

# Holiday errands made easy

## Expert advice for your annual holiday shopping

By Courtney Hsu

Photography by Luca Salvatore Ciardullo and Jon Evans

With the annual festive season in full swing, the stores are becoming busier as we get closer to that magical date. To help you narrow your search and alleviate some of your stress, *IN Burlington* sought the savvy shopping advice of Courtney Hsu, owner of Run My Errand ([www.runmyerrand.ca](http://www.runmyerrand.ca)), a Burlington-based errand and concierge company offering services in the Halton region.

Here are a few unique places in Burlington recommended by Courtney to help inspire you to find that perfect gift. Before you go shopping, be sure to include these stores on your list.



### Hobby and Toy Central

2455 Appleby Line  
(905) 331-4500  
[www.hobbyandtoycentral.com](http://www.hobbyandtoycentral.com)

Hobby and Toy Central brings kids of all ages together for a fun shopping experience. Started 17 years ago by Cheryl Flood, with a vision of a store that she describes as “where education meets fun,” Hobby and Toy Central recently opened its third location, located on Appleby Line just south of Dundas Street in Burlington.

With an emphasis on service, the staff will guide you to any of the store’s sections, which includes models, trains, puzzles, games, infant, or plush toys. The excitement of the holiday season draws people in to see the hottest toys of the year, including the classic construction toy Meccano and an electronic version of the age old 20 Questions called 20Q, that shows an uncanny accuracy. Perennial favourites such as Playmobil and Thomas the Tank Engine, along with more unique items like science kits, meld fun and learning for all ages.



### Casablanca Salon and Spa Oasis

695 Plains Road East  
(905) 637-9191

The goal of Casablanca Salon and Spa Oasis was to create a space where clients could feel as though they had been transported to another world. Owners Kim Barrett and Stacey Pack want clients to relax just as they would in their own homes.

With industry-leading techniques and procedures, Barrett and Pack’s goal is to service their clients to the fullest. Casablanca boasts an inviting Moroccan theme which has been home to talented stylists and estheticians for nearly five years.

The service at Casablanca doesn’t end after the visit to the salon. Clients are educated on how to maintain their service at home.



## Casteleyn's

368 Brant Street  
(905) 631-8074

Traditional Belgian chocolate made right here in Burlington? Yes, it's true. Casteleyn Belgian Chocolatiers was started 17 years ago by brothers Mark and Luk Casteleyn, who brought their unique brand to the Burlington downtown in 2001. Mark, trained in his native Belgium as a chocolatier, uses imported ingredients from Belgium in his recipes. While in the store you can also relax with a fresh coffee as you watch the chocolates being made through a round porthole window that gives a peek into the manufacturing area. There are many types of Belgian chocolates available today but Casteleyn's provides some of the finest, freshest and most traditional you will ever taste.



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## The Jean Store

423 Guelph Line  
(905) 634-7878

Whether you're searching for a new pair of flare or skinny jeans, The Jean Store should be your first stop for denim. One of the best hidden gems of the Burlington area, The Jean Store provides great old-fashioned service with selections for clients of almost any age.

Owner Raffy has been operating at his location on Guelph Line and New Street in Burlington since 1994. Recognizing a need in the marketplace for a full service jeans store he now offers brands including Guess, Parasuco, Liz Claiborne and French Dressing. Clients receive advice on sizes and styles available in all price ranges. Once they've made their purchases, expert hemming or tapering can be done on the spot in minutes. The Jean Store also carries great accessories such as Guess purses.



## Interior Design House

4047 Fairview Street  
(905) 634-3439  
[www.interiordesignhouse.com](http://www.interiordesignhouse.com)

If you're searching for a common sense approach to interior design, owner Marnie Warman of Interior Design House has achieved just that. With its huge variety of upscale furniture, merchandise and fabrics in vibrant

colours or neutrals, Interior Design House offers a fresh new perspective on design where good taste doesn't have to be expensive.

Warman, who opened the store in 1991, and her staff of more than 20 consultants are available to help you select anything from contemporary to traditional furniture; there is even a line of children's furniture. Options for clients include in-home consultations, luxurious blinds and draperies, an on-staff florist who makes beautiful Christmas mantel pieces, swags and wreaths. You can also purchase gift baskets and hostess gifts which can include some of their great wine wafers, chocolate-covered pretzel rods or their new line of Gourmet Devine chocolate bark available in different flavours.

With an incredible array of attractively priced products, Interior Design House can help you bring some new flare and fashion to your inner space.