

Let's Shop!

You've heard this from me before -- I'm trying not to shop! At this stage in my life I have more than I need and have been working to de-clutter our house. It's slow going.

But when you are in Mexico it is impossible to resist the local crafts and folk art (came home with a corn-husk Christmas wreath) the beautiful hand-made jewelry (who knew that Chiapas has extensive Amber mines???) or hand-made items made by women who use the money to feed their families.



This wonderful man makes replicas of the pottery found at Monte Alban, one of the earliest cities in Mesoamerica. After showing me his wares, he pulled out two magnificent jade beads and a jade ring from his sachel. My guide signaled that yes - they are antique.

No surprise here --- I bought them!



Amber is fossilized resin and Chiapas amber is particular sought after for its color and inclusions. This photo shows how it is found in the mines.

And men selling amber jewelry will find you - no problem. We lucked out in that it is market day in the mountain town of San Juan Chamula and vendors are out in full force.



But when you talk with a lovely Tzotzil woman crocheting hats, bags and toys; when you meet the man who sculpts traditional figures from the same stone the Mayans built their cities; and when you run across beautifully hand-made silver items. Well.... its hard to resist. At least I didn't have to buy an extra suitcase to get all my stuff home this time!



This is Rosa. She likes to sell her hand-made items to travelers as she says “they appreciate my work.” If you ever visit to San Cristobal de las Casas, look for her by the entrance to the Arrecefe Hotel.

Her craft items are practical and beautiful, I bought a hat, bag, water carrier and hat band. I will treasure them forever.