

# Support the Makers at 101 Easter Road

**Carmen Chalmers runs a shop at 101 Easter Road which has a huge range of beautiful craft goods ideal for Christmas or other gifts – or even to keep for yourself.**

Her aim is to “support the makers” and in this wee shop there are crafts made by around 55 independent makers plus goods bought wholesale from some others who don’t want to have the responsibility of stocking the shop.

Her goods come from Brighton Liverpool Manchester and also from as far afield as Malawi where she sources African handbags, aprons and beaded art. The sale of these goods supports a children’s home in Malawi.

Carmen moved from South Africa almost 20 years ago and has two “amazing girls”.

She explained: “I started selling hand-made stuff when I was little. You could sell it on the side of the street in South Africa where it is quite normal to buy hand-made and support that market.

“I think I also have a love of bright things that are slightly different for my home or for my kids. So when the girls were born I started looking for things that were indeed different. I didn’t want my kids to be dressed the same as everybody else.

“I wanted my home to reflect my own personality. So I started

looking at handbag makers independent brands and following people on Instagram.

“In 2018 I started with my first Christmas market in Portobello with 21 makers. I had about 350 people through the door there and was absolutely delighted. The following year I had a market at the same venue with 35 makers and 1,500 people visited us. We had Christmas music with local Brownies singing, it was really festive and I thought ‘I’m onto something here’.

“But then Covid happened and it all went just a little bit haywire so I created an online presence with an Instagram account which has all grown phenomenally. Now we have around 20,000 followers. I wanted to develop it even more and ran stalls at a couple of markets between July and December last year. The beginning of this year I ran a couple of pop ups at Sook in St James Quarter.

“Another location asked me to run a massive event during the summer – to create Festival City Markets at Waverley Market with my friend and colleague Seb from Seb’s Urban Jungle. This included about 250 independents over a period of six weeks.

“This was an amazing space with handbag makers, vintage clothing and a pop up coffee shop with houseplants. We had a DJ, live music, magicians and puppet shows.

After that the intention was to go back and do some more at Christmas but then Seb offered me this shop which he had outgrown and I opened the doors at the beginning of November. Seb has gone to the Leith Walk shop where he can concentrate on one business.

“To start with I would look at goods which appealed to me or to my friends and family. Obviously a lot of the stuff we sell is quite bold – did I tell you I love colour? – Choosing the stock now I am quite selective as I feel I now have the knack of knowing what sells and what doesn’t sell.

“You can come in and have a really good browse – a good coffee and walk away knowing that you had done your bit in shopping local.”

The café space is at the back of the wee shop and still serves Seb’s Urban Jungle Roast coffee which was part of Carmen’s agreement with him.

The shop is open six days a week at the moment and she is looking for staff, but Carmen wanted to be sure and say a big thank you to Seb and to her sister for all of their support.

Do visit. There is a wide range of goods to choose from.

Support the Makers 101 Easter Road EH7 5PP







The café at the back of the shop is a true oasis of calm





















