A TOWN WITH OLD-WORLD OKLAHOMA CHARM MIXED WITH MODERN SENSIBILITIES, CLAREMORE HAS SLOWLY BUT SURELY BECOME ONE OF THE SWEET SPOTS IN NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA FOR SHOPPING, DINING, AND UNWINDING.

BY MICHELE CHIAPPETTA
PHOTOS BY ROB HARMON

RETAIL RENDEZVOUS

Less than 30 miles northeast of Tulsa, Claremore is an accessible destination for a full day of shopping, dining, and sightseeing. Named after the Osage Indian chief, Claremore, this town has a rich history.

Thirty-three years before Oklahoma was granted statehood, a post office was built in this area for the Cherokee Nation. But perhaps Claremore is best known as the birthplace and home of one of the country's favorite 20th-century entertainers, Will Rogers.

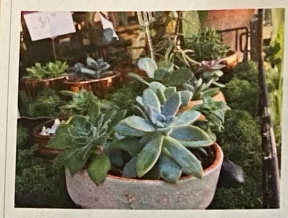
So many of the buildings in downtown Claremore date back to the early 1900s, with several older than the state of Oklahoma itself. Since the 1990s, with a continual effort for renewal called the Main Street Project, Claremore has slowly but surely become one of the sweet spots in Northeast Oklahoma for shopping, dining, and unwinding. It's a town with old-world Oklahoma charm mixed with modern sensibilities.

The Main Street shops, inside almost 30 different historic, refurbished buildings on Will Rogers Boulevard, put their unique spin on recreational retail therapy, exploring, and all that comes with a fun day trip.

There are so many enjoyable sights to see in this beautiful town. Murals of working men and women, flowers, and the like decorate buildings. Decorating the corners of downtown intersections are metal sculptures — a bicycle, a giant coffee cup, and more than a couple of Will Rogers, including one of him reading a newspaper on a bench. Commemorative plaques along the sidewalks, and in front of several of the old buildings, provide small history lessons.

Food, fun, and frivolity await anyone visiting Claremore for the day. There are plenty of benches for sitting, resting, and people watching on Will Rogers Boulevard before you get back to browsing the boutiques, furniture, antiques, jewelry, and clothing stores.

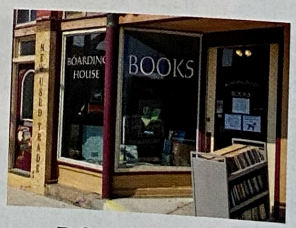




CROOKED ROOTS DESIGN

323 W. WILL ROGERS BLVD. CLAREMORE

A go-to spot for event planning and floral design in Green Country, Crooked Roots has a reputation for naturally designed floral arrangements with an extraordinary flair for color. You will enjoy picking out flowers almost as much as giving them to a loved one. The team of creative florists will design an arrangement that fits your desires and personality. The shop can cater to any occasion. You can learn some tricks of the trade at their occasional workshops, which show you how to make floral arrangements look beautiful.



BOARDING HOUSE BOOKS

300 W. WILL ROGERS BLVD. CLAREMORE

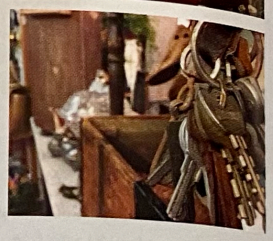
Over a century ago, the Ward Boarding House welcomed weary travelers, one and all, from the Dust Bowl days to post-World War II. They came, arriving by horse, train, automobile, and on foot. All these years later, with its rich history intact, the building houses a fabulous bookstore, full of all kinds of genres for children, general readers, and collectors. Book enthusiasts will have quite a time perusing the thousands of fiction and nonfiction books lining the shelves in each of the former bedrooms. A bathtub filled to the brim with books in the boarding house's old upstairs washroom makes this store a one-of-a-kind experience. Book lovers can easily spend a few hours or more in this excellent spot, finding that perfect book or two add to their collection.

THE CRANBERRY MERCHANT

417 W. WILL ROGERS BLVD. CLAREMORE

This gigantic store, jam-packed with antiques and must-have collectibles, is a time traveler's paradise. So many pop-culture and American items fill the shelves of this enormous antique mall. Cookbooks from back in the day, ceramic bowls and vases in pristine condition, Frankoma pottery that could readily be displayed in a museum, vintage signs from all over the country — these and so much more are yours for the buying. Don't forget to look upstairs, where





an entire additional floor of unbelievable finds await. Antique furniture of all styles and shapes are displayed throughout the store, waiting for their new home.

HAMMETT HOUSE RESTAURANT

1616 W. WILL ROGERS BLVD. CLAREMORE

The scent of tasty home cooking fills the air the second you enter this Green Country gem. A Northeastern Oklahoma landmark since the late 1960s, it's a favorite among locals and tourists alike. Their daily lunch and dinner specials, featuring items such as



