

Small Business Saturday beckons treasure hunters during less frenzied shopping day

By Kimberly Pierceall
The Virginian-Pilot
Nov 25, 2017 Updated Nov 25, 2017



L. Todd Spencer | The Virginian-Pilot
Sarah Rosenberg and Carl Rich shop at Werther Leather Goods inside the Selden Arcade in downtown Norfolk during Small Business Saturday, Nov. 25, 2017.



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Afternoon sunlight shines through the doors of the Selden Arcade in downtown Norfolk as shoppers come and go during Small Business Saturday, Nov. 25, 2017.

If Black Friday is the corporate juggernaut encouraging us to abandon Thanksgiving meals to storm stores or log on to websites for the best deals,

Small Business Saturday is the artisan craftsman who would rather you leisurely stroll for hidden treasures.

That was the general vibe inside the Selden Arcade in Norfolk, the recently opened indoor marketplace, as more people visited the independent retailer stalls than usual.

“People are actually stopping by and looking,” said Luis Pereira, 25, between sales of his succulents and soil-free air plants at his Color Fleur storefront. Before 1 p.m., just one lonely cinnamon sugar doughnut was left at Doughminion Donuts and the Mangan food pop-up was nearly sold out of pork tacos.

American Express launched Small Business Saturday in 2010 and still supplies promotional materials like canvas shopping bags, balloons and buttons to events espousing the small business ethos.

Many sellers had only recently formed their small businesses.

Kenneth Calaunan and his brother-in-law, Vince Galang, started their Filipino fusion pop-up Mangan in July. “This is my dream,” Calaunan said, adding that he eventually hopes to open a Filipino four-course fine-dining restaurant.

Nickie Janes, though, has owned the nearby waxing boutique Smooth in downtown Norfolk for seven years. In that time, she said she’s seen a noticeable improvement in traffic from the Small Business Saturday promotions. “People are more proud to say they shop small,” she said.

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