

# East Hollywood is a shopping mecca for vintage and one-of-a-kind items

By **JESSICA RITZ**

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**A**lthough some zealous real estate agents might will the areas around Vermont, Virgil, Melrose and Fountain avenues to meld with Los Feliz or Silver Lake, East Hollywood has always had its own identity. Los Angeles City College, once an early campus of UCLA, is an anchor of this vibrant, diverse residential community with its multiple commercial districts and variety of architectural styles, from Arts and Crafts to Midcentury Modern.

The Melrose and Heliotrope node in the shadow of the 101 Freeway is known informally as Hel-Mel and the bicycle district, thanks to the staunch presence of Orange 20 Bikes. The Faculty, on Heliotrope, is a good place for the shopping-weary to rest and have a snack.

Meanwhile, the evolution of landmarks such as Jensen's Melrose Theatre, currently home to the Ukrainian Culture Center, reflects complex demographic changes. The district includes Thai Town and Little Armenia. To this cultural richness and aesthetic variety, more stores lately are contributing their design savvy.

## **Heliotrope-Melrose**

### **Eric Berg's Early California Antiques**

Eric Berg's floor-to-ceiling emporium in what by all appearances was a movie theater built during the 1930s is an immersive experience in California heritage and aesthetics. Berg's expertise in Spanish Colonial Revival, Arts and Crafts, Monterey- and Mission-style furniture and accessories rivals that of museum curators. "We're a good historical fit for the neighborhood," Berg said. Looking for a specific piece of California-made ceramics or a hand-painted 19th century wooden dresser? Go see Berg. There's also a section dedicated to Spanish antiques from the 17th through the 19th centuries, and he specializes in fine arts from the Golden State, such as original works by artists Ejnar Hansen and Sam Hyde Harris.

4361 Melrose Ave.; (323) 953-8330, [earlycaliforniaantiques.com](http://earlycaliforniaantiques.com)

### **Hutch Vintage**

Hutch Vintage is a family affair. Owner Natalie Hutcheson's sister, Emily, makes the handmade

jewelry and stationery on display, and their mother, Connie, helps staff the store. Hutcheson brings back clothing, housewares and accessibly priced vintage furnishings from her own shopping sprees. Hutch also sells cutting boards handmade with wood sourced from northern Wisconsin by Captain Mike, a.k.a. Natalie and Emily's father.

706 N. Heliotrope Drive; (323) 872-6798, [hutchvintage.com](http://hutchvintage.com)

### Clad Home

Interior designer Rosa Beltran has moved from Silver Lake to this bright Melrose location with enough room for her studio and a showroom for the tailored, retro-inspired furnishings she designs and combines with patterned pillows, vintage goods and collectibles.

4306 Melrose Ave.; (323) 868-9738, [www.cladhome.com](http://www.cladhome.com)

### Virgil-Melrose

#### Sqirl

Crowds line up outside to savor Jessica Koslow's seasonal breakfast and lunch dishes that also showcase her famous jams. The limited square footage in the restaurant (designed by Project Room and featuring an open kitchen) makes eating inside a cozy experience — and makes outdoor seating necessary. "I couldn't have imagined" the amount of pedestrian traffic that's now on the block, Koslow said. She sees a particular geographic advantage to being in East Hollywood. "Because it's in this middle zone, it's easy to get to. We're not nestled in Atwater or Echo Park, so it's broader." Architect Barbara Bestor is designing Sqirl Away next door, a provisions shop with beer and wine, scheduled to open in early summer.

720 N. Virgil Ave.; (323) 284-8147, [sqirlla.com](http://sqirlla.com)

#### Twig & Twine

Floral designer Heather Williams doesn't limit her retail creativity to a single medium. At her boutique and studio near Sqirl, she stocks carefully selected cookbooks and coffee-table tomes, ceramics, personal accessories and other goods that serve as compatible accompaniments to her stunning, naturalistic floral arrangements. Light + Ladder hanging planters and Little Korboose tea towels make for ideal hostess gifts or small additions to perk up your own home. In addition to giving floral design lessons, Williams regularly offers the space to other crafters and artisans for hands-on workshops.

716 N. Virgil Ave.; (323) 660-4100, [twigandtwinedesign.com](http://twigandtwinedesign.com)

## Fountain Avenue

### Motley

Joshua Keys took over the Fountain Avenue storefront last year and remodeled the interior to accommodate his wide-ranging selection of furnishings, home goods and decorative arts. The self-described jack-of-all-trades is a skilled craftsman who comes from a family of iron workers in Michigan, so he personally installed the new birch plywood flooring, shelving, a sliding catwalk shelf and even the channel letters on the store's blade sign. (He also holds a master's in landscape architecture from the University of Michigan.) While Keys still maintains a warehouse and studio in Long Beach, he was charmed by "the quaintness" of the stretch where the former Cedars of Lebanon Hospital, now owned by the Church of Scientology, looms large over a low-slung commercial cluster and the restaurant Square One attracts daytime foot traffic. Motley L.A.'s inventory includes pieces from the mid-1950s through the 1970s, including Danish Modern furniture, decorative metalwork by Curtis Jere and classic Milo Baughman pieces, many of which Keys has restored. He's used modest square footage to maximum effect. "I've always liked creating different moments," Keys said.

4876 Fountain Ave.; (562) 508-6732, <http://www.motley.la>

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