

# YOU CAN NOW BUY FROM DOZENS OF MONTCLAIR SHOPS ONLINE (TOWN SQUARE)

*Also: The Montclair Center BID urges you to buy gift cards to support local businesses that need a cash infusion now, during the pandemic.*

March 25, 2021



*Teo Zac via Unsplash*

**By JASON GLEASON**

*For Montclair Local*

The pandemic has been an extraordinary challenge for businesses, in Montclair and everywhere. The Montclair Center Business Improvement District has been working with

the township, the state and our community partners on creative solutions to help Montclair's downtown not just survive, but thrive.

Among them: Through a grant from the [state's Main Street NJ program](#), we've helped dozens of your favorite downtown shops [join BeyondMain.com](#), a shop-local marketplace where small businesses can create storefronts for online ordering. You can pick up Easter baskets from Just Kidding Around, comic books from East Side Mags, masks and hats from Her Name Was, candles at Culture Couture, virtual classes from the Eclectic Chic Boutique and gift cards to your favorite salons and restaurants. Montclair Center gift cards are redeemable at all the Beyond Main Montclair Center stores.

We know that it will take all of us together to make a successful recovery. Shoppers will now be able to purchase directly online to support the downtown with easy store pickup – making it just as convenient as other online sellers, but with the benefit of growing our own community.

Now in its third year, Beyond Main's core mission is to use technology to help small businesses and communities thrive in the new era of retail with a convenient way to shop local. It has become increasingly important for small businesses to be visible online, and we are delighted to be able to offer this service to our downtown businesses.



JASON GLEASON

I also want to encourage you to buy gift cards at individual shops and restaurants. A gift card purchase today for your future dining and gift-giving functions is a short-term loan for our businesses right now. Every day