

THE 50 BEST Antiques shops

Whether you're after fantastic furniture or perfect paintings, **Kate Watson-Smyth** offers the experts' guide to affordable auctions and sky's-the-limit galleries

LONDON

1. The London Silver Vaults

"In this remarkable centre there are some 30 dealers in antique and contemporary silver of every kind from tableware to candlesticks," says John Andrews. "It's a great place to shop for anything silver for gifts both large and small." **Where** Chancery House, 35-64 Chancery Lane, WC2A 1QS (020-7242 3844; www.the-silver-vaults.com)

2. John Carlton-Smith

"If ever there was a true gentleman of the antiques world it has to be John," says Mark. "He specialises in clocks - longcase, mantel and bracket, he's been buying and selling them for 30 years, and is incredibly knowledgeable. He never does a hard sell but he doesn't need to as his clocks are so carefully chosen they almost sell themselves." **Where** 19 Ryder Street, SW1Y 6PX (020-7030 6622; www.fineantiqueclocks.com)



3. Grays Antiques Market

Situated in the heart of Mayfair, with over 200 antiques dealers, Grays is a focus of the London antiques scene and home to some of its leading dealers, says John Ainsley. "The range of stock is diverse, from £5-£500,000 and the quality is second to none. Dealers are both knowledgeable and approachable and the ambience is totally reassuring. Parking isn't a problem as Bond Street Tube Station is just a stone's throw away." **Where** 1-7 Davies Messes, London, W1K 5AB (020-7029 7034; www.graysantiques.com)

4. Godson & Coles

"If you need inspiration for how to display the finest antiques in the modern home, this is the place to go," says Mark.



Obscure objects of desire: family business Apter-Fredericks has been selling refined English furniture for more than 60 years (4)

"The quality of what is on offer is of the very best. He chooses his pieces carefully and has an exceptional eye. I can think of few dealers who manage to combine their stock with such effortlessness." **Where** 92 Fulham Road, SW3 6HR (020-7384 2200; www.godsonandcoles.co.uk)

5. Alfies Antiques

This is well known but still worth including, says John Ainsley. "Here you will find professionalism, vetting, quality control and myriad specialisms and stock from a few pounds to over £50,000, supported by a full range of facilities including a rooftop restaurant." **Where** 13-25 Church Street, Marylebone, NW8 8DT (020-7725 6066; www.alfiesantiques.com)

This week's panel

Mark Dodgson, secretary general of the British Association of Antique Dealers (www.bada.org); John Ainsley, editor of 'Antiques Info' (www.antiques-info.co.uk); John Andrews, editor of 'Antique Collecting' magazine (www.antiquecollectorsclub.com); Fiona Ford of Lapada, the UK's largest association of professional art and antiques dealers (www.lapada.org)

THE INFORMATION

9. The Antique Trader at the Millinery Works

This is the place to go for Arts and Crafts furniture and artefacts, with plenty of space, lots of knowledge and a wide selection of famous names such as Voysey, Gimson, Heal, Glasgow School, Cotterolds and many more, says John Andrews. **Where** 85-87 Southgate Road, N1 3JS (020-7309 2019; www.millineryworks.co.uk)



Since John Robertson opened his gallery in 1971, he has sold over 25,000 pictures, says Fiona. "This is a remarkable achievement for a gallery tucked away in a quiet street of a market town and which has been described as 'Surrey's best-kept secret'. John sells 18th, 20th and 21st-century paintings at prices from under £1,000 to over £50,000." **Where** 35-33 Lebourne Road, Reigate, Surrey RH2 7JS (01737 249514; www.bourmegallery.com)

16. Woburn Abbey Antiques Centre

There are 40 individual shops specialising in furniture and art, but with a good-quality selection of small antiques from £25 up to about £1,000. "No new or reproductions and the emphasis is on improving the customer experience," says John Ainsley. **Where** Woburn Abbey, Bedfordshire, MK17 9WA (01525 290696; www.woburn.co.uk/antiques)

17. Deddington Antiques Centre

This four-floor emporium has been established for 30 years and caters for both the public and trade. "You can swap your unwanted antiques for others from

Street not cards but is "I am pass are ur local did the use? now, all Y&NP s.com) d either is the "They promise- look at the work of celebrated clockmakers, this shop is a must." **Where** 79 Kensington Church Street, W8 4BG (020-7908 1100; www.raffertyantiqueclocks.com)

12. Mallett

One of the oldest-established antique dealers in the world specialising in furniture and works of art, including clocks and pictures mainly from the 18th century and Regency periods. The business was opened in Bath in 1865 before moving to London and, in 2003, opening a New York showroom. **Where** 141 New Bond St, W1S 0B0 7499 7411; www.mallett.co.uk)

13. Robert Young

An eclectic mix of furniture and quirky objects that will amuse and delight. It's a tiny little shop whose owner tries hard to find individual pieces often with a touch of eccentricity. Trained at Sotheby's, he set up his shop in 1977 and stocks a mix of English and European antiques. Browse online and ring with inquiries. **Where** 68 Battersea Bridge Road, SW11 02D-7228 7847; www.robertyoungantiques.com)

