

# The New York Times

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## Shopping the New South

By Elizabeth Hutchison

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In Nashville, everyone in line behind you at Hattie B's, famous for its "hot chicken," will tell you about the "100 people" who are moving to town every day. On the South Carolina coast, Charleston locals praise the bustling Boeing airplane plant and the new Volvo auto factory as proof of the city's vitality. And once-sleepy Savannah, Ga., now owns the title of fastest-growing city in the Peach State. With an influx of newcomers, design-minded businesses are staying put in the South instead of decamping to New York or Los Angeles.



Croghan's Jewel Box, also on King Street, is a 111-year-old family-run jewelry store. Hunter McRae for The New York Times

## CHARLESTON, S.C.

“We have one shot to create a great experience — to introduce the customer to a place that’s like nowhere else,” said Kathleen Hay Hagood, who together with her sister, Mariana Hay, is helping to shepherd the family’s 111-year-old Charleston jewelry store, Croghan’s Jewel Box, into the 21st century. Mariana now

designs two in-house lines — the Goldbug Collection and a new floral series, Bloom Where You're Planted.

The nearby boutique Ibu is like wandering into a bright Moroccan souk or a Mexican mercado. The actress Ali MacGraw is an ambassador for the brand, which sells clothing and home goods made by women in more than 30 developing nations, providing them with a platform for economic self-sufficiency. On Cannon Street, Charleston's new creative corridor, duck under the candy-striped awning at the postage-stamp-size stationer Mac and Murphy for dreamy paper goods, or pop into J. Stark, the leatherworker Erik Holmberg's workshop and showroom to pick up weekenders, backpacks and totes in rusty earth tones.

Also on Cannon is Indigo and Cotton, where the owner, Brett Carron, dresses Charleston's cool kids with his offering of independent American men's brands such as Raleigh Denim and Shuron eyewear. "There is the real opportunity to grow here; to try something new," said Sarah-Hamlin Hastings, who opened Fritz Porter in the revamped Cigar Factory on East Bay Street. The interiors emporium (possibly Charleston's prettiest shop) stocks fabric by the yard, lighting, custom furniture and rugs.

## SAVANNAH, Ga.

Just over 100 miles south, there's new in energy in the languid Savannah air. And it's impossible to talk about this change without mentioning the Savannah College of Art and Design, or SCAD. The powerhouse art school alumni are filling city storefronts with world-class boutiques, showrooms and studios. To get a small taste of the talent the school is turning out, visit ShopSCAD on Bull Street, where colorful cubist-inspired, block-print silk scarves are just a sampling of the student- and alumni-created offerings.

When the Elizabeth Seeger Jolly, a leatherworker whose sleek python clutches and tasseled bucket bags used to occupy shelf space at ShopSCAD, left school, she didn't go far. Satchel, her studio and showroom, is just a few blocks down Bull Street.

Try not to get lost in the labyrinth-like confines of the beloved Paris Market and Brocante. Part Old World department store, part Southern-accented European flea market, the deceptively well-edited shop is stuffed to its Victorian-era rafters with everything from sturdy kitchen gear to French-milled soaps. If you're searching for a slice of John Berendt's Savannah, it's still here, at Alex Raskin Antiques, chockablock with secretaries, chests and sideboards.

## NASHVILLE

The bulk of Nashville's most interesting retailers are cropping up in the neighborhoods ringing downtown, but Keep Shop, a tiny boutique in the bottom of the new Noelle hotel, is a sign of good things to come for downtown. Developed by the Tennessee native Libby Callaway, a former New York Post fashion editor, the gallery-like shop specializes in exclusive collaborations with Nashville designers such as the handbag maker Ceri Hoover (A Keep Shop sister store opened this month in Savannah).

Across the Cumberland River in East Nashville, the country artist Nikki Lane chooses the wide range of heritage pieces at High Class Hillbilly; the singer-songwriter's shop is famous for its vintage denim. At Lemon Laine, wellness and natural beauty shop, you can rent out the in-house "oil bar" to create customized, professional-level facial oils. In historic Germantown, visit Josh and Ivy Elrod's breezy home goods outpost Wilder for watercolor-patterned textiles and geometric wallpaper.

North Nashville, near Germantown, is undergoing a creative awakening with a wave of small businesses anchored around Buchanan Street. The designers at Nisolo are reimagining Nashville's boot-making tradition with their line of ethically made, classic-meets-contemporary shoes and boots produced with responsibly sourced leather. Next door, at Emil Erwin, Emil Congdon constructs stylish, sturdy leather bags that have drawn the attention of major retailers like J. Crew.

**Correction:** October 26, 2018

*An earlier version of this article misspelled the surname of a former New York Post editor involved in the Keep Shop in Nashville and gave an imprecise description of her role. She is Libby Callaway, not Calloway, and she developed the shop but does not own it.*

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