

THE ITALIAN ARTSHOP

By Gavin Collins

The Riverside mall has never really been one of those shopping centres that I get excited at the prospect of visiting... until now that is.

The Italian Artshop has recently moved just down the road from their old shop, to occupy one of the larger shops in the Riverside Mall, and what a fabulous job they have done.

This truly is an artist's paradise.

The interior is warm and inviting and the shop has a very up market feel, which is ironic given their prices. The Italian Artshop has always been synonymous with value for money, and this is made even more evident in the new shop. Their own imported brands offer unbeatable value for money, and the more commonly available products are marked very competitively.

It's always amazing to compare paint prices with those available at The Italian Artshop- often you get a better quality paint at a cheaper price compared to other imported brands. I was surprised to see their Canson paper at only R33.00 per sheet and Liquin at only R175.00 for 75ml and R655.00 for 500ml- very reasonable compared to other shops in SA.

My friend was delighted to find that the 300g Arches paper (one of the best papers for watercolours) was only R139.00 per sheet, and even more so when she discovered that they keep the 640g sheets as well as a range of blocks and pads. Of course my favourite is still the Sennelier oils imported from France. I use this paint in abundance and just love the buttery feel and the range of amazing colours.

Sennelier was the paint manufacturer to the French Impressionists, and many of their unique colours still remain. Sepia, Warm grey and Greenish Umber are just some of my favourites and you can see these wonderful tones in many of my paintings.

Owner Skye Kennedy has told me that the new shop allows them to further expand their range of products. They've already added Daniel Smith water-soluble oils to their arsenal, known as one of the only true artist quality water-soluble oils available in the world.



Soon to come will be a range of coloured pencils, water soluble pencils and pastel pencils, available in sets as well as individually. The Italian Artshop is definitely broadening their range of drawing/sketching materials, and this is already evident in the increase to their paper and sketch book ranges, as well as their coloured charcoals and natural charcoals.

Something that really excites me is the range of art books that will soon be available at The Italian Artshop to accompany their huge selection of DVDs. Not only will you be able to get a wide range of the usual 'how to' books, but an absolutely gorgeous range of coffee table books, books on various artists, and the less common books on technique.

This shop has always carried a very unique range of products that has set them apart from other art shops, and this range of art books will further enhance that uniqueness.

This shop still maintains its level of quality products and is still focused on fine art, so don't expect to find face paint or craft glue here. It's a haven for all fine artists and the knowledge of the staff is well known. If you have a query related to art materials- call the Italian Artshop.

This is the place to go if you are looking for some of the more obscure products, such as rabbit skin glue, gum Arabic, copal gum, mastic resin, French linen primed by hand with traditional oil primers, oil of spike lavender, and even lead white oil paint.

For those of you who are not lucky enough to be able to visit this shop in person simply call or email to have your order delivered. If you are in or near a major city, your order will be delivered to your door for the nominal fee of only R50.00. If you're in a mud hut in the middle of nowhere, there is still



a good chance that they will deliver to you at a surprisingly low rate, just ask for a quote.

I loved the original Italian Artshop, but the new premises have really elevated this art shop in my opinion. It is incredibly easy to find, and the parking is plentiful (and free).

Definitely worth a visit



THE ITALIAN ARTSHOP
FOR ALL ARTISTS PAINTS AND MATERIALS

**Ground Floor
Riverside Mall
Main Road
Rondebosch**

Tel: 021 6851877

info@italianartshop.co.za

