



PHOTO CREDIT: TIMLYN VAUGHAN PHOTOGRAPHY

SHINY and BRIGHT:

New Shops Liven Up the West Chester Holiday Shopping Experience

NEW SHOPS & OLD FAVORITES ARE HOLIDAY READY

Cara Corridoni

STOREFRONTS ARE WRAPPED IN PINE. LIGHTS are twinkling. Shop windows are decked out in their holiday best. You can almost hear Bing Crosby singing, “It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas...” Or maybe that’s the Uptown Singers performing on the Historic Courthouse steps?

Christmas in West Chester is back with all the charm you’ve come to expect. Only this year, as you make your way up a snow-covered Gay Street (one can hope), you’ll find a bounty of exciting new shopping options tucked in between the tried and true gift deliverers.

LET’S TAKE YOU TO CHURCH ... STREET

Let’s begin this shopping journey under the holiday lights of Church Street. The already-charming side street is being included this year in the Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce’s popular “Lights Up West Chester” program, making it all the merrier.

Church Street is also home to a trio of noteworthy stops. West Chester’s newest coffee shop, **Twin Valley Coffee**, is located on the ground floor of the Church Street Market House (120 N. Church). This is the third location for the local roasters, whose rich, creamy coffee is known to draw fanatics from miles around. Grab a holiday latte and some expert-approved coffee paraphernalia for the caffeine lover on your list. Have a coffee devotee in the family? Twin Valley offers refillable growlers. Gift a filled growler now and the recipient can refill it at a discount in the future. Coffee lasts about two weeks.

After our caffeine fix, let’s head across the hall to **Turks Head Wines**, a new package shop delivering handcrafted Northern California wines to our area. In January 2022, owner Allison Owen decided to leave the corporate world behind to pursue her passion for world-class wine. Today she sources fruit and produces a diverse portfolio of approachable yet elegant wines. Grab a bottle or two for your next holiday party. Pair with a wine accessory for a perfect hostess gift.

Now that we’re properly caffeinated, and armed with a few bottles of wine, let’s head across the street to the **Green House**, an adorable plants-and-more shop that opened this summer (107 N. Church). While the rest of the world is brown and barren, this little shop is an oasis of green. Choose from a selection of hardy house plants homed in cement pottery made by owner Peter Giuffre. With potted plants ranging from \$15 to \$65, you’ll be tempted to swap all your hostess bouquets for something that lasts long past your visit. Handmade, staff-curated gift baskets are also available.

GO TO GAY STREET

Turn the corner and head to Gay Street, where you’ll find many of your old favorites. But stay sharp because sprinkled along the way are some fun new finds.

First, go west to **Pomp West Chester** (141 W. Gay). Inside you’ll find a one-of-a-kind collection of small-batch, ethically sourced decor and home goods. The Moroccan Market Basket is gorgeous and surprisingly versatile. Or win



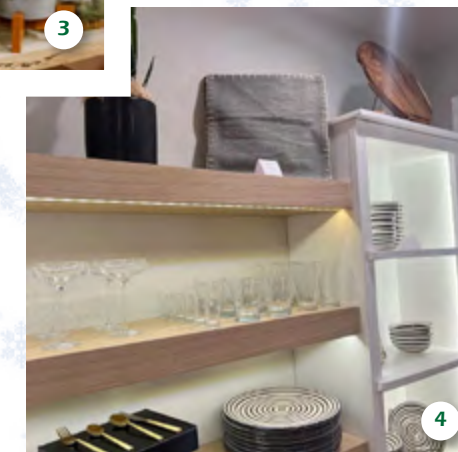
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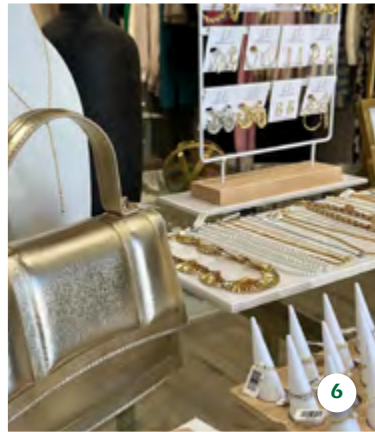
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1. **Twin Valley Coffee** // 2. **Turks Head Wines** // 3. **Green House** // 4. **Pomp**

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with a gift of a chunky wool blanket sure to warm the spirits and the toes of just about anyone on your holiday list.

