



## INTRODUCTION

I learned about the wisdom of bargain shopping at my mother's knee. When I was just a tiny tot, my mother, Gloria Gildone Philips, dragged me around the stores of San Francisco on Saturdays from early morning until late afternoon, just ahead of the commute traffic. We literally shopped until I dropped, shop-worn into her arms, fast asleep and clutching my bags of bargains.

My mother invented what I came to refer to as the "Shopping Olympics". I learned to leap tall rounders in a single bound, search for hidden treasures amongst the vast tundra of trash, grab the best merchandise away from women twice my height and ferret out fashion finds.

I learned how to tell the difference between real designer merchandise and knock-offs, quality merchandise and schlock, and adopted my mother's beliefs that everything is negotiable and that there is discount in volume.

My later training as a buyer for an upscale fashion chain store, showed me the wonderful world of wholesale, which, of course, further fed my bargain shopping mania. The idea that only people outside that world actually paid retail was constantly reinforced.

Years after my foray into fashion, I discovered consignment and thrift stores... and never looked back. To this day, the only thing that I buy new is food; everything else is gently used and formerly treasured. Even my license plate frames reflect my shopping passion: *Get outta my way, I'm going shopping!* and *This is not an SUV, it's a shopping cart*. My SUV is lovingly referred to as “the shopping shuttle” by my friends.

Speaking of my friends, it is at their urging that I write this book. They think that the treasure trove of thrift and consignment stores on my shopping route offers super shoppportunities for bargainistas . So, here it is... happy shopping!

While we've combed the cities in this book to compile a complete list of thrift and clothing consignment stores, we realize that a few may have slipped through the cracks. If you don't see your favorite store on our list, please contact us at **[www.joannaphilips.com](http://www.joannaphilips.com)**.