



# For What It's Worth

## Appraisers can help you handle your treasures

Above: This nightstand is a reproduction piece available at The Embellished House. An artist added gold paint and silver leafing, and it was embellished by hand with Swarovski crystal. Photo courtesy of The Embellished House.

Opposite page: Mediterrania's vast collection of Spanish antiques includes this circa 1600 to 1620, painted-and-gilt Castilian sacarium in chestnut. The piece is from the province of Burgos, Spain. Photo courtesy of Mediterrania.

## For most people, buying and owning antiques and collectibles is a fun hobby, but they don't always know the real value of what they have.

That uncertainty comes to light when people have to make decisions about selling or donating valuables.

Many people these days find themselves dealing with the prospect of downsizing or handling a relative's estate, and they don't know how to figure out what things are worth or where to sell things.

Homeowners have traditionally turned to appraisers to appraise individual high-value items for insurance purposes, estate planning, or for a sale or donation. In order to get a tax deduction, the IRS requires an appraisal to be conducted by a "qualified appraiser" for items donated to charity worth more than \$5,000. However, now people are turning to appraisers to con-

sult with them about downsizing or selling items, as well.

Rather than doing a full appraisal, an appraiser might do a walk-through of a house and advise a client about which items might be valuable and give specific advice about where items can be sold. This may alleviate the anxiety people may have about selling parts of their collections.

If you are planning to sell your art and antiques locally, there are a number of markets to consider. Some dealers or galleries will buy outright, but you usually will not receive as much for your valuables as you would if you consign them. You should speak with a few dealers or shops to clarify their fees and any out-of-pocket costs you might incur, such as shipping or photographing the items. You should also ask how the gallery or dealer plans to market your items. If you are consigning, confirm the length of your consignment agreement. Also, confirm that the gallery or dealer will insure your valuables.

In Arizona, more valuable items can be offered at high-end auction houses such as Scottsdale Art Auction. SavvyCollector in central Phoenix specializes in fine art and Native American art, crafts and jewelry on the secondary market. For lower-valued items, options include weekly catch-

**THE EMBELLISHED HOUSE**  
7121 E. Sahuaro Drive, Suite E  
Scottsdale  
480-991-2610  
[www.theembellishedhouse.com](http://www.theembellishedhouse.com)

The Embellished House offers vintage collectibles from the Midwest to the East Coast. Visit this special workshop where pieces of your past, or newer likenesses, come to life in ways that are uniquely you. Buy an item as is, or work with talented artists on staff to refinish reproduction pieces. Accessories and glassware reflect eras from the 1930s through the 1960s, and many pieces throughout the store are embellished with gold and silver leafing, custom paints, Swarovski crystals and vintage jewelry. The store models how to mix woods, time periods and metals to create an eclectic and signature decor.

**CHEZ ANTIQUES**  
4848 E. Cactus Road, Suite 600  
Scottsdale  
602-404-7305  
[www.chezantiques.com](http://www.chezantiques.com)

More than 100 vendors are represented in this large antique mall. There is always a fresh inventory, including paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries. You can sell some items directly, consign others, or simply rent space. And if you're looking for something in particular, Chez Antiques will contact vendors to find what you're looking for at no cost. The store's considerable selection of high-end antiques and quaint collectibles is sure to fill your treasure chest.

**AIRPARK CONSIGNMENT**  
7848 E. Redfield Road, Suite 17  
Scottsdale  
480-951-7883

Airpark Consignment specializes in upscale furnishings and accessories and offers a slew of redecorating options. It represents various design styles and has a constantly changing inventory. Discover furnishings from the Spanish Colonial era to rustic Southwest, and modern to eclectic. The store is filled with more than 9,000 square feet of top-quality pieces priced well below retail, including one-of-a-kind items to brand names such as Maitland-Smith, Crate & Barrel, Versace and Lenox. It has become a hot spot for consignors, interior designers, real estate professionals and the general public.

**MERCHANT SQUARE**  
1509 N. Arizona Ave.  
Chandler  
480-792-1919

With approximately 250 independent dealers, Merchant Square is the largest antique store in the Southeast Valley. It carries antiques, furniture, outdoor products and lighting fixtures, including elegant chandeliers. Although Tuscan styles are more dominant in the store, there is an impressive variety of styles that include Asian and pre-modern.



# MEDITERRÁNIA

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Opposite page, top: Another vintage piece found at the The Embellished House, this dresser features a handpainted design, Swarovski crystals, and vintage depression glass knobs with buttons and Swarovski crystals. Photo courtesy of The Embellished House.

Opposite page, bottom left: Echoes of Asia's selection includes this seated, gilded wooden Buddha. Composed of teak, the piece is from Mandalay, Myanmar (formerly Burma) and dates back to the late 1700s. Photo courtesy of Echoes of Asia.

Opposite page, bottom right: With more than 100 vendors represented, Chez Antiques has plenty to choose from, including this two-piece, Louis XVI-style oak French sideboard. Photo courtesy of Chez Antiques.

all auctions such as Auction Systems, vintage shops such as Retro Redux or online sites such as eBay.

Personal property appraisers are not required by state or federal law to be certified or licensed. Therefore, if you decide you need an appraisal, make sure you hire an accredited appraiser from an established national organization such as the American Society of Appraisers. Don't use an appraiser who offers to buy the item or charges you a fee based on a percentage of the value (which is an unethical practice for an appraiser). And of course, paying for an appraisal only makes sense if the item is worth more than the appraisal cost. Appraisers normally charge by the hour, item or total job. Hourly rates in the Phoenix area range from \$125 to \$300 per hour. Price varies due to the appraiser's experience. Clients should expect to pay a minimum of several hundred dollars for an appraisal.

If you get an appraisal, keep the final report with other important legal documents. And remember that the markets for antiques and collectibles continually go up and down. You should consider getting high-valued objects re-appraised every few years. H&D

www.appraisers.org  
www.myspace.com/retroreduxphoenix  
www.savvycollector.com  
www.scottsdaleartauction.com

Allison D. Gee is an accredited senior appraiser designated in fine arts through the American Society of Appraisers. Gee was recently nominated to serve as an officer on the National Personal Property Committee of the American Society of Appraisers.