

Fairest of Them All

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Festival goers explore Fred Stodder's booth at La Quinta Arts Festival.

Well, they did it again!

For the second year in a row, Kentucky Crafted: The Market pulled ahead of the competition to win the top spot in AmericanStyle's seventh annual Top 10 Fairs and Festivals competition.

With its stellar mix of traditional and contemporary work, plus live performances and regional foods, what's not to like? Kentucky Crafted has a lot to be proud of, and AmericanStyle extends its congratulations to everyone connected with the annual event.

In addition to Kentucky Crafted, this year's Top 10 span the country and include five repeat winners as well as newcomers Saint Louis Art Fair and the Festival of Fine Craft in Millville, N.J., plus a welcome return to the Top 10 after a two-year absence of La

Just what makes these events stand out from the competition? We've opted to let selected readers tell you who they cast their votes for—and why—in the winners' list below. Be sure to also check out our month-to-month calendar by clicking here.

1. Kentucky Crafted: The Market Louisville, Ky.

Kentucky Crafted: The Market is a consistent favorite with AmericanStyle readers. Jeffrey Lambert of Prestonsburg, Ky., explains why: "Excellent crafters, tremendous crowds, beautiful surroundings and traditional Kentucky hospitality!" This year's event, on March 19-20, will feature the best of fine art and craft, as well as musical performances, specialty foods and the chance to meet Kentucky authors. Learn more at <http://kycraft.ky.gov>.

2. Scottsdale Arts Festival Scottsdale, Ariz.

Scottsdale resident Karen Spector describes what makes the Scottsdale Arts Festival unique: "I love the diversity of the exhibitors. It's a way to absorb culture from all around the country in one beautiful location." The latest edition, on March 11-13, features work in a meandering outdoor setting by 200 jury-selected artists in every art and craft medium. Attendees can enjoy the art with live music and a visit to the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, all included in the price of admission. Visit www.scottsdaleperformingarts.org for details.

3. Paradise City Arts Festival Northampton, Mass.

The Paradise City Arts Festival aims to show the work of the nation's very best craftsmen and artists. And year after year, AmericanStyle readers agree. "It's the quality of the work and the creativity represented that makes this the best show. It feels like visiting a museum!" says Marcia Cook of Concord, Mass. With more than 250 artists exhibiting their work, the upcoming shows, May 28-30 and Oct. 8-10, will not disappoint. Go to www.paradisecityarts.com for more information.

4. Saint Louis Art Fair Clayton, Mo.

From fiber and sculpture to ceramics and metalwork, the Saint Louis Art Fair has something for everyone. St. Louis resident Elsa Greenblatt explains, "It's one of the most fun and creative events the city offers—it brings the community together." Along with more than 180 artist booths, the fair includes three performance stages and food from several of St. Louis' best restaurants to tickle your palate. The next fair is slated for Sept. 9-11. For details, visit www.culturalfestivals.com.

5. St. James Court Art Show

Louisville, Ky.

Another perennial reader favorite, the St. James Court Art Show features more than 750 artists from across North America. “The wide diversity of artists representing their unique talents make this event a full day of entertainment, opportunity and experience,” says Gaye Franke of Bardstown, Ky. This year’s juried event, Sept. 30-Oct. 2, will feature the best of the best in fine arts and crafts. Visit www.stjamescourartshow.com to learn more.

6. La Quinta Arts Festival

La Quinta, Calif.

Nestled among the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains is La Quinta Arts Festival, featuring the juried work of more than 200 artists in every type of medium. “The quality, variety and craftsmanship of the fine arts displayed at this event is far superior to any other art festival I’ve attended,” says Norma Plante of San Diego, Calif. See the art against a backdrop of awe-inspiring scenery March 10-13. For details, visit www.lqaf.com.

7. Des Moines Arts Festival

Des Moines, Iowa

A juried art fair, artist demonstrations, contests and exhibitions are just the beginning of what’s in store at the Des Moines Arts Festival. Held June 24-26, it will take the full three days to see it all. “The city welcomes the artists in a gorgeous setting, which is exceptionally comfortable to patrons and artists alike,” says A. Joyce Smith of Urbandale, Iowa. “This festival is representative of the cultural growth of the city.” For more information, visit www.desmoinesartsfestival.org.

8. Festival of Fine Craft

Millville, N.J.

New to the Top 10, the Festival of Fine Craft, scheduled for Oct. 1-2, is sure to stay high on readers’ lists. “It’s a very well-rounded, interactive fall festival in a beautiful part of the country. You can spend the entire weekend browsing and enjoying the landscape, vendors and interactive demonstrations,” says Amy Blevins of Mullica Hill, N.J. After walking the festival, be sure to visit the Museum of American Glass and Down Jersey Folklife Center. Find all the details at www.wheatonarts.org.

9. Old Town Art Fair

Chicago, Ill.

“High-quality vendors, homey neighborhood atmosphere and proceeds that go to a great cause,” are the reasons Lauren Warnecke of Chicago, Ill., lists the Old Town Art Fair as one of her favorite annual events. This year, it will feature 260 nationally acclaimed artists June 11-12, as well as a music stage, food court and a garden walk of the historic buildings that surround the festival. Visit www.oldtowntriangle.com for information.

10. Ann Arbor Street Art Fair, the Original

Ann Arbor, Mich.

Always a hit with AmericanStyle readers, Ann Arbor Street Art Fair, the Original has a 50-year history of promoting the most influential American artists. Susan Pioch of Northwood, Ohio, describes why the show, which returns July 20-23, is one of the best: “It’s a beautiful street fair with something for every possible taste. Every medium is featured and beautifully displayed.” Go to www.artfair.org to learn more.