The hordes of visitors to South Carolina flea markets certainly attest to the belief that one man’s trash is another man’s treasure. Just last week I found a weathered door to convert into a headboard, thanks to the inspiration of Home & Garden Television (HGTV). Flea markets offer something for everyone, whether you’re looking to transform a guest cottage from shabby to chic, collect hard-to-find fishing lures or even adopt a pet. So be sure to add to your itinerary a stop at one of the state’s treasure troves for miscellany. Even if you’re not on the hunt for something particular, a visit to the flea market is a great way to step off the beaten path, and provides a charming and idyllic setting for a morning jaunt out for fresh produce.

Peppered throughout the state, flea markets range in size, hours of operation and type of offerings. So grab a book on bargain hunting and, whatever your quest, come prepared with cash and spare shopping bags in hand.

The Pickens Flea Market is one of the largest in the Upstate, luring visitors from far and wide to scavenge through more than 1,000 booths of goods sheltered under an impressive quarter-mile stretch of shed. Only held on Wednesdays, the market is open from 4-11 a.m., so don’t forget to set the alarm. The facility is rich in upscale antiques that make for unbelievable finds—from old church pews to chairs, terrines and more. Some local families pay an annual visit to purchase locally made “fried pies” before the Thanksgiving holiday, while tourists visiting Lake Keowee make it a fun family excursion to search for everything from old farm tools and car parts to fresh flowers, fruits and vegetables.

If you are in the market for a pet, head to “Pet Row” at the Upstate’s Anderson Jockey Lot, which was given its name some 30 years ago as a place to “barter or jockey the price” of things. Featuring over 2,000 indoor booths, it’s also a mecca for bric-a-brac and dollar store finds and includes one of the largest yard sale sections around. Coastal Carolina Flea Market, located in Ladson, is the Lowcountry’s largest flea market, with over 800 booths offering everything from antiques to electronics, and is also known for its assortment of furry friends.

South Carolina’s Olde English District is comprised of quaint and storied towns such as Camden and Rock Hill. For an overnight adventure, book a bed and breakfast, or just make a day trip to one of the area’s antique malls and outdoor markets such as Barnyard in Fort Mill or the Flea Market of Rock Hill. If you want to by-pass Myrtle Beach’s more touristy destinations, The Grand Strand offers a smattering of flea market stops.

Hudson Flea Market in Surfside is a great place to find unlimited kitchenware, beach necessities from flip-flops to decorative seashells, handmade jewelry, unique watches and other one-of-a-kind clothing accessories. If you are looking for that special holiday gift, you can commission a blown-glass piece on site, designed with your loved one’s name or favorite image on it—such as tiger paws for the Clemson fan.

Beyond the larger venues, small 20+ vendor flea markets punctuate other small towns—where the people truly are as nice as the pies they sell.

Find out more…
For a partial listing of South Carolina’s flea markets including contact information, visit http://fleamarketguide.com/SC.aspx.