



ROAD TRIP

CHARMING COUNTRY STORES

Generations have relied on general stores for everything from housewares to penny candy. These keystones of small towns brought people together, and nostalgia keeps them coming back.

BY LORI VANOVER SENIOR EDITOR

1

OLD SAUTEE STORE
Sautee Nacoochee, Georgia
sauteestore.com

Nestled in Georgia's Appalachian foothills, a landmark general store established in 1872 beckons tourists and locals to experience days gone by. Field Editor Sandra Warwick, of Cleveland, Georgia, says, "Homemade soaps, pens, paper, clothing and shoes fill the aisles. An old music box and a fireplace add charm. And true to southern hospitality, everyone who swings by gets a sample of Swedish Farmer Cheese."

2

TROUTDALE GENERAL STORE
Troutdale, Oregon
503-492-7912

A popular spot for cyclists to stop for lunch at the gateway to the Columbia River Gorge, the store also offers made-in-Oregon specialties, and holiday decor items are sold year-round. Field Editor Tawny Nelson, of North Plains, Oregon, says her family liked browsing the gifts and toys, both modern and retro. "Next time I'm going to try a milkshake and go on a weekend when they have smoked salmon chowder!"

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3

END OF THE COMMONS GENERAL STORE
Mesopotamia, Ohio
endofthecommons.com

Touted as the oldest in the state, this general store in Amish country has been serving the needs of Ohioans since 1840. Shelves are lined with quality products of yesteryear that your grandparents relied on, such as canning supplies, old-time remedies, pine tar soap and salves. Field Editor Tami Gingrich, of Middlefield, Ohio, says, "Stop in for penny candy, housewares, homemade fudge and hand-dipped ice cream."

4

WILSON STORE
Clear Spring, Maryland
301-582-4718

Come hungry, as the Wilson Store sells cheese, hickory smoked sweet bologna, candy and homemade chips. Pop by the post office next door to see vintage pictures and memorabilia. Field Editor Anne Duvall, of Greencastle, Pennsylvania, says, "We bought root beer in a glass bottle from the old Coca-Cola ice chest and read the ledger from 1850 that kept customer records."

5

THE SWEET PALACE
Phillipsburg, Montana
sweetpalace.com

Talk about pretty in pink! This fanciful candy store is housed in a 100-year-old general store in the historic town of Phillipsburg. Field Editor Connie Thompson, of Blackfoot, Idaho, says, "People drive 35 minutes out of their way just to visit this place. It's not simply for the candy, which is good, but to enjoy the setting." Enjoy free samples of fudge and 72 flavors of saltwater taffy.

6

ELSAH GENERAL STORE
Elsah, Illinois
elsahgeneralstore.com

Visitors to the store (not pictured) say it reminds them of childhood. And this village on the Great River Road was recently named Illinois' top scenic spot. Try local favorites like gooey butter cake. Owner Blair Smith says, "It's a 20-minute drive to a large grocery store. By offering essentials like butter, eggs, milk, flour, sugar and coffee, it's an actual working general store for our neighbors."

1. MANDI WOOD; 2. TAWNY NELSON; 3. TAMI GINGRICH; 4. ANNE DUVALI; 5. TIM COOPER

Visit TasteofHome.com/countrystores to see more old-fashioned places to shop.