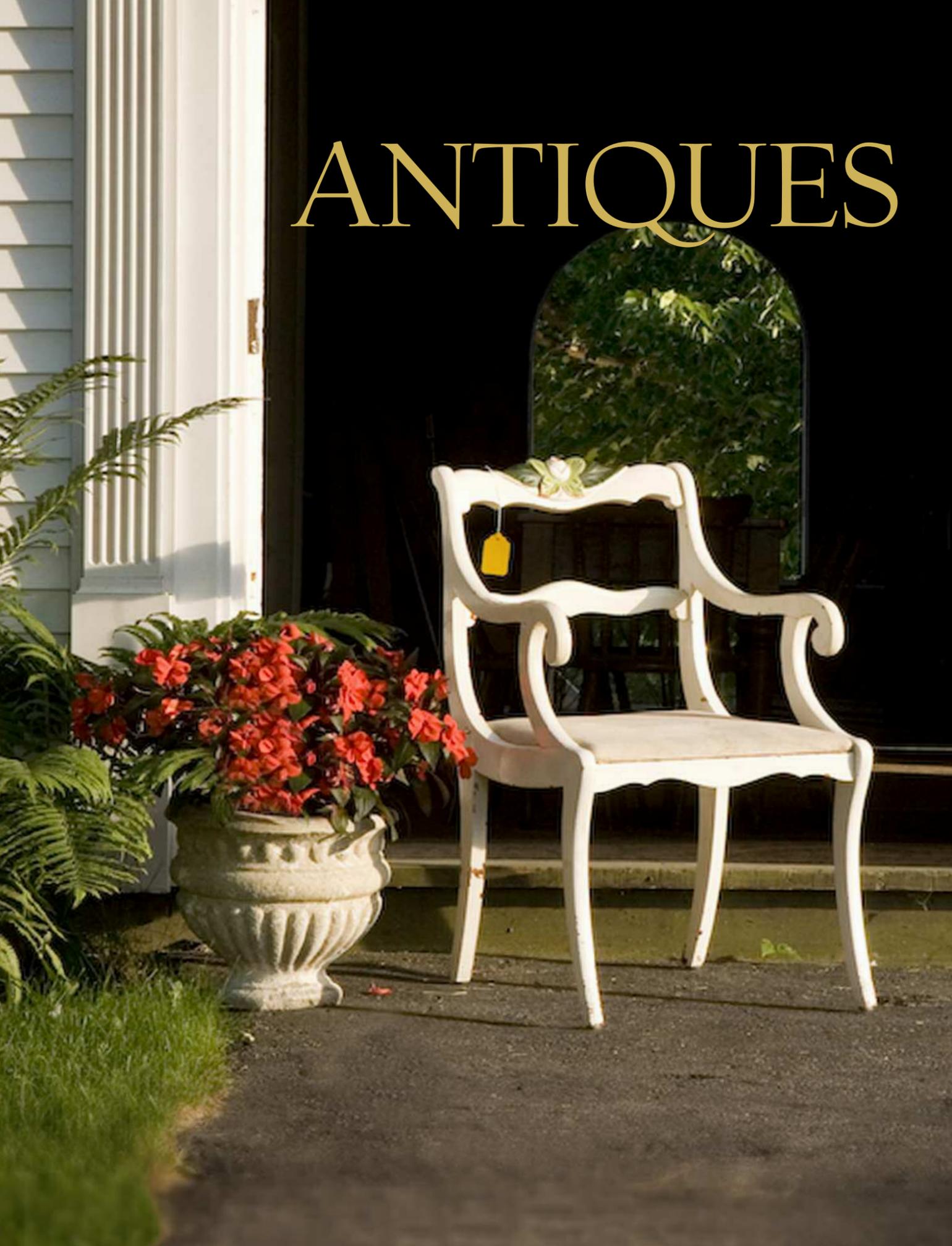


ANTIQUES

ROAD TOUR

All across the north, wonders and treasures lie in wait.