SOUTH-EAST

14. John Cowderoy Antiques

Fiona says this charming shop specialises in mechanical boxes, antique polyphons and music instruments as well as antique clocks and other antiques. "You can always find varied and interesting objects, with an emphasis on quality and the unusual high on the agenda." **Where** The Clock & Musical Box Centre, 42 South Street, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 4XB (01323 720058; www.cowderoyantiques.com)

15. Bourne Gallery

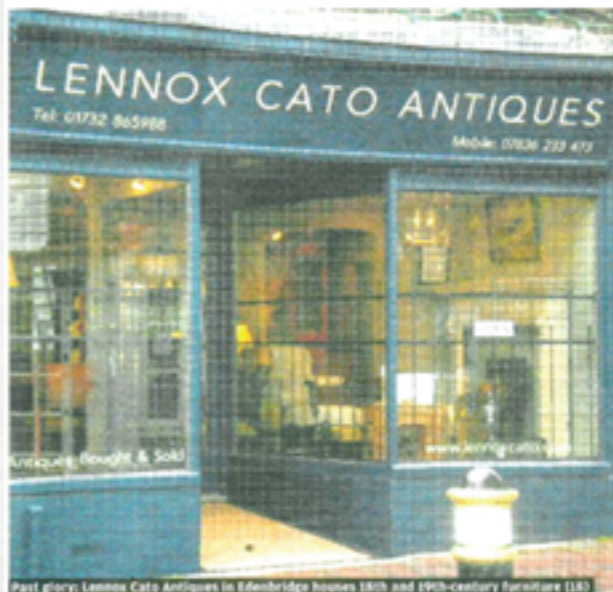
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Past glory: Lennox Cato Antiques in Edenbridge houses 18th and 19th-century furniture (18)

their stock and there is total customer service ethic," says John Ainsley. It's run by Brenda Haller, an expert dealer on Dickinson's Real Deal.

Where Laurel House, Bullring, Deddington, Nr Banbury, OX15 0TT (01869 338968)

18. Lennox Cato Antiques & the Edenbridge Galleries

Lennox Cato, familiar to many from 'The Antiques Roadshow' has put together a group of BADA dealers of different specialisations under one roof as well as his own 18th and 19th-century furniture, mirrors, lamps and paintings. "He has an international reputation for finding the unusual," says Fiona. **Where** 1 The Square, Church Street, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 5BD (01732 862988; www.lennoxcato.com)

19. Hungerford Arcade

"The Arcade is great shopping fun," says John Ainsley. "Hungerford is proud of the range and diversity of antiques, collectibles and curios, which includes everything from antiques to stamps and postcards to vintage tools." There is a large book shop and a popular junk section among the 110 professional dealers as well as a cafeteria and restaurant. **Where** 26 High Street, Hungerford, Berkshire, RG17 0NF (01488 683700; www.hungerfordarcade.co.uk)

20. The Swan at Tetworth

Forty showrooms, 70 dealers in a Grade II listed Elizabethan Coaching Inn. Stock dates from Charles II to Art Deco and ranges from £10 for a silver spoon up to £98,000 for a George III secretaire cabinet. "The fairest of prices to suit all pockets," says John Ainsley. **Where** High Street, Tetworth, Nr Thame, OX9 7AB (08844 287777 www.theswan.co.uk)



Handle with care: small is beautiful at Woburn Abbey Antiques Centre in Bedfordshire (16)

SOUTH-WEST

21. Andrew Dando

Andrew Dando specialises in pottery and porcelain, English, Continental and Chinese export, but Mark's favourite part of his stock is his distinctive Staffordshire pottery, whether it be figures of a man and woman feeding chickens or of a crocus planter in the form of a hedgehog. "Bradford-on-Avon is a delightful spot for antiques collectors at the best of times and Andrew's shop does not disappoint, being in an old, tall and narrow building with a wonderful winding staircase that takes you to the upper floors." **Where** 34 Market Street, Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 1LL (01225 865444; www.andrewdando.co.uk)

22. Delomosne Fine Antiques

"This is the Rolle Royce of the antique glass world," says Mark. "The Royal Family has perused their splendid wares and it's all beautifully and spicily displayed." John Andrews points out that it's a good place for chandeliers, porcelain, needlework and papier mâché. **Where** Court Close, North Wraxall, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 7AD (01225 896505; www.delomosne.co.uk)

23. PA Oxley Antique Clocks

Michael Oxley has been in the clock business since 1970 and loves his subject, says Fiona. "He specialises in fully restored antique clocks and barometers, especially longcase clocks (also known as grandfather clocks), which are delivered by their own vehicles with an installation expert to ensure that they are properly commissioned." **Where** The Old Rectory, Cherhill, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 8UX (01249 816227; www.british-antiqueclocks.com)

24. Richard Gardner Antiques

"Tetworth is a great centre for antiques," says John Andrews. "And Richard is deservedly prominent. In addition to producing a mouthwatering and erudite catalogue at regular intervals, he has a fine selection of furniture, paintings, ceramics and works of art of all kinds, including rocking horses." **Where** Swan House, Market Square, Tetworth, GU28 0AN (01798 343411 www.richardgardnerantiques.co.uk)