

# TAKE A WALK DOWNTOWN

by Katherine Quimby Johnson

Jeffersonville's downtown may be small, but it's thriving and worth a visit for the unique new businesses that have found a home there alongside the established restaurants, shops, and art galleries lining the town's charming Main Street.

The Village Sampler, at 168 Main Street, offers an eclectic mix of vintage linens, china, cutlery, and pewter, as well as molded beeswax ornaments, wooden bowls turned by Cambridge woodworker Craig Hall, and fresh eggs. Aside from the eggs, operator Jane Melfry tries to offer "connections to the past, to the family past. I have a lot of things that people haven't seen in a long time."

In many ways, the space's current contents reflect its own past, when the retail space was the dining room of the inn operated by artist and entrepreneur Alden Bryan. Melfry took over the business from Lisa Bryan, Alden's granddaughter-in-law, with whom she worked for six years. Melfry says, "Lisa has been quite a mentor for me. Her encouragement and support in this venture have been unrelenting." The store continues to offer syrup produced by Bryan and her husband.

A work opportunity for her husband brought Melfry from New Jersey to Vermont in 1998. The adjustment was easy. "I love this climate," she says. "I'm a winter person. I've been snowboarding about five years."

Along with a background in soft toy design and retail experience in dried and silk flowers and the antiques business, Melfry brought a treat from the Jersey Shore—an ice cream sandwich made with fresh waffles that one of Melfry's friends dubbed "The Frozen Wedgie," which is available year-round. That and the maple smoothie (steamed milk with maple syrup), offer a pleasing mid-afternoon pick-me-up no matter what the season.

Across the hall from the Village Sampler, goldsmith and jeweler Silvio Mazzaresse's Ornament Studio continues the tradition of combining business and art that epitomized the building's one-time owner. A fourth-generation jeweler, Mazzaresse follows his own style. "I try to do what I would wear or want to wear." His preference for high carat gold, or for working with two metals,



gives his work a degree of contrast and shading that is as rare as it is attractive.

Mazzarese was born in Tunisia to Italian parents, and lived in Rome and Paris, where he trained before moving to Santa Fe. Influences from all these places can be seen in his work, which features stones he's collected over the course of a 30-year career. In addition to his own creations, Silvio also makes custom pieces and can repair gold, platinum and silver.

He maintains contacts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he was a goldsmith for 23 years, and where he continues to sell work. The Ornament Studio offers works by some of his colleagues in the Southwest, as well as stack rings by his wife, Teresa Bobel Mazzarese, whom he met in Santa Fe.

The Mazzareses moved to Jeffersonville three years ago, in order to be closer to Silvio's sister in Montreal. "It's made for kids," Silvio says. "Vermont is so manageable. We live in the village, so we can walk everywhere." Teresa plans to return to jewelry-making full-time after the younger of their two daughters starts school this coming fall.

From the Village Sampler and Ornament Studio at 168 Main Street it's a quick walk around the corner to the Smugglers' Notch Distillery, which opened in October 2010 and offers tastings on Saturdays, typically from 1-5 pm. The business began to develop five years ago when Jeremy Elliott's job as a pharmaceutical research and development chemist moved overseas. "We wanted to stay in Jeffersonville," says the younger Elliott, who came to Vermont to attend UVM, attracted by the

school's proximity to good skiing. Elliott narrowed his options to either creating a distillery or synthesizing pharmaceutical ingredients and decided that the former a) would be more fun and b) could be done locally. In addition, distillation interested him as a chemical process and matched his skill set.

After volunteering at other distilleries, most of them in the Rockies or on the West Coast, he put together the numbers and brought his father, Ronald, on board, for the business side of things. Their partnership "works well," Jeremy reports. "Finding a business partner like that in my father was just great."

Smugglers' Notch Distillery may be very new, but Jeremy says, "We're doing well for a little start-up." The brand took double gold at the 2011 San Francisco World Spirits Competition. The award will come as no surprise to anyone who has sampled the vodka, which is exceptionally smooth, with a mere hint of sweetness.

