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Indy \$500

Race to the shops

Indianapolis may be the “Racing Capital of the World,” but the ACRL 2013 host city has much in the way of shopping. From designer and national brands to kitschy local finds, timeworn vintage stores, and upstart boutiques, shoppers of all kinds will find pleasing shopping opportunities in the Circle City.

With so many large-scale events taking place in Indianapolis in the last year, including Super Bowl XLVI, Indy 500, and NCAA men’s and women’s basketball tournaments, you’d think there wouldn’t be much left on the racks at the malls, outlets, and other shopping venues.

However, with more than 1 million people, and currently ranking as the 12th largest city in the United States, Indianapolis retail businesses are alive and well in both the metropolitan and outlying areas, including some very swanky and unusual places to find items to fill your suitcase during a break from the fantastic sessions that ACRL conferences always deliver.

Though Indianapolis has many neighborhoods offering distinct shopping experiences, this article will focus mainly on the major areas closest to the Indiana Convention Center (ICC): downtown (DT), Massachusetts Avenue (Mass), Fountain Square (FT), and Broad Ripple Village (BR). Here is a tour of all of the stores that you can find within walking distance of the convention center and throughout our great city.

About the neighborhoods

Downtown Indianapolis is the heart of the

city’s business district, and it is very walkable for ACRL attendees in the ICC and those staying in conference hotels. Massachusetts Avenue (or simply Mass Ave.) to locals, is a mile-long, diagonal street approximately one mile (or a \$6 cab ride) from the ICC. Fountain Square is a funky developing neighborhood one-and-a-half miles (or \$8 in a taxi) away from the ICC.

Broad Ripple Village is a hip, trendy area about eight miles (\$24 in a cab, but worth it) from the ICC with a wide variety of shops, dining, and entertainment.

Malls, malls, and more malls

The Circle Center Mall (DT) is the quintessential Midwestern mall. Best of all, it is connected to the ICC. Housing more than 125 national and local retailers across four levels, the mall is sure to have at least one store for everyone. The usual suspect stores include **Aldo Shoes, Banana Republic, Bath & Body Works, Clarks, Gap, H&M, Lane Bryant, The Limited, Sunglass Hut, T. J. Maxx, and The Walking Company.** The anchor department store of the mall is **Carson Pirie Scott**, a regional store with more than 100 years in the business. With



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all of these options, the mall will be the first word in Indy shopping for many conference goers. Also, if you are like us, the first place you will want to find in a conference city is a pharmacy. There is a **CVS** (DT) within walking distance of the ICC and the Circle Center Mall. And, if you are in need of snacks or are preparing your own meals, there is a **Marsh** grocery located on New Jersey Street, just seven blocks from the Convention Center.

Further out of the downtown area (about 13 miles), reachable bus or by car, is the **Fashion Mall at Keystone**. Currently undergoing a multimillion dollar renovation, Keystone is an upscale shopping experience, including the **Art Cinema and Lounge, Anthropologie, Nordstrom, J. Crew, Pottery Barn, Crate & Barrel, and West Elm**. Two miles east on 86th St. is **Castleton Mall**, which also has more than 130 stores and a multiplex theater. Other outdoor shopping experiences include **Hamilton Town Center** (in the nearby town of Noblesville) and **Clay Terrace** (in Carmel), as well as the **Greenwood Park Mall** in Greenwood and **Metropolis**, 11 miles west of Indianapolis in Plainfield. Many of these shopping destinations are accessible by bus or taxi.

Maps, neighborhood, and transportation information

- Downtown Indy: visitindy.com/indianapolis-maps-guides
- Massachusetts Avenue: www.discovermassave.com/
- Fountain Square: www.discoverfountainsquare.com
- Broad Ripple Village: www.discoverbroadripplevillage.com
- Irvington: shopirvington.com
- Indy Go Public Transportation: www.indygo.net
- Yellow Cab Indy: www.ycindy.com

Bookstores and music

Beyond the fray of the national chains, one can find gems in the Indy local bookstores and music shops. Comic collectors and pop culture enthusiasts should check out **Downtown Comics'** large inventory. **Indy Reads Books** (Mass) is not only the single independent bookstore in the downtown area, but it is also a treasure trove of new and used books for adults and children. In addition, all revenue goes to support adult literacy education in central Indiana. **Big Hat Books** (BR) offers a smaller collection, but makes up for it in whimsy. Shoppers who venture to this bookstore will find a playful collection of hats displayed on top of the shelves. Similarly, **Kids Ink** (BR) is an independently owned bookstore, worth going the extra few blocks for distinctive selections and customer service.