Next head east and up the stairs to **Solome** (117 W. Gay), a fashion house featuring contemporary women's, men's and kids' clothing. West Chester-based designer Solome Katongole specializes in using bold fabrics and distinctive shapes to create stand-out designs. Wow the crowd at the holiday party with an elegant gown or spice up your winter staples with a bold designer jacket.

HEAD TO HIGH STREET

Next on to **Bobbles and Lace** (125 N. High), another new boutique. According to owner Crystal Gambardella, Bobbles and Lace offers high fashion at an affordable price. But it's not just the clothes that make this shop worth visiting. "What sets us apart is our styling experience. Every client who walks in will be styled head to toe, whether they leave with one piece or a whole wardrobe," says Gambardella. They also offer private shopping events. So, why not gather a couple of friends and knock the holiday shopping out together while enjoying light refreshments, a 15% discount and lots of laughs?

Right next door is another West Chester newbie generating a lot of chatter, **Mayday Coffee** (125 N. High St.). It opened earlier this year in the retail space regular visitors will recognize as the former longtime home of women's clothier Jane Chalfant. The new location has a distinctly different look and feel, but not all is forgotten. The bold red Jane Chalfant signature can still be spotted out back. Inside you'll find a laid-back West Coast vibe and a curated collection of gifts. Order a handcrafted drink to sip while you peruse hand-poured 1502 Candles and select Poppy & Pout chapsticks for all the lips on your list.

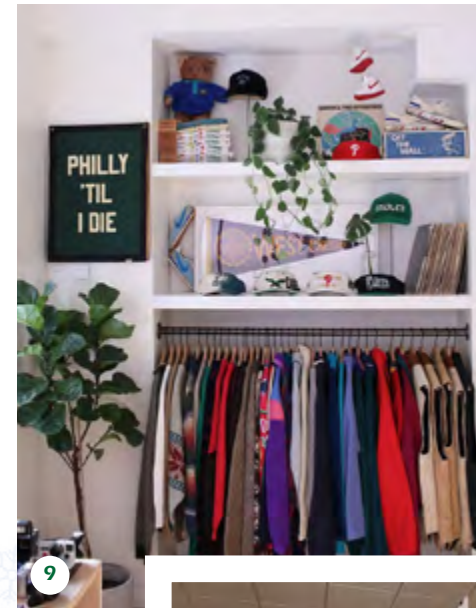
If a change-up from coffee is what you need, how about a spot of tea? Continue south on High Street past the old Courthouse and the splendor of West Chester's 25-foot Christmas tree to **Mimi's Tea Cottage** (30 S. High). Enter a traditional

English tea room filled with floral garlands, brocade chairs and dainty tea cups. Plan to meet friends for a full afternoon tea service, including a selection of sandwiches, scones and pastries. Mimi's also carries a selection of unique tea-themed gift items.

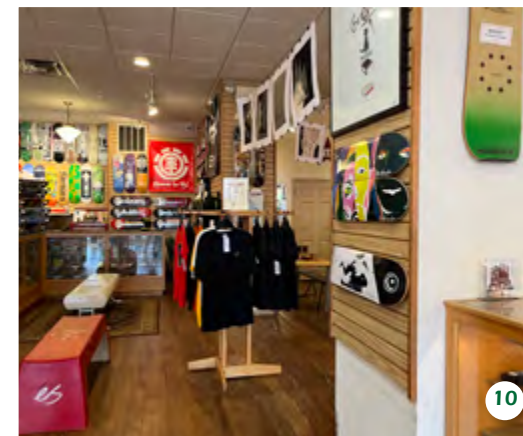
Refreshed and revived, head back out on the street again, this time to **Jawn Supply** (40 S. High), a vintage clothing store specializing in throw-back Ts, sweatshirts, sports apparel and jeans. Merchandise moves quickly in this store, so every day brings a new find. A must-stop if you have Phillies, Eagles, Sixers or Flyers fans on your list.

