

A CREATIVE CORNER IN PLYMOUTH

Just a few blocks from highways 55 and 169 is a nondescript office and industrial park that unless you work in the area you really wouldn't notice. I've flown past it going 55 miles an hour countless times and never wondered what was even in those buildings. But these days you just never know what's around the corner.

I needed fabric the other day and thought about my options. Sewing isn't really my thing but I always seem to need fabric every now and then. Like most creative supply businesses, a lot have consolidated or closed. The pickings get slim — and ordinary. So I Googled “fabric stores” in the Twin Cities and found Blue Bamboo. They cater to quilters but welcome everyone. According to their website they specialize in Asian and batik fabrics. I wasn't looking for either of those but thought I'd head over and take a look anyway.

Blue Bamboo is so tucked away on the side of an industrial building you'd never even know it's there. And that was fine with them because they started out as an online fabric store. But when so many local customers began picking up their fabrics they decided to go bricks-and-mortar. The bright, clean, expansive warehouse space is filled with custom-made shelves that hold bolts of fabric. I stood in awe as the entire color spectrum blended through the space from yellow to green to blue to purple then red right before my eyes — all in neatly rolled bolts of fabric. A special section by the door held new arrivals — monochromatic marbled fabrics in every color and shade imaginable.

Fabric is available by the yard or in cute little pre-cut packages of varying sizes. Since the store is geared for quilters, all the printed patterns are small and most fabrics are cotton — there's no upholstery or curtain sheers here. I didn't think I liked batiks but they were out-of-this-world gorgeous! I had no idea they could get that much color and detail and layering in a batik. It completely changed my mind on what I thought of the process. Other fabrics include Australian aboriginal abstracts, bright and cheerful Charley Harper illustra-

Blue Bamboo

12865 Industrial Park Blvd., open Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.; mybluebamboo.com

Anchor Paper Express

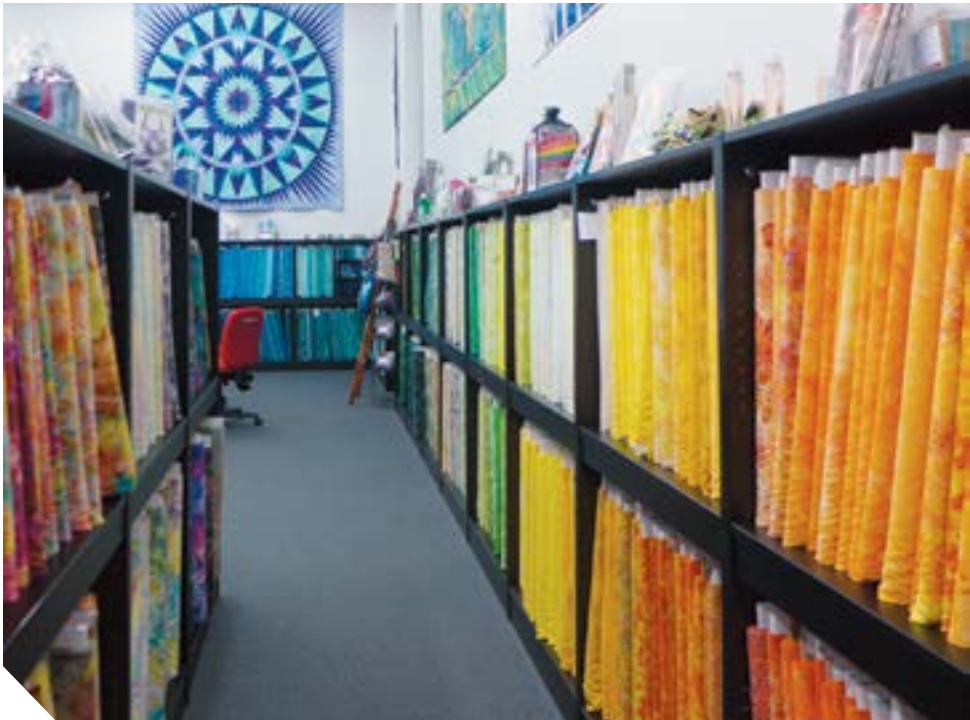
12855 Highway 55; open Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.; anchorpaper.com

tions, holiday themes, novelty prints, and lots and lots of small patterns. They carry really beautiful and unusual fabrics — nothing ordinary here.

Display racks are filled with patterns for quilts, pillows, table runners, tote bags, and purses. Buy a pattern or take a class. Follow Blue Bamboo on Facebook for upcoming events and classes.

Just across Highway 55 in another industrial building is Anchor Paper. Serving businesses since 1923, Anchor Paper opened their first Express store in 1990 to make smaller quantities of papers along with paper craft supplies available to their customers. The store is attached to the giant paper warehouse. Anchor Paper Express also offers classes and has a monthly e-newsletter. Wander the rows stocked with paper, pens, glues, ribbons, stamps, and everything you need for making collages, scrapbooks, cards, and invitations.

Follow Linda on Facebook



Papers, pens, and personal expression awaits at Anchor Paper (top) while the color spectrum circles the warehouse at Blue Bamboo. Photos by Linda Koutsky



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