Following the national trend, local music shops are dwindling in Indianapolis, yet the survivors are beloved by the residents. **LUNA Music** (BR) is arguably the best music store in the city. New and used CDs and vinyl records line the shelves of this hometown darling. With a friendly staff and a large, diverse collection, anyone can find a new or a newly discovered favorite. Boasting the largest vinyl collection in the state, **Indy CD & Vinyl** (BR) should also be on the music lover's list of Indianapolis shops. The staff can assist you in buying or just sampling the varied collection with albums in all musical genres. Other vinyl hangouts include **Vibes** (BR) and **Larry and Jane's Record Shop** (FT).

Gifts and home shops

If you are looking for the perfect Indy souvenir or a quirky, unexpected gift idea, do not leave without popping over to **Silver in the City** (Mass). This gift store specializes in local and adorably eccentric knickknacks and home items. Its next-door neighbor, **Global Gifts** (Mass), is a fair trade gift shop with handmade items from artisans located in more than 35 countries. Each purchase helps to provide employment for struggling artists in the developing world. **Arts a**

Poppin is also a short walk down Mass Ave., and features art, crafts, and other kitschy items, where 170 local, regional, and national artists are represented. Also in the area is the toy wonderland, **Mass Ave Toys** (Mass), a must-see for every child and child-at-heart. Knitters should travel out to the **Mass Ave Knit Shop** (FT), Indy's premiere knitting store featuring weekly classes and online instructional videos in addition to a large yarn selection, and **Homespun** in Irvington has an amazing selection of soaps, craft supplies, jewelry, and funky art to bring life to your office or home. For a something a little different, or for specialty items, try the **Arsenal Game Room and Café** (FT), **Funkyard** (FT), or the **Indianapolis Children's Museum Store** (DT).

Fashion

The Circle City has fashions to outfit the whole family. For the little ones, **Nurture: Baby & Toddler** (Mass) is a great place to find beautiful and trendy, tiny clothes. One of the best local men's fashion stores is **J. Benzel Menswear** (Mass). This haberdashery can clothe the male librarian from day to evening. With women's fashion there are many options for the Indy area shopper. **Eye Candy** (Mass) is one of the best places for women's clothes and accessories. **Athena's Fashion Boutique** (FT) features one-of-kind dresses and separates; in addition, the selection of handmade jewelry and accessories is often rated best in the city. Combining vintage, urban, and bohemian into a fun, youthful selection, **Girly Chic Boutique** (BR) is a great place to peruse styles or to have a classic '80s montage trying on pieces in the vintage prom dress collection. Other trendy, local women's clothing stores include **Pitaya** (BR) and **Lucky B Boutique** (BR). Local shoppers with a sophisticated edge like **Snazzi Boutique** (BR), which specializes in one of kind apparel, artisan jewelry, fashion accessories, and home décor.

For one of the largest selections of shoes, try **Stouts** (Mass). Locally owned since 1886 and the oldest shoe store in the United States,

the variety of shoes will impress even the most discerning customer; they have a great return policy and they ship anywhere, even internationally.

Vintage/consignment stores

Indianapolis has some good vintage shopping opportunities. There is something about the growing Midwestern city that fills second-hand stores with rare and enjoyable classics.

White Dog (Mass) has beautiful, newfangled and timeworn home items, artwork, antique tchotchkes, clothes, and a modest collection of vintage cameras. A store with a similar mission, **indySWANK** (FT) is a lifestyle store containing high fashion vintage clothing and home goods surrounded by artwork on sale from local Indy artists. Vintage shopping is all about the selection: the bigger, the better.

Broad Ripple Vintage (BR) has one of the largest and most diverse selections of vintage apparel for men, women, and children ranging from bustiers to old Boy Scouts uniforms. Women's clothing, shoes, and accessories store **The Toggery** (BR) has a 20-year reputation in the consignment industry and regularly has top designer labels in stock. **Minx** (DT) also has vintage women's clothing with a fabulous selection of hats and other items from the '50s, '60s, and '70s. **Designer Men's Room** (BR) has upscale consignment apparel for men. Men can enjoy the sizable selection of stylish and affordable shoes, watches, cufflinks, and hats. *~*

Local information

- The Indianapolis Star: www.indystar.com
- NUVO: www.nuvo.net
- Indianapolis Monthly: www.indianapolismonthly.com
- For more Indy shopping information and pictures, visit our Shop Indy Pinterest page at pinterest.com/rkhuisman/shop-indy/.