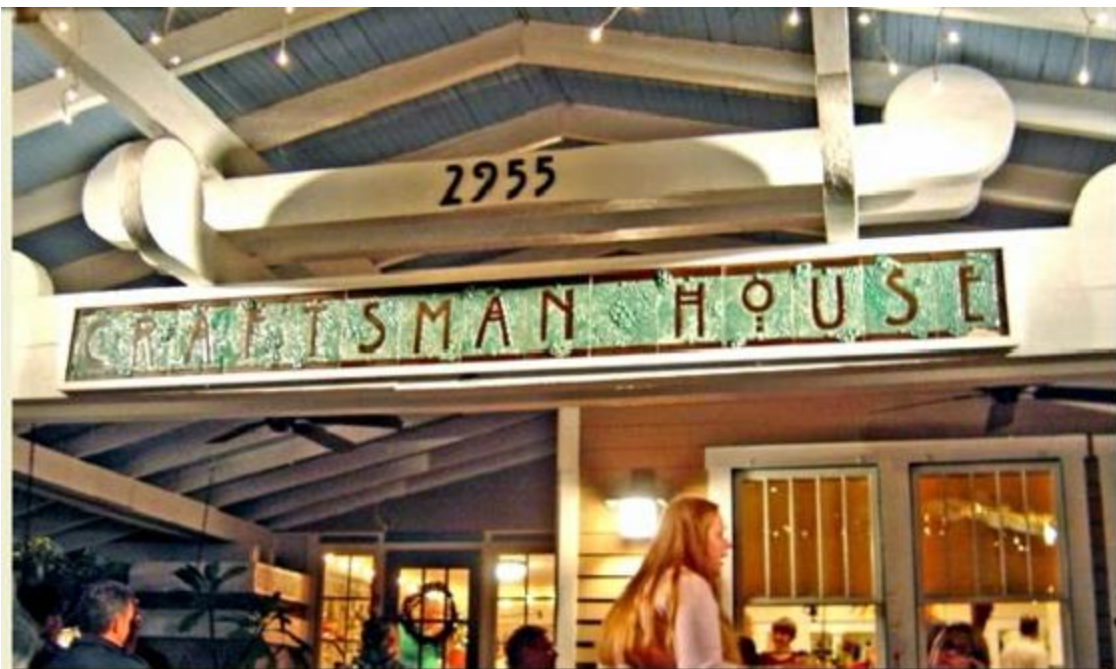


Exploring the Art of St. Pete: The Craftsman House GUIDE

By Ryan Rushton

Known for its beaches and endless sunshine and sailboats, St. Petersburg, FL is a popular vacation spot. But did you know that the city has emerged as a top destination for the arts since the new millennium? It has also been selected as one of America's top arts places by ArtPlace America.

One gallery that should be a sure stop for any art enthusiast is the Craftsman House Gallery, located in the Grand Central District. Built in 1918, the Craftsman House bungalow features three-dimensional art from over 300 national and local artisans- in addition to a pottery studio and café. But it's more than that. Owner and founder Jeff Schorr explains that: "Since the beginning we have strived to make an accessible art gallery that is a place of community, where everyone can feel at home."



Some of the art at Craftsman House is inspired by the American Arts and Crafts movement of the 1920's- relating to the time period when the historic bungalow was built. Galleries are filled with an extensive collection of hand-blown glass, turned wood, jewelry, and more from American artists across all 50 states.

Through several renovations, the carriage house became the pottery studio, which is now home to a year-long residency program for professional ceramic artists. The studio is a must for visitors who want to see how pottery is made. Schorr says that visitors, "make that personal connection by getting to meet the artist that made their piece, seeing how it was made, & hearing the story behind it." Once the artists' work is complete, it is displayed in the gallery alongside some of the top potters in the country.

The other addition to the Craftsman House is the café, which was created to further the feeling of "home". Visitors will enjoy the personal touches: for example, all meals in the cafe are served on plates and mugs that were made in the pottery studio. Schorr explains that, "This shows customers how they can easily incorporate art into their everyday lives."



Within the Craftsman House, you will feel comfortable dressed up or in shorts and a t-shirt. Schorr works to create a welcoming culture that makes art accessible.

"We have a wide range of price points so there is something affordable to everyone. You don't necessarily have to spend thousands of dollars for art. You can start your art collection by purchasing a coffee mug for less than \$20, and enjoy using it every day."

The next time you're in the Grand Central District, stop by and experience the Craftsman House, an Arts and Crafts destination in the beautiful city of St. Petersburg.