A FINAL STOP

Now, one last stop before we stash all our treasures and find a place to cozy up with a cocktail and rest



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Old Favorites

Yes, there are plenty of new stops to shop, but a trip to West Chester just wouldn't be the same without a visit to these longtime favorites.

Malena's Vintage Boutique. No one quite knows how to throw a holiday shopping party like Malena's. Expect music, refreshments and rack after rack of the best finds in the business. After 20 years, it's reassuring to know vintage never goes out of style. 101 W. Gay.

Sunset Hill Jewelers. There are few gifts that thrill like jewelry, and Sunset Hill Jewelers has been brightening Christmas mornings for 30 years. Not sure where to find the shop? Just look for the bright red bow that wraps the outside of their shop each holiday season. 23 N. High.

Kaly. Women's clothier and hostess gift destination, Kaly has been coming to the rescue of holiday shoppers for the last 35 years. With a proven selection of the practical, beautiful and funny (who doesn't need a kitchen towel with sass?), this is a perennial favorite. Plus, they gift wrap. 37 W. Gay.

The 5 Senses. Each year this gift shop stocks a unique collection of handmade ornaments, including ornaments in materials from hand-blown glass to felt. You'll need to stop in to see what kind of wonders they have in stock this year. 133 W. Market.

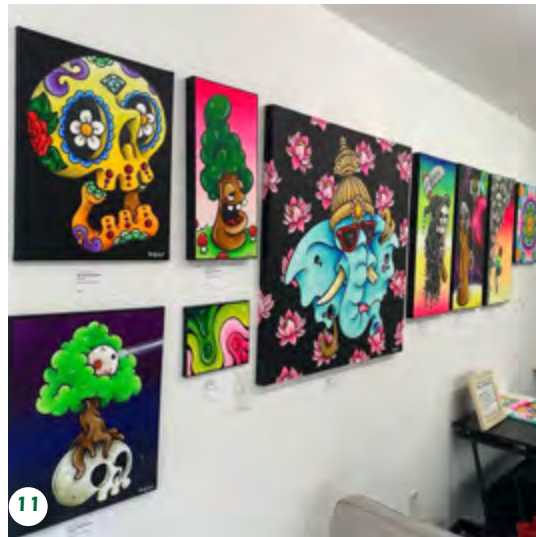
Visual Expansion Gallery. What better surprise to find under the tree than a piece of original artwork? The Visual Expansion Gallery has been delighting the West Chester community with an impressive selection of attainable artwork since 1975. 132 N. High.

Taylor's Music. There's something timeless about the gift of music, and Taylor's has been doing it better than anyone in the region for more than 90 years. Choose from an impressive selection of instruments, accessories and sheet music. Throw in a few lessons for good measure. 116 W. Gay.

Fairman's Skate Shop. Serving the skateboard community since 1977, Fairman's reliably delivers wins in one of the toughest gifting categories of all time — boys 12 to 17. Choose from boards, kicks or one of their signature T-shirts. 43 W. Gay.

5. Solome // 6. Bobbles and Lace // 7. Mayday Coffee // 8. Mimi's Tea Cottage

9. Jawn Supply // 10. Fairman's Skate Shop



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11. Corner Art Collective

our weary soles. This one is just a little outside the downtown district. In the former home of a neighborhood corner store is the new **Corner Art Collective** (341 S. Matlack), a modern art gallery operated by artists. In this narrow space, you'll find bold works of art from a fresh collection of local artists. Don't expect traditional landscapes or muted colors. Everything here is intense, and whimsy is embraced.

