

## Quilter's Shop Hop

### Quitman, Texas Stitchin Heaven

Deep in the piney woods of East Texas, past Gamblin and not far from Bright Star and Little Hope, Stitchin Heaven Quilt Shop has made a name for itself, and many, many friends. Its owner, Debbie Lutrell, takes orders by Internet or phone, ("We'll take Pony Express, too," Deb jokes), invites you to call for a live chat (you'll get a bonus card if you do), and is even more hospitable in person.

Stitchin Heaven's whole staff of 15 employees is committed to quality and service. The shop offers on-line support for quilters in action, something few or no other shops do. "We strive to give excellent, incredible, outstanding customer service," and when Deb calls you "sweetie," you get a quick sense of what she means.

"We're Block of the Month Headquarters," Deb says. "That's our niche." They've been running a "Dear Jane" block of the month club with 800 members since 2004, and are starting up a new one in January, 2007. "Dear Jane" is a very beautiful Civil War design with 225 blocks in all and the club runs for 24 months. "They love it," Debbie tells us. Another great block of the month quilt "Affairs of the Heart" begins this October.

Customers can choose from more than 3000 bolts of quality cotton, spanning tastes from batiks to some great little calicos. They also have a large collection of books and patterns—and



if they don't have exactly what you fancy, they'd be delighted to order for you. They sell Brother sewing machines, and offer "Scraps of Wisdom," helpful tips possibly edited by Scraps, the shop cat. Stitchin Heaven sends along free fat quarters with every order, and free shipping on orders over \$100.

**Stitchin Heaven**  
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The Craft Connection's customer favorites include the La Scala collection from Robert Kaufman; Hand-Dyed Solo panels by LunnStudios and Labrador Faces, both from Timeless Treasures.

### Conifer, Colorado The Craft Connection

Friendly service at a fantastic price: "That's what we offer," says Linda Jones, owner of what's probably the biggest online-only quilt shop in the country. "But we're people, not computers!" Linda's been a quilter for more than 25 years—she also makes dolls—and used to live further south, but can't resist

the pure serenity of high-mountain Colorado. Conifer is so remote and isolated that "we couldn't support a shop, but it's really beautiful up here," she says, looking out at a high-altitude green scene of pine and spruce.

So online we go! Treat the Craft Connection just like your local quilt shop—but don't bother to kick off your slippers. "We understand that you can never have enough places to look for new materials and tools. Please consider us your 'other' local shop," Linda says. Craft Connections' website changes every single day, "so customers won't be bored. Every night the computer calculates the day's best sellers and what's new—"you cast the votes by the yard." It's fun just to log on and see what today's bestsellers are.

"We're famous for off-the-beaten-track fabrics— abstracts, bright colors and contemporary prints. We specialize in fabrics a quilter might not be able to find in a local quilt shop," Linda explains. With her virtual store, she's able to offer advice and help with any problems or questions. She'll special order anything at no extra charge, and will send free snippets of fabrics or threads on request. And don't forget to take time to check out the weekly specials.

"We go the extra mile," Linda promises. "We provide same-day shipping, show you coordinate fabrics, with easy links to coordinating fabrics, so you can order them together. We tell you how much we have in stock, and whether or not we can get more for you." It can't get any easier than this!

**The Craft Connection**  
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