

Features

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Shopper's Delight

Jennifer Polanz

I'd forgotten how overwhelming it is to enter Building 1 of AmericasMart in downtown Atlanta in January, tasked with rooting out the new and fabulous among three buildings and multiple floors of products. It's a bit daunting and my pedometer crossed 10,000 steps before 1:00 p.m. each day as I criss-crossed the buildings in search of garden, home and holiday pieces worthy of these pages.

But, boy, did I find what I was looking for. I perused the aisles of the temporaries in garden, holiday, gift and gourmet food before hitting the permanent showrooms for garden, some gift (there's too much gift), home décor (there's also too much home décor) and Christmas. Whew. I'm tired again just thinking about it. And it proves the point that what's required before touching down at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is a good game plan for how to merchandise, promote and sell the products you'll find at the market.

I'll leave the game plan to you, but for my part, here's just a taste of what I saw, separated by category.

Gifts & Home Accents



Burgeon & Ball introduced a new line of gifts for gardeners in five different patterns. Each of the patterns includes items like tools, notebooks, gloves, umbrellas, plant stakes, twine in a decorative tin, kneelers, mugs and watering cans.

Eleven Point debuted the River Rock collection of candles last year. There are nine scents total in the collection and they come in funky treated glass holders that can be repurposed once the candle has been fully burned. Eleven Point's artisanal candles are made in the U.S.A.

The glass bowls and tealight holders at Emilio Robba Paris were so elegant and striking I had to stop by to find out more information. The artist, Emilio Robba, is Italian, but was raised in France, where his original store is located. These bowls feature beautiful orchids, succulents and other types of flowers in resin, encased between walls of glass.



Bee jewelry from Metal Monk Handmade Jewelry & Gifts caught my eye in the temporaries. Bees are hot this year, as you'll see in a bit. These bracelets and necklaces are made in artist Donya Lynn O'Brien's Long Island studio. The bee line comes in assorted colors and styles with a variety of sayings, including "happy," "loved," "adored," "strong," "free," "confident," "blessed" and "cherished," among others.

Looking for something unique, gardening-related and that can be given as a gift? B. dazzle offers brain-teaser puzzles with a variety of garden-related imagery, including hummingbirds, wildflowers and more, all with a written description of the images on the back. These puzzles come in UV-resistant, heavy plastic packaging that will hold up to moisture in the greenhouse or store.

The New Jersey-based Better Bee is in its second year of offering its line of products made with honey and beeswax from their farm. Their products include lotions, bug repellants, after-bite cream and bath salts, among others. Co-owner Lisa Neidig—who runs the company with her husband, Brian—says they initially got the bees to help pollinate their garden on the farm.

Not enough bee-related product yet? Here's one more. Honey House Naturals offers a solid lotion bar in a variety of scents, like vanilla, citrus, Hawaiian, Lavender, Meadow and Honey. Retailers can order sets of 18 or 12 assorted or they can order customer's choice in sets of 18 or 12. There's a larger size and smaller, as well as lip butter, hand soap, shampoo and conditioner, and gift sets. All of the products are made in the USA.

Garden Products



SuperMoss showcased its Beneficial Bug Houses in the temporaries at the show, which are designed to attract and house beneficial insects like solitary bees, lacewings, earwigs, ladybugs and butterflies. The houses came in different sizes depending on the beneficials or came in a large size that attracted all five types.

The new individually named Blob House planters from Georgetown Home & Garden garnered lots of interest from buyers this winter. They come in a variety of fun sizes and facial expressions, and all have a drain hole for use outside. They're created by Portland artist Gesine Kratzner.

Allsop Home & Garden featured new printed solar lanterns at the show. Each lantern collapses flat for storage and includes a stainless steel hanging handle, solar panel, photo light sensor, AAA rechargeable battery and bright LED light.



Kitras Art Glass is a Canadian company created by glass blower Stephen Kitras highlighting new solar lights, fairy orbs and blown glass bird seed hangars (pictured) at the show. These beautiful works of art are made in the studio in Fergus, Ontario.

New owls from Designer Stone take the fun of this trend to the next level. These cast-stone pieces of artwork are all made in the USA at the studio in Ramona, California. The company also makes a beautiful cast-stone gardener's chess set sealed for outdoor use. **GP**