With our bags full and our list in tatters, it's time to make our way back to town for a well-earned celebratory happy hour and dinner. And be content to know that this holiday season is sure to be bright ... in part because you shopped local and supported new businesses in their first year! ♦

West Chester Events

THROUGH DECEMBER 17

West Chester Railroad. Santa Express: *Through Dec. 17*, join Santa for a journey through the Chester Creek Valley. **Christmas Tree Train:** *Nov. 26, Dec. 3, 10*, take the train to Wiggins Tree Farm. *Trains depart the station at 203 E. Market St., \$10-\$35. Times and tickets, WCRailroad.com.*



**THROUGH JANUARY 2

Holiday Weekends in West Chester. Every weekend features West Chester's dazzling 25-foot-tall Christmas tree and the Professional Gingerbread House Competition. *Dec. 1*, West Chester Christmas Parade, tree lighting at 6:30 pm on the lawn of the courthouse and the West Chester Christmas Parade

at 7 pm features marching bands, cheer squads and dance teams, culminating with Santa on his very own custom-made float. *Dec. 2, 9, 16*, Making Spirits Bright Holiday Music Series on the steps of the courthouse. Catch Santa cruising through the borough on a classic fire truck. For details, *GreaterWestChester.com*.

**THROUGH JANUARY 2

Gingerbread House Competition. Professional builders include: Cakes and Candies by Maryellen, Carlino's, John Serock Catering, Kilwins West Chester, Yori's Church Street Bakery and The Master's Baker. To vote, visit display locations and scan the QR code there. *GreaterWestChester.com*.

THROUGH JANUARY 5

"Gifted"—18th Annual Holiday Exhibit at The Art Trust. Give the gift of original art. 20 talented artists' work is for sale — paintings, ceramics, fiber art and more. Net proceeds of art sales go towards art scholarships. *Dec. 7*, Bourbon & Bubbles, 5 to 8. 16 W. Market St. Gallery hours, Mon-Fri, 9 to 4:30. *TheArtTrust.org*.

DECEMBER 1-29

Holiday Events at Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center. *Dec. 1*, The Holiday Cheer Show; *Dec. 6*, Accent: An A Cappella Holiday; *Dec. 7*, Constantine Maroulis; *Dec. 8*, Hypothetical House Band; *Dec. 14*, Nefesh Mountain Holiday Show; *Dec. 15*, Holidays in Hollywood; *Dec. 17*, *The Nuttiest Nutcracker*; *Dec. 19*, The Cartoon Christmas Trio; *Dec. 20*, The Last Big Band with Erich Cawalla and Tony DeSantis; *Dec. 22*, Twelve Twenty-Four: The Holiday Rock Orchestra; *Dec. 23*, A Dream is a Wish; *Dec. 29*, Ballets with a Twist. 226 N. High St. 610-356-2787; *UptownWestChester.org*.

**DECEMBER 2

Santa at the Square. The borough of West Chester will host pictures with Santa at Marshall Square Park, 405 N. Franklin St. 4:30 to 6:30. *DowntownWestChester.com*.

DECEMBER 2

Breakfast with Santa. Come over to the Chester County History Center to meet Santa and enjoy breakfast. 9:30 to 11 am. 225 N. High St. \$15. Pre-registration req. *West-Chester.com*.

DECEMBER 2

2023 West Chester Charity Ball. Friends Association celebrates 200 years of serving families in our community, and the Charity Ball has helped in their mission to end homelessness in Chester County. Enjoy dinner, music, dancing, auctions and more. West Chester Golf & Country Club, 111 W. Ashbridge St. 6:30 pm. \$200. *FriendsAssoc.org/Charity-Ball-2023*.

DECEMBER 2-17

West Chester Public Library Holiday Home Tour and Holiday Door Tour. See *Holiday House Tours* in this issue.

**DECEMBER 9

Photos with Santa. Bring your camera and your kiddos to M&T Bank in downtown West Chester for free photos with Santa and free hot chocolate and coffee. 10 N. High St. 2 to 4 pm. Hosted and sponsored by M&T Bank.

