

mala market - the Best of Montrose

Submitted by Heather Almquist



The theme for November's Civic Association meeting is local artists. We have invited Alberto Careaga from Art League Houston to speak at our November monthly meeting. In that vein, I want to encourage Hyde Park residents to support mala market over on West Gray.

mala market is a non-profit collective space dedicated to offering local small business owners affordable and

consistent retail space. mala market takes care of the financial and physical responsibilities that come with operating a brick & mortar, while continuing to offer opportunities for small businesses to elevate their brands. With over 50 makers in the space, the market offers a diverse selection of handmade goods.

Somya Gupta, the founder and operating director of mala market, wanted to build the foundation of her vision on the solid belief in community - the name mala comes from the use of mala beads in self-meditation practices. Just as you use the mala beads to connect yourself to your deepest intentions, Gupta hopes to connect the community with purpose and intention. By shopping with mala market, you not only benefit the artists, but you are also directly impacting the social wealth and the economic health of our community.

When I wandered in to the store on a Sunday I was greeted immediately and quickly enchanted by the various offerings. Beautiful prints, vintage furniture,
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Shop Local with mala market

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jewelry, repurposed clothing and glassware to name a few things. For my sister's (belated) birthday I found earrings, a notebook (with hand drawn print on the cover) and tea towel with a similarly hand drawn print. For me I got cocktail syrups and dog shampoo. It was wonderful seeing everyone's art and craftwork.

Future paychecks are earmarked for a cute handbag (why should I sport name brand, when I can sport handmade?) and the quilted jackets - has the temp dropped yet?!?!?

Why Should You Shop Local?

We have all seen it... the mountain of donated clothes after a hurricane. The rubble pile after a carnival Christmas. Stuff, stuff, and more stuff taking over your house until you give in and Marie Kondo it. Always hoping someone finds joy in the remnants of a different time in your life. By the way, I highly recommend joining the inner loop Buy Nothing group on Facebook to help you create space in your life. While we may get a temporary rush from something in our Amazon cart - is it bringing you joy or dread when your fast fashion item disintegrates or is no longer on trend?

One of my goals is to become more conscious about the decisions I make on spending and travel. mala market helps me with that, and embodies the benefits of shopping local:

1. **Convenience.** mala market is walking distance from Hyde Park, open 7 days a week!
2. **It's better for the environment** – minimal packaging, and lots of repurposed and upcycled goods!
3. **You are investing in Houstonians**, and are encouraging people to pursue their passion. mala market is there to support people in their next business goals and provide a launching pad of sorts.
4. **Quality products, lovingly handmade** – items are more likely to be sustainably sourced. Check out the cleaning, laundry, bath products and candles in upcycled glassware.
5. **There's more chance of finding the weird, wonderful and quirky.** Cocktail syrups? Thrifted tshirts with a funky mushroom or fish print? Handmade jewelry for the more tame consumer.
6. **It encourages you to be intentional** in the items you purchase.

mala market is the best of Montrose. It represents the independent and artist spirit and makes it easy to find something off the beaten path. You need to take a peek and see what they have to offer, and invest in Houston artisans!

2022 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