I run my hands across the chair's back and feel goose bumps on my neck. This classic rocker lazily perched inside Sunset Bay Antiques in Ludington has everything I was looking for in a rocking chair. Funny thing, until I laid eyes on it two seconds ago, I didn't even know I was looking for one.

It's a porch rocker, made for lemonade-laced afternoons and stolen naps. It's genteel and restful and graceful. I love the soothing creamy white paint—lovely, just right.

When I sit in it, I feel like there will always be a fresh supply of lake air, juicy novels and mint for juleps.

Sometimes antiques don't let you choose them; they choose you. The rocker is from an era when people were generally tinier, so the scaled-back arms fit my smallish forearms perfectly. It's high backed, so in the already comforting act of rocking, it cradles my shoulders and even my head. The astute sales women, sensing my goose bumps, tells me it's the exact make of a rocker once used on the porch of Mackinac Island's storied, lavish Grand Hotel.

I remember staying at that magnificent hotel as a kid, just once. My papa broke the strict evening coat-and-necktie rule, lending me his big-shouldered, tan summer sport coat so I could be snug and warm while rocking on the longest porch on Earth.

I make a quick phone call to my husband from the street. Despite my dramatic case for how much we need a rocker—this rocker—Andy hedges. He throws out a litany of reasons not to buy it. Winter is coming, and I need new tires. (It's June.) And won't it end up just a place to pile laundry? (Probably.)

The chair's white paint is so crisp and smooth, I can't bear to leave it. But I do.

Andy confides later that this urgent, out-of-the-blue rocking chair obsession was making him nervous. "I thought you wanted it for a baby," he says. Someday. But first, I'll knit some scarves. I'll rock and think. I'll finally cancel cable.

Over a summery steak-and-tomatoes supper with Andy's family, I lament leaving the rocker in Ludington.

After dinner, my mother-in-law Diane sneaks up the ladder to the attic in their 1880's house in Grayling. She comes down wielding a sturdy, dusty rocker. The chair has an aura of utility; it makes me think about darning socks and soaking tired toes in a bucket after a hard day. (Not mint juleps.) One of the bottom support rungs on is gone, the wood legs held together for decades by a now-rusty wire.

She told me it was in the house when they bought it and had been up in the attic ever since. "It's yours," she says.

I wipe it clean with a damp rag, paint it red and put it on my on my front stoop.

I like it very much. But the white beauty still haunts me.

It's two days before Christmas and we take the long way home to Grand Rapids (riding on our new spiffy and safe Nokian tires) down U.S. 31 by way of Ludington to pick up some of Anna Bach's Danish kringle for the morning. In the Christmas spirit, Andy says we can make another stop, at Sunset Bay Antiques. We crunch over the snowy street. Looking through the window, I crane my neck to see if my rocker is still there, all these months later, but all I can see in its spot is a cradle and a lamp.

Next time I get goose bumps like that I won't leave my love behind in Ludington. That, I realize, is what a weekend antique hunt is all about. Seizing the moment and letting intuition guide you. Striking while the iron's hot. Coming home with a rocker in your trunk, a beautiful piece of history that makes you feel alive.

TEXT BY **EMILY BETZ TYRA**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **TODD ZAWISTOWSKI**

The Northern days are turning crisp, perfect weather for a rambling antiques trip. Turn the pages for ideas for getting your Up North hunt started. ▶



COLLECTING Wanderlust

These antique items are all fairly easy to find across the north, and are a not-too-expensive way to start a collection. Pick a theme and see where it takes you.

- Old buttons** Adorn wrapped gifts with polka dots or use to embellish hand-written place cards at a dinner party.
- Souvenir pennants** Every town had them back in the 50's and 60's. Try pinning them to a bedspread.
- Scarves** Can be framed, worn, or used as window valance when hung in multiples on a rod.
- Vintage tablecloths** Use them for picnics or a garden party.
- Bowling pins** Use as a funky bookend, or make a lamp for a kid's room.
- Fishing lures** Arrange in a shadow box.
- Lightning rod insulators** Beautiful and curious when displayed in stacks—on a real vintage lightning rod.
- Magazines** Hang covers in a grid as art.
- Milk bottles** Use as vases for cut flowers.

