

Shop talk! The 100 best small shops in Ireland

From the best bakeries, boutiques and bookshops to vintage treasure troves, wonderful wine retailers and small speciality stores, our writers pick their favourite independent shops around the country

Amo & Pax, Kilmacanogue, Co Wicklow



Amanda Pratt at her store, Amo & Pax. Photo by Steve Humphreys

In Wicklow, a new type of shopping experience is putting a spin on slow luxury. Owner Amanda Pax, former creative director at Avoca, has come full circle, returning to the former Avoca HQ where she once worked and bringing with her that hands-on attitude, savvy sense of style and creative flair.

“I worked here every day for over two decades alongside my mum and dad, so it has a powerful connection for me,” says Pax, who set about reshaping the former factory, stripping the asbestos roof, punching in big windows in the walls upstairs and knocking out the rabbit warren corridor of offices. She is still surrounded by a menagerie of visual motifs and pretty trinkets, but instead of looms and handweavers, there are French butter dishes and McNutt throws, terracotta fruit bowls, interesting glassware, books that ‘feed our thinking’, glass cabinets with floral inlays, fine jewellery, ceramics, and a small collection of well-crafted fashion pieces. There’s even an on-site tailor to mend and sew, and reimagine, your favourite pieces. The retail experience is designed to encourage thoughtful shopping, which goes beyond the shop floor with an event space upstairs, designed for creative minds and wellbeing. “What is common across what you’ll find here is an attitude, a set of values; we are looking to offer a different sort of retail experience, something with meaning, with a more conscious, sustainable, purposeful perspective.”

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