



Give the Gift of Great Rivers & Routes This Year

November 19 2020 11:44 AM





Alton, IL – When it comes to discovering locally crafted gifts for the holidays, even Santa Claus knows where to shop.

Jolly Old St. Nick and his Elf made a special visit to southwest Illinois recently to help kick off the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau's "Give the Gift" holiday campaign highlighting local makers and small independently-owned businesses.

"We really want to encourage people to shop local this holiday season and shop safely by wearing masks and practicing social distancing," Cory Jobe, President of the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau said. "The 'Give the Gift' campaign is one way we can encourage people to think local and shop local this holiday season as well as provide support for our small businesses."

The bureau is highlighting locally made gifts on the RiversandRoutes.com website with blogs that include:

- "Great Rivers & Routes Made Holiday Gift Guide" -- highlighting local makers and the one-of-a-kind products they create;
- "Give the Gift of Great Rivers & Routes Experiences" -- focusing on local attractions and season passes as a traditional gift alternative;
- "Give the Gift of Travel" -- encouraging people to give gift certificates for overnight stays in the region to help encourage travel in 2021.

The campaign officially kicks off Friday, Nov. 20 through social media and on the RiversandRoutes.com website. Rare video footage of Santa and the Elf shopping local will be available on the tourism bureau's Facebook page after Thanksgiving.

Local makers featured in the "Holiday Gift Guide" include Mississippi Mud Pottery, Alton; Crocker & Springer, Elsah; David Stine Furniture, Dow; Alton Stained Glass Works, Alton; Water Sweets Soaps, Edwardsville; Old Bakery Beer, Alton; Old Herald Brewery & Distillery, Collinsville; Recess Brewing, Edwardsville; Peel Brewery, Edwardsville; Opera House Brewing Company, Hillsboro; Bluestem Vodka, Bethalto; Grafton Winery & Brewhaus, Grafton; Kruta Bakery, Collinsville; LuciAnna's Pastries, Alton; A Little Taste of Heaven, Edwardsville; The Cup, Edwardsville; Duke Bakery, Alton; Jubelt's Bakery, Litchfield; Goshen Coffee, Edwardsville; Bunkhouse Joe's, Fieldon; Black Rabbit Coffee, Hillsboro; Post Commons, Alton; Taylor's Mexican Chili Parlor, Carlinville; and Code 3 Spices, Collinsville.

"Small businesses really help me out this time of year. My elves don't have to work so hard and I love looking around these independent shops," Santa Claus noted during his stop in Collinsville. "And you know, anyone who shops from them always ends up on my nice list," he added.

Visit RiversandRoutes.com for a complete list of locally owned and operated businesses.