



Savvy shoppers know how to bag a second-hand bargain, writes ANNA KOSMANOVSKI



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Op Shops offer feel-good shopping and the chance to nab a one-off find. These popular community-run stores are in the spotlight for National Op Shop Week.

Nicole Pinder, retail marketing manager for the St Vincent de Paul Society (Vinnies), says there are many benefits from shopping at opportunity shops.

“First and foremost, op shoppers get bargains,” she says. “There’s nothing better than finding a great and unique piece of clothing or homewares – especially when it’s at a fraction of its original price.”

“Op shopping is about recycling and sustainability – ethical shopping as we call it.

“What many people may not realise is that by op shopping they are actually helping those in need in their local community,” she says. When a Vinnies op shop sells an item the profits help those less fortunate within that area.

Vinnies Grovedale’s store manager Maree Cooper says it is one of Vinnies’ latest concept stores.

Maree draws on her experiences of working in retail and has created a clean and airy shop that features

strong visual merchandising and colour co-ordinated racks that show off appealing products in top condition.

“Our standard is: if we wouldn’t wear it, we won’t sell it,” Maree says.

Pointing to the \$1 rack where a cream woollen blazer is waiting to be discovered, she explains that there’s plenty of high-end pickings around. “We have designer labels all throughout the store.”

Eye appeal:
Maree Cooper
in Vinnies’
Grovedale
op shop.
(MICHELLE
KELCEY)

Local op shopper Judy Sobey, from Teesdale, says some of her greatest finds have included a genuine antique Hali rug (bought for a steal at \$100) and an 1912 unopened bottle of port for \$5.

She says that while op shops can be full of the unknown – and one-off pieces – the drawcard is “the serendipity factor of finding something wonderful that you weren’t expecting”.

“Op shops vary their stock all the time,” Judy says.

Her advice for newbie op shoppers? Put your hunting caps on.

“Many of my friends are in awe of what I get, saying they could never do that ... they walk in and out in under five minutes,” she says.

“You have to be prepared to hunt for a great find. They don’t always jump out at you.” ●

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“IF WE WOULDN’T WEAR IT, WE WON’T SELL IT”

– MAREE COOPER



SHOP

- » Op Shop Week runs from August 23-30.
- » opshopweek.com.au

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