DECEMBER 9

American Helicopter Museum Presents SantaFest 2023. Santa arrives by helicopter at 11 am ready to hear children's wish lists in the colorful Santa's Workshop. Bring your cameras for pictures with Santa and Mrs. Claus. SantaFest will feature holiday-themed crafts and movies in the theater. Friends from Paws for People will be there, too. 1220 American Blvd. 10 to 3. \$7-\$10. *AmericanHelicopter.Museum*.

DECEMBER 9-10

4th Annual Christkindlmarkt. A 2-day holiday market featuring over 90 vendors offering individually handcrafted and locally designed products, such as art, ceramics, jewelry, homewares, food and more. Hosted by Chester County Art Assoc. and Downtown West Chester. Gay St. (between Darlington & Matlack Sts.) Sat, 1 to 8; Sun, 11 to 4. Free. *DowntownWestChester.com/Christkindlmarkt*.



DECEMBER 15-17

Brandywine Ballet Presents The Nutcracker. Ring in the season with Tchaikovsky's timeless score and be transported with Clara to the magical Land of Sweets. West Chester University, Emilie K. Asplundh Concert Hall, 700 S. High St. Fri, 10 am & 6 pm; Sat, 11 am & 5 pm; Sun, 11 am & 3 pm. \$30-\$50. 610-696-2711; *BrandywineBallet.org*.

**DECEMBER 17

Touch a Truck. Head for the parking lot at the corner of Chestnut and Church Streets. See ambulances, police and West Chester Fire Department trucks, along with some construction vehicles. Meet the firefighters, get hands-on with a firetruck and more. Hosted by the West Chester Business Improvement District.

***Part of Chester County Hospital Lights Up Holiday Weekends in West Chester, presented by the Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce. Visit GreaterWestChester.com.*

Holiday Shopping Guide

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|---|--|
| 1. Tish Kids | 30. Erica Brown Studios |
| 2. Old Soul | 31. The 5 Senses |
| 3. Bobbles & Lace | 32. Mainline Custom Clothiers |
| 4. Mayday Coffee & Shop | 33. Kaplan's Fine Jewelry |
| 5. Artistic Eyewear | 34. HOP Fidelity |
| 6. Paper Moon Custom Stationery | 35. Kilwins West Chester |
| 7. Visual Expansion Gallery | 36. La Chic Boutique |
| 8. Sabrina Ann Couture | 37. Coins of Chester County |
| 9. Big Diamond Importers & Fine Jewelry | 38. Sunset Hill Jewelers Fine Arts Gallery |
| 10. Salty Paws | 39. Pine + Quill |
| 11. KALY | 40. Tish Boutique |
| 12. Fairman's Skate Shop | 41. David Katz Gallery |
| 13. Green House | 42. Prince of Puff |
| 14. Le Berger | 43. Ever After Bridal |
| 15. Turks Head Cafe | 44. Woman's Exchange |
| 16. Turks Head Wine | 45. Church Street Gallery |
| 17. Kerkula's Jewelry | 46. All the Dogs |
| 18. Solome | 47. Vida Beale Consignment |
| 19. Vape & Beyond | 48. Art Trust Gallery at Meridian Bank |
| 20. Malena's Vintage Boutique | 49. Éclat Chocolate |
| 21. Precision Eye Care | 50. Bryn Mawr Running Co. |
| 22. May 23 Clothing & Accessories | 51. A Taste of Olive |
| 23. Creep Records | 52. Mimi's Tea Cottage |
| 24. Pomp West Chester | 53. Kati Mac Floral Design |
| 25. H. Rose Boutique | 54. Jawn Supply |
| 26. Blink | 55. Ginkgo Arts |
| 27. Green Eyed Lady | 56. Phineas Gage |
| 28. Taylor's Music Store & Studio | 57. G-Spot Modern Retro Thrift Boutique |
| 29. Thistle Be Perfect | 58. Corner Art Collective |

Downtown West Chester

