

Chicago Tribune

Concrete Jewelry and Air Planters — Millennials Will Love Gifts From These 2 Chicago Markets

Millennials thrive off of doing things differently — whether in the workplace, relationships, food choices (we see you, avocado toast) or places to shop.

But the thrill of exploring an unbeaten path isn't enough; millennials like to fill up their homes and lives with distinct, uncommon purchases that bring peace, provoke thought and demonstrate some sort of consciousness. There's no question, then, that many will be looking for holiday gifts somewhere else than the aisles of Target.

Two Chicago holiday markets — Renegade Craft Fair and One of a Kind Show — more than satisfy the desire for a unique gift with a good story.

Both fairs bring hundreds of artists into the city to display and sell their custom-made, handcrafted goods. Everything from housewares and fashion, to mixed media, paintings and photography are in abundance, just waiting to find a new home.

One of a Kind Show

What it is

Returning for its 18th year, the One of a Kind holiday show is an indoor fine art and fine craft shopping show that brings in over 650 artists. The artists come from all over the U.S. and elsewhere in the world, and offer products that range from fashion to ceramics, from furniture to bath and body. The show aims to be all-inclusive and to go beyond shopping, with gourmet cafes, bars and special drinks, live music, and a fashion show that highlights items from the exhibitors.

Why we love it

What makes this show truly one-of-a-kind is that every single item is fully handmade in small batches by the artists themselves — nothing is outsourced, not even locally, making each product distinct.

Moreover, shoppers will have the opportunity to talk directly with the designer and executor of the work. Shoppers are sure to find something spectacular. The merchandise is spread across the floor and not arranged by category. Although large, the show is easily walkable.

Don't miss

The Emerging Market. Twenty-nine up-and-coming exhibitors who have never done this show or any show of this scale.

JLB Designs. An emerging artist this year, Jennifer Lippman-Bruno crafts minimalist jewelry pieces out of concrete and sterling silver that are elegant and timeless.

Facture Goods. Creator Aron Fischer, who is also new to the show this year, makes kitchenwares and utensils with hardwoods, clay and metals that create a rough, “primitive modern” aesthetic.

When and where: Dec. 6-9, times vary. Seventh floor of Merchandise Mart