



Our 15th Anniversary: Memorable Stories and Our Top 10 Finds



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From the desk of Linda Fischer, Publisher, [Minted Prose, LLC](#)

We can't believe it, but 15 years have passed for us as we celebrate this milestone in 2018! As publisher, I have met many interesting people while traveling to research our books. So to kick off our 15th anniversary I thought it would be fun to create a list of Top 10 Finds that I've discovered in my travels related in one way or another to the publishing journey. You can find them online and in stores, just as I have.

[VYANNI:](#) I met the owner of Vyanni when she translated works from Slovenian to English for *The Memory Book: One Woman's Self-Discovery in the Mist of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy*. When I heard she had moved on from translation to fabric, I decided to take a trip to Sri Lanka to see her work and learn more about the country. Today several of her modern-looking pieces, made the old Sri Lankan way—handcrafted on looms by rural women—grace my home and those of my friends. You'll be happy to know your purchase on their [Etsy](#) shop supports talented rural Sri Lankans.

[ASSISI JEWELS:](#) I joined a [writing workshop](#) led by award-winning novelist and poet [Sarah Van Arsdale](#), which was being held in Assisi, Italy. While taking a break from working on short stories and the early draft of a new children's book, I admired this jewelry gleaming in glass cases in the lobby of the Hotel Giotto several times before finally relenting and purchasing two pieces. Assisi Jewels is a multibrand shop. Their [Humilis Assisi](#) brand is produced entirely in Assisi, inspired by the Tau cross, a famous Franciscan symbol.

[ARTISANS ANGKOR:](#) I was headed to Vietnam to meet some of my *Sled Dog Dachshund* co-workers and figured I was so close to Cambodia that I should make a visit. There I ended up acquiring various pieces, including silk robes and scarves, at Artisans Angkor. They're great items and for a good cause, too—helping young Cambodians learn the art of making handicrafts while at the same time providing them with a skill and a livelihood.

[ERBARIO TOSCANO:](#) On a tour through the Lake Trasimeno area of Italy, I dropped into Panicale, a little town with a cozy piazza. After a gelato, I landed at a store filled with handicrafts. Erbario Toscano soaps and perfumes were near the register. I normally don't have a passion for perfume, but this was special. I'm giving their perfume vials as [holiday gifts](#). (Don't tell anyone!)

[MASSIMO DUTTI:](#) I attended NYU for graduate school and had many book publishing group projects. In one of them, I met an international student from Taiwan. We've been friends ever since, and I'm godmother to her first child and fairy godmother to the other two. The last time I visited Taiwan she pointed me to Massimo Dutti in Taipei 101 for stylish clothes. The velvet jacket I bought is a staple in my fall wardrobe. And get this—people have even complimented me on the buttons!

[THU HƯƠNG ART:](#) Vietnam gave me an opportunity to visit Hanoi. This city, with its constant commotion of motorbikes and cornucopia of freshly cooked local cuisine, also offers a rich tradition of handmade home decor. I stopped at a lacquerware store and watched the artists transform tiny eggshells into finished pieces of wall art, vases, and more, ready for display. I picked up a tray and a picture for my walls. (And just to note, Hanoi is on my list to visit again!)

[THE SUN MAGAZINE:](#) Surrounded by fruit-bearing goddesses, the Assisi writing group I was in discussed articles from *The Sun* magazine. I still remember the lively conversation we had regarding an article about disability and language from a mother's perspective. I returned to New York determined to get my own subscription. Budding writers take note: readers can write for *The Sun*, too. The magazine provides monthly topics for which you can send in your own work. And they accept unsolicited submissions for articles as well.

[THE GREENER PALATE:](#) It's a habit of mine to pack snacks for my travels. My favorite is the homemade granola from The Greener Palate in Brooklyn, NY. It contains more seeds than a typical granola, and has the perfect mix of sweet and salty for the taste buds. I've tried a lot of granolas, but so far I consider The Greener Palate's the best. I dispensed granola bags for the holiday last year and was rewarded with compliments galore.

[VARGA DESIGN:](#) Hungary was one of my earliest destinations in Europe, and it was there that I found a memory book by a young girl who provided the basis for *The Memory Book*. Walking around downtown Budapest, I happened to stop in Varga's store where gems and fine metals were transformed into finished pieces. The following day I lured my husband with the temptation of coffee and a pastry at Café Gerbeaud, knowing full well that Varga was nearby. Afterward, we stopped in Varga, and he chose a simple ring with a tiny but compelling stone for me.

[ISLAND SEAFOODS:](#) Watching exuberant huskies pull sleds over dry ground at Denali National Park in Alaska, my husband and I wondered out loud what would happen if a dachshund were in the group. The second leg of the trip was to Kodiak where I saw a sign for Island Seafoods. I went into their store (they also have an online shop and do custom processing for charter boat customers) and since then I've been hooked. I love their salmon, halibut, and black cod. We ultimately did find out what might happen with a dachshund in a sled race from author Laura Atkins, who wrote the magical story [Sled Dog Dachshund](#) for Minted Prose.

Do you have a story about travel, literature, and the irresistible buy? Let me know on [Minted Prose Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) pages, where I'll be posting my latest exploits in South Africa and Namibia.

#1

Vyanni, Sri Lanka

Handloom fabrics and home textiles



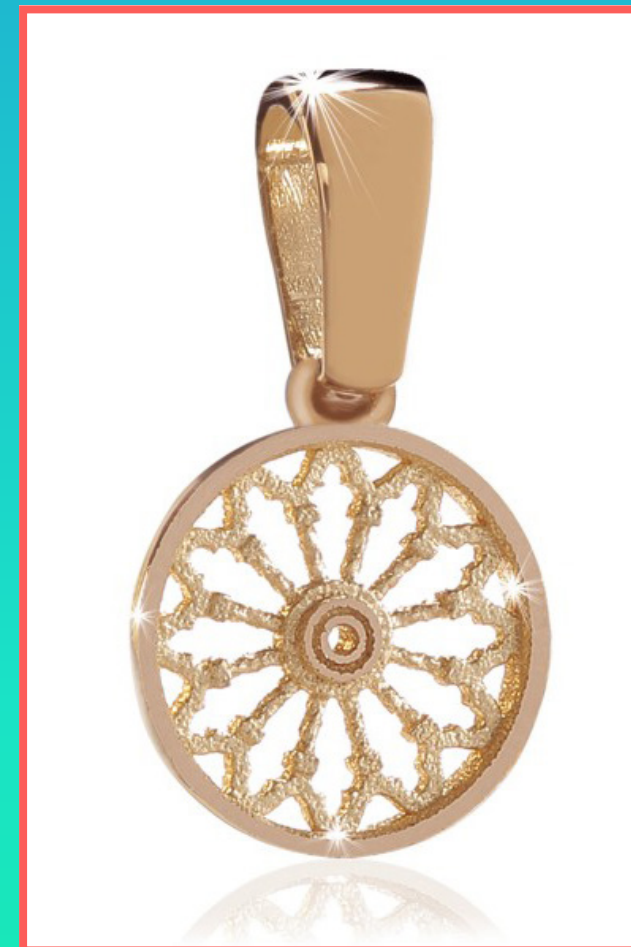
Why I love it
magical fabrics,
rural artisans

Get it
<http://www.vyanni.lk>

#2

Assisi Jewels, Italy

Gold, silver, and other handmade jewels



Why I love it
delicate and elegant,
day and night

Get it
<http://www.assisijewels.com/en>

#3

Artisans Angkor, Cambodia

Khmer silk, stone and wood carvings, and paintings



Why I love it

luxurious silk,
contemporary styles

Get it

<http://www.artisansangkor.com>

Erbario Toscano, Italy

Body and hair care, perfumes, and home fragrances



Why I love it

soaps and perfumes,
enticing to the senses

Get it

<http://www.erbariotoscano.com>

#5

Massimo Dutti, Spain

Urban, contemporary, classic clothing



Why I love it
enduring fashions,
year in and year out

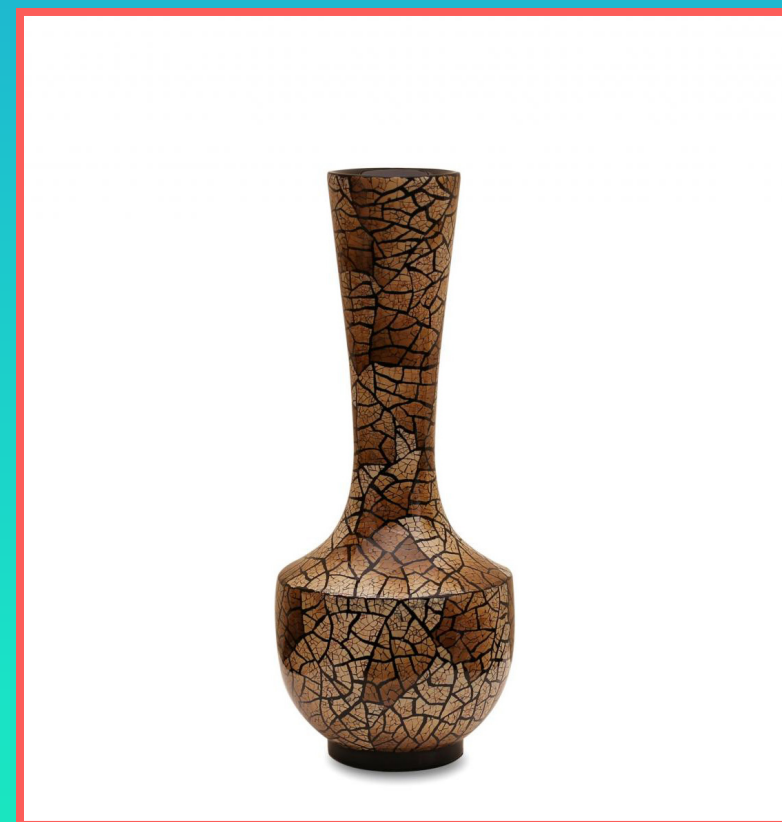
Get it

<http://www.massimodutti.com/us>

Thu Hương Art, Vietnam

Lacquerware home furnishings and accessories

#6



Why I love it
artisan-crafted,
timeless, and unique

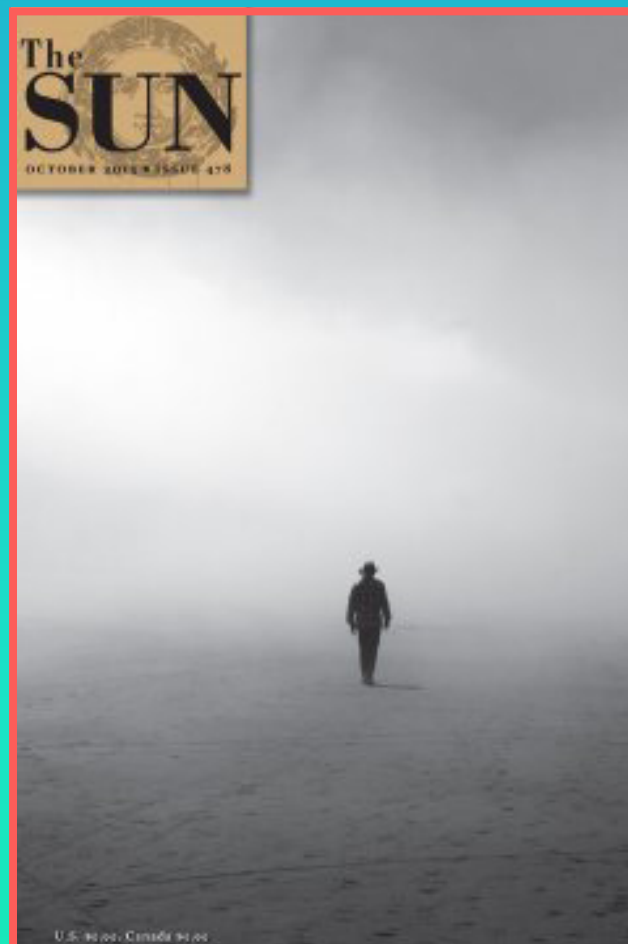
Get it

<http://www.thuhuongart-handicraft.com.vn>

#7

The Sun Magazine, USA

Independent, ad-free, focusing on life's complexities



Why I love it

real stories, real people,
riveting

Get it

<http://www.thesunmagazine.org>

The Greener Palate, USA

Chef services, nutrition consulting, and recipes

#8



Why I love it

delicious, nutritious,
healthy

Get it

<http://thegreenerpalate.com>

#9

Varga Design, Hungary

Jewelry innovator and designer



Why I love it

original, meticulously
designed

Get it

<http://www.vargadesign.hu>

Island Seafoods, USA

Salmon, halibut, crab, and other seafood

#10



Why I love it

salmon like steak, black
cod like butter

Get it

<https://www.islandseafoods.com>

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