

Small-town Shopping

Between Oklahoma City and Dallas, Ardmore boasts a couple of unique shops that are worth a visit.

Stop off I-35 in Ardmore (Exit 31), and you'll find a quiet town keeping a leisurely pace. We strolled our way through and found some neat shops that you won't want to miss.

Gardens and Clothing

Owner Maria Edwards Wilkinson gained her love of clothing and gifts from her work experience with Neiman Marcus and Stanley Korshak. After renovating a 1930s cottage in town, she blended her many interests in Maria's Garden, which is part nursery, clothing boutique, gallery, florist, and home and garden decor shop.

Among the comfortable clothing, gifts, and accessories, you'll find works by Ardmore artists displayed throughout. "I love hanging paintings in this house because I know it gives people an idea of what it will look like in their own homes," says Maria. One artist shares her mosaic picture frames, mirrors, and birdhouses. Another shows handmade greeting cards



above: Maria's Garden shop is housed in a renovated 1930s home.

below: Macy Davenport and Kim Ratcliffe taught preschool together before opening Sunnybrooke Bead Company.

and her fused glass jewelry. The property is also dotted with a sculptor's metal art made from found objects. "We support the arts," says Maria.

Just Bead It

You would think with the funky items here, Sunnybrooke Bead Company would attract a young crowd. Co-owner Kim Ratcliffe says, "Women of all ages come in every week to bead, and teenagers come to make jewelry for dances or other fancy events."



above: Garden Lady, a sculpture at Maria's Garden made from found objects by a local artist, was created from a 19th-century lawn mower.

Kim owns the store with Macy Davenport. Both were preschool teachers when they had a wild hair to open a bead store. "People love making their own necklaces, bracelets, and earrings because they can tailor them

to their own styles," says Kim. Most jewelry starts around \$7, depending on the beads used. With Swarovski Astral crystal beads, sterling silver beads, and seed beads on hand, you can get as fancy as you desire.

The beads are the draw, but you'll also find candles, picture frames, jewelry, and cards. "We've filled this place with just a little bit of everything," says Kim. **TANNER C. LATHAM**

Maria's Garden: 112 Wheeler, Ardmore, OK 73401; (580) 223-2500 or www.mariagarden.net. **Sunnybrooke Bead Company:** 17 North Washington; (580) 223-9111.



PHOTOGRAPH BY BOB MOOREHEAD