seemed willing to accept $30), makes the experience patience-trying. That said, the spare and simple Alpha & Omega (40-33 162nd St, 718-463-4400) offers antique Chinese pieces along with a slew of supercool '60s wall clocks at fair (and marked) prices.

**Jackson Heights**

Located at the end of the main shopping strip in Little India, India Sari Palace (37-07 74th St, 718-426-2700) stocks a department-store-like selection of fabrics. Though they're sold as sari sets (for $35, which includes the top), the six-yard piece of cloth easily doubles as a curtain panel, which makes them an excellent alternative to more traditional fare (which can cost anywhere from $15 to $100 per yard). If you aren't handy with a sewing needle, any tailor can stitch a quick hem. The racks are packed with options, including deep beaded aquas and high-gloss fuchsias; Pappas and Miron like the earlier, more muted greens and oranges, edged with high-voltage shots of color.

**Astoria**

Pappas and Miron recommend The Furniture Market (22-08 Astoria Blvd, 718-545-2335) for anyone looking to fill an entire apartment on a tight budget. "Unlike other secondhand stores, it's extremely well organized," explains Pappas. "And accordingly, the stuff is in better shape." Armoires, school desks and rocking chairs mingle with smaller bits, like brass candlesticks and salt and pepper shakers. A side-table insert with a canvas magazine holder ($60) and a set of '60s lamps with spun plastic bases ($150 for two) caught Miron's eye, while Pappas uncovered the scariest find of the day: a framed needlepoint of a clown. But at $20, how could we not buy it?—Elise Leckmen

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**How to get your steals home**

**Mass transit**

Per the MTA, items that impede passenger traffic, extend outside the door or window, or pose a hazard to yourself or others can get you slapped with a $25 fine or ten days in jail. Technically, you can schlep that small rattan chair on the tube, but bulkier items warrant transport that costs more than $2.

**Movers**

Specializing in small jobs, Bronx company A Man with a Cube Van (917-257-2761, amanwithacubevan.com) offers 19-foot trucks that can hold the contents of a one-bedroom apartment. Complimentary sofa covers and insurance protect your new goods from the potholes on the Van Wyck Expressway. Sample rate: $125 for a sofa from Jackson Heights to Murray Hill.—Helen Yun

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