

Northern Virginia MAGAZINE

Home & Design Features

Shop Spotlight: Two the Moon



Photo by Aaron Spicer.

Aesthetic: Owned by former nurse **Johanna Braden**, this neighborhood gift shop has a convivial atmosphere. “We’re fun; we’re functional,” says Braden.

From the calming fragrance of soy wax candles wafting through the air to the varying shades of blue on the walls, the space evokes a dreamy feel. The store takes its name from something she and her husband always said to their two children: “I love you to the moon.”

Product spread: With a focus on local companies, Braden carries D.C.-based **Gordy’s Pickle Jar** and beautiful jewelry by Arlington-based **Ruth Barzel**. Although products are often seasonal, there are some staples, such as **Rewined Candles**, **Farmhouse Fresh Skincare** and **Crabberrie** bags. “I like to find companies that have a story,” Braden says. **Modern Moose clocks**, which are hand-carved by **Paul Ocepek** in **Massachusetts**, hang on the walls, and wooden signs made from recycled **Wisconsin** barn materials sit on display.

Extra services: In addition to thoughtful and whimsical gifts, Two the Moon has trunk shows every other month featuring a local company or artist. They also do corporate gift packages and host evening events. Braden explains that if someone calls her asking for a certain number of gifts at a set price, she will go around the store and pick out some options for the customer before they come in. “This is part of what a small shop should be about,” she says.

Clientele: Two the Moon's welcoming vibe and eclectic array of products is suited to both children and adults. Regardless of who the customer is, Braden's friendly energy is infectious, and she treats everyone who enters her store like an old friend. When teenagers come in every Friday to buy candy, for instance, she often ends up teaching them about sales tax.

Wallet wonders: Prices at Two the Moon range from \$1 candy sticks to gifts under \$10, such as \$8 handmade soaps. The furniture, purses and jewelry often have high-end pricing. –Victoria Gaffney



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