



# (Andrea) ♡ Singarella



Andrea Singarella is the proprietor of One Hundred Wishes, a web-based boutique where she sells pretty things she's made with her own hands. When she's not playing trains with her children, you might find her creating something in her studio: a necklace, a decorative craft project for her home, or a gift for a friend. She lives in Fredericksburg, Virginia, with her husband and children, her most precious creations to date.





## Tip:

AS DIFFICULT AS IT MAY SOMETIMES BE, TRY NOT TO COMPARE YOURSELF TO OTHERS. JUST BE THE BEST VERSION OF YOU THAT YOU CAN POSSIBLY BE.

Some of my very favorite childhood memories include time spent at my grandmother's house. It was a ritual that we would sit on her bed and take the drawers out of her dresser to dig through the endless piles of jewelry, purses, silk scarves, rosaries, and dime-store goodies. It was a treasure hunt for me, and I was fascinated by the accessories and trinkets that were hidden in those drawers. I didn't realize it at the time, but that was the beginning of my love for all things feminine, flowered, beaded, and vintage. I always went home with a bag full of Grandma's things, and I cherished them.

Throughout my teenage years, I would've gladly turned down a trip to the mall for an adventure at a flea market or thrift shop with my mother. I was always looking for vintage clothing and old jewelry although I didn't know anyone my age who liked the things I liked or dressed the way I dressed. In a way I felt like an oddball, but I just did what felt right to me. I enjoyed collecting and carrying old Bakelite purses, wearing sweaters from the 1950s, and still loved peeking into Grandma's closets searching for fur-collared coats (which, lucky for me, she gladly parted with). As Prom time approached, I recall that I couldn't find the style of earrings I had wanted, so I rifled through my jewelry boxes of broken bits and shiny baubles and created my own pair. I was pleased as punch that I had made them myself.

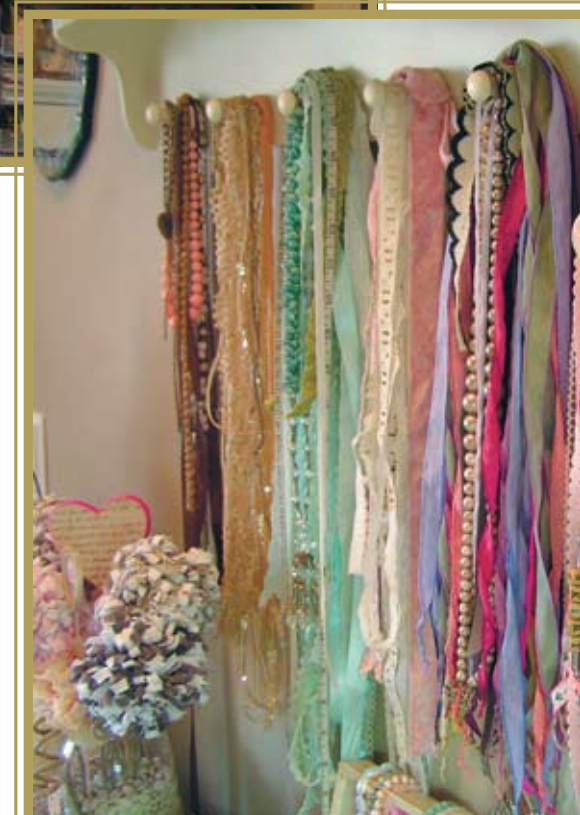
In college I majored in Fashion Merchandising, and learned sewing, pattern making, and the business of retail. Courses such as Textiles, Art History, and Fashion Merchandising filled my schedule, and it felt great to study with other girls who shared the same interests and passions. I ended up finishing school in



New York at the Fashion Institute of Technology, and it was there that I truly found myself. It sounds so cliché, but it's true. For the first time in my creative life, I felt like I really fit in. While New York can take a lot from you (like all of your money as a freshly graduated college student!) it also gives you so much in return. It gives you the confidence and courage to be yourself and follow your dreams.

After spending a few years working as a buyer for a specialty store in New York, I decided to follow the man I loved on an overseas adventure. We lived in Sarajevo, Bosnia, for a year while he worked, and we traveled when we could before finally returning to the States to start our family. The funny thing is, no matter where I lived, whether in a dorm or apartment, in the United States or abroad, I have always carved out a nook to use as a crafting space. It seems I've tried nearly every craft at one time or another: knitting, perfume making (a very smelly phase for me!), sewing, soldering, scrapbooking, and cake decorating to name a few.

When we bought our first home, my husband suggested I convert the unused formal living room into a crafting space. It's the room you see here filled with flowers and flourishes, ruffles and ribbons, scallops and sparkle. In this new space, I began creating





# Favorite Quote:

To think quietly, talk gently, act frankly;  
to listen to stars and birds,  
to babes and sages, with open heart;  
to bear all cheerfully, do all bravely,  
await occasions and hurry never.  
To let the spiritual, unbidden and unconscious  
grow up through the the common.  
This is to be my symphony.

— WILLIAM HENRY CHANNING



like crazy. Nearly every day I would go into my room and work on a project for the house that needed some embellishing or string a bracelet for myself or for a friend. I made our Christmas cards and all sorts of holiday decorations. I stitched curtains for our baby's nursery and scrapbooked our family memories. Being in this new creative space surrounded by pretty things inspired me endlessly.

Eventually, I decided to fulfill a long-time dream of running my own shop. I gathered everything I had learned and loved about vintage style, handmade goods, and the retail industry, and I opened a web-based boutique. In the early days, I sold my handmade items such as jewelry, collages, and other papercrafts, in addition to vintage-inspired craft supplies in my favorite pastel hues. Ribbons, glass glitter, and other beautiful embellishments now filled the shelves of the studio.

As business grew, the space took on a life of its own and became a warehouse for inventory as well as a packing and shipping center. I was grateful that my little shop was a success, but sadly, I no longer had time to create and sell handmade items. I missed my creative self and my creative space. The floor was overrun with boxes and packing peanuts, and I began to dread entering the room altogether. I felt like I had lost my creativity and had also lost sight of the reasons

why I opened my shop in the first place. It took a while to realize something had to give.

I'm happy to say that the proverbial lightbulb finally clicked on and everything suddenly fell into place. I have recently sold off most of the inventory in my shop and now only sell items that are designed or created by my own hands. Sometimes it's a little, sometimes it's a lot. I can't begin to tell you how great it feels to be creating again. Even if it's just a project here and there, it's on my time, in my style, with my heart leading me all the way.

So, this craft room has come full circle. Once again, it is the place where I go to reconnect with myself. It's the place where my collection of vintage purses and piles of millinery flowers happily live, along with treasures from grandma's closet and flea market trips with my mom. It's the place where trays of beads and baubles wait to be made into a new piece of jewelry. It's the place I go to stitch an apron or cut and paste a collage. It's a room that I love to walk into because I can feel my spirit so clearly there.

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WHERE WOMEN CREATE would like to thank Andrea Singarella for her involvement in our Spring Issue. To learn more about Andrea, visit [www.onehundredwishes.com](http://www.onehundredwishes.com).