- Pyrex glassware** Consider replacing plastic storage junk in the kitchen with classic Pyrex. Goes from freezer to oven or microwave, very durable, fun patterns and colors.
- Aprons** Look very cute hung on a string in a kitchen or laundry room.
- Depression glass** Pick your favorite color and collect only that color for a dramatic display. Pink and apple green are pretty easy to find, but there are many others.
- Wooden hangers** Hunt for them with different store and hotel names or advertisements on them. They're classy and classic in a guest closet.
- Doorknobs** Hang different ones side by side and use as hooks for coats or hats.—DIANE KOLAK AND EMILY TYRA

◀ Summer Everlasting

The United States Coast Guard mandated that life preservers be onboard pleasure crafts in the 50's, hence the boon of stylish **boat cushions** produced by Sears, Roebuck and Co. adorned with fun graphics fitting the times. Designs to look for are the common (navigation signals and knots) the rare (a marlin or a mermaid) the comical (two men fishing, asleep while fish jump out of the water) and the sexy (a woman in a yellow two-piece). Most collectors hang their cushions for display—think a screened-in porch or a beach house guest room—and so vintage cushions with two straps are more desirable than those whose straps have worn off through use. PHOTOGRAPHED AT WILSON ANTIQUES, TRAVERSE CITY.

▲ Life of Pie

Antique **cherry pitters** are a nostalgic and functional find from the fruit growing regions of the North. It's boggling to imagine the number of tart cherries that passed through a guillotine-like apparatus such as this—and the beautiful homemade pies they made. PHOTOGRAPHED AT MYERS' GRANARY ANTIQUE MARKET, BEULAH.

▶ Farmhouse Functional

While pretty arranged on a kitchen wall, with a little cleaning and care, **cast iron cookware** can be usable kitchen heirlooms. Look for skillets, muffin pans, trivets, bread molds, and kettles. Many of the pieces in current circulation were made-to-last by the Griswold Manufacturing Company of Erie, Pennsylvania, from 1865 until the late 1950's. Don't let a little rust or grime on your find worry you, heavy duty cast iron can be beautifully—and easily—restored (for a primer on how to clean and care for cast iron, check out panman.com). PHOTOGRAPHED AT MYERS' GRANARY ANTIQUE MARKET, BEULAH.



Handheld History

Hunt for +postcards depicting long-loved landmarks or travel postcards from a favorite Up North town. PHOTOGRAPHED AT MYERS' GRANARY ANTIQUE MARKET, BEULAH.



UP NORTH TRAVELER

Handpicked stops on your antique road tour, plus peaceful retreats antique lovers will love.

Bear Lake

Shop: Old School Antiques Mission-style and other furniture finds inside the late-1800's Warren Schoolhouse. Closed on Tuesday. 8532 CHIPPEWA HWY. (U.S. 31) BEAR LAKE, 231-889-4632, 4OLDSCHOOLANTIQUES.COM.

Stay: Bear Lake Manor Renovated Victorian on the shady streets of Bear Lake Village with a wraparound porch and turret, drawing room and ball room. \$100+ NIGHTLY, 7812 MAIN STREET, BEAR LAKE, 231-864-2242, BEARLAKEMANOR.NET.

Beulah

Shop: Myers' Granary Antique Market Wander past the original grain bins and chutes inside the 10,000-square-foot former Benzie County Co-op on your search for 1940's war and cowboy comics, stained glass, furniture, dishes, cast iron pots and pans and primitive collectibles from rural Northern Michigan. The shop offers local gourmet food samples and Leelanau Cellars wine tasting. 7300 CRYSTAL AVE., BEULAH, 231-882-9422

Stay: Crystal Crate & Cargo Suites Cozy, fresh and well-appointed hideaways above the Crystal Crate & Cargo store, just a few steps away Crystal Lake. Each suite includes a gourmet kitchen. \$800+/WEEK OR \$100+ NIGHTLY (AFTER SEPT. 15), 262 SOUTH BENZIE BLVD., BEULAH, 800-787-7366, CRYSTALCRATE.COM.

Petoskey

Shop: Joseph's World of Art & Antiques Housed in the old Resort Township Hall. Owner/appraiser Joseph McGee's breathtaking collection demonstrates his impeccable taste and deep knowledge of 19th and 20th century decorative arts. Look for paintings, bronze and art glass pieces. Joseph's World was named best antique store in Michigan by the *Detroit News* in 2003 and 2006. 2680 U.S. 31, PETOSKEY, 231-347-0121.

Stay: Stafford's Perry Hotel A gracious, stately yellow-brick beauty built in Petoskey's gaslight district in 1899 as a luxury resort hotel. Many rooms with private balconies overlooking Little Traverse Bay. \$85-\$269 NIGHTLY, 100 LEWIS ST., PETOSKEY, 800-737-1899, STAFFORDS.COM.

Silver Lake

Shop: Silver Hills Antique Mall A crisp white, century-old dairy barn a few miles from the Silver Lake Sand Dunes holds primitives, furniture, books, kitchenware, linen and lace, china, glassware, clothing, and antique farm equipment. Open through Labor Day, closed Tuesdays. 6780 WEST FOX RD., MEARS, 231-873-3905.

Stay: The Hexagon House Bed & Breakfast Built in Victorian splendor in 1870 as a boarding house for lumbermen visiting Pentwater. Set in three gorgeous manicured acres. \$115+ NIGHTLY, 760 SIXTH ST., PENTWATER, 231-869-4102, HEXAGONHOUSE.COM.

Elk Rapids

Shop: Antiques & All That Jazz Lighting and vintage jewelry. 108 DEXTER, ELK RAPIDS, 231-264-6136.

A Summer Place, Ltd. A cottagey collection of vintage linens, antique radios, furniture and china. 125 RIVER ST., ELK RAPIDS, 231-264-6556. **Elk Rapids Antique Warehouse** 8,000 square feet with Depression glass, stained glass, cottage furniture, vintage kitchenware and linens. 603 BRIDGE ST., ELK RAPIDS, 231-264-9192. **Harbor**

Antique Mall 35+ vendors in a former corner gas station. Among the treasures are vintage toasters —many still work—vintage gas pumps, salvaged wrought iron gates, pie safes and Munising bowls. 201 RIVER ST., ELK RAPIDS, 231-264-6850. **Lilacs Antiques** Find a large collection of leaded and stained glass windows, Royal Doulton figures, crockery, oak file cabinets and furniture in this open and lofty former cement factory. 965 GREEN ST., ELK RAPIDS, 231264-9491.

Stay: Yorkburg Manor Bed & Breakfast (12 MILES SOUTHEAST OF ELK RAPIDS), Welcoming, farmhouse-sweet 1896 homestead close to the magnificent trails of the Sand Lakes Quiet Area. \$110+ NIGHTLY THROUGH OCTOBER. 5721 N. BROOMHEAD RD., WILLIAMSBURG, 877-310-9675, YORKBURGMANOR.COM

Traverse City

Shop: Rolling Hills Antiques Housed in a rambling dairy barn; specializing in early American, primitive, early 1900's and Victorian furniture.

Stay: Warwickshire Inn Traverse City's first bed & breakfast. An antique-filled country farmhouse perched on a hill next to Rolling Hills Antiques. \$75+ NIGHTLY, 5037 BARNEY ROAD, TRAVERSE CITY, 231-946-7176 WARWICKINN.NET

Shop: Wilson Antique Mall Four floors for 40 dealers in the historic Old Town section of Traverse City. 123 S. UNION ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-946-4177, WILSONANTIQUEMALL.COM

Stay: Wellington Inn A glorious neo-classical mansion in the heart of a historic Traverse City neighborhood; all rooms lavished with period antiques. \$195+ NIGHTLY, 230 WELLINGTON ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 877-968-9900, WELLINGTONINN.COM

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