To buy a bottle of Smugglers' Notch Distillery Vodka during the week, visit the Jeffersonville Country Store at the corner of Church and Main. If you want to sample the product and find the distillery closed, stop by The Family Table Restaurant, at the intersection of Route 15 and Church Street, where a bottle graces the small bar.

The Family Table joined Jeffersonville's range of eateries in February 2010. The name comes from chef-owner John Raphael's family tradition: "I ate at five o'clock with my family every day. It meant so much to me. Anyone who was visiting sat down with us. Everyone was welcome at the family table."

Raphael's original family table was in West Boylston, Massachusetts. He came to Vermont following his brother, and earned an associate's degree in business from Champlain College. Raphael went on to culinary school at Johnson and Wales in Rhode Island, but continued to visit the friends he had made in Vermont and eventually realized this was the place he wanted to be. A few years of cooking for places like the Catamount Country Club and Edson Hill Manor and he was ready to open a place of his own.

The Family Table's menu, which Raphael calls "traditional with a twist," reflects the sense of connection and welcome. It offers the classics for kids (hot dogs, mac and cheese, chicken fingers, and more), as well as more venturesome fare for adults, including maple-and-herb-brined pork chops, buttermilk fried chicken, and a lamb burger with tzatziki, feta and roasted red peppers. No wonder a customer offered his unsolicited opinion: "This is a must-stop place. I come from Lyndonville and this is the place I stop every time I drive Route 15."

"That's why I do what I do," says Raphael; words that could have been uttered by any of the owners of Jeffersonville's newer businesses, including Lisa Porter, owner of Essence Salon and Day Spa at 105 Main Street. Offering massage, facials, manicures, pedicures, and waxing, in addition to hair cuts, coloring, and the like, Essence opened in April 2011 and from the beginning has done a brisk business. It is unique among Jeffersonville's newer businesses in being owned and staffed by locals. Porter and her sister, Tara Quicksell, the salon's skin care specialist, grew up in Belvidere. Lauren Beeman, the massage therapist, and stylist Amber Cary grew up in neighboring towns.

No matter where their owners come from, Jeffersonville's new businesses share several traits with its long-time establishments: their owners are professionals whose passion for what they do has brought them to a home in this small community.

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### Jeffersonville's new businesses: hours of operation

**The Village Sampler:** Tuesday through Saturday,  
10:00 am – 6:00 pm.

**The Ornament Studio:** Monday through Saturday,  
9:00 am – 12:00 noon and 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm.  
Website: [www.ornamentstudio.com](http://www.ornamentstudio.com)

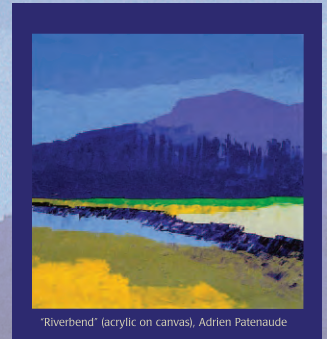
**Smugglers' Notch Distillery:** Saturday, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm.  
Website: [www.smugglersnotchdistillery.com](http://www.smugglersnotchdistillery.com)

**The Family Table:** Thursday through Monday,  
6:00 am – 10:00 pm. Take-out available.  
Website: [www.familytablevt.com](http://www.familytablevt.com)

**Essence Salon and Day Spa:** Open Monday through Saturday.  
Call 802.644.5424 for appointments and information.  
Walk-ins are welcome. Website: [www.essencevermont.com](http://www.essencevermont.com)

## Third Annual FESTIVAL of the ARTS

jeffersonville  
on main street



"Riverbend" (acrylic on canvas), Adrien Patenaude

local art • music  
food • kids activities

**Saturday**  
**August 13, 2011**  
**9:00 am - 4:00 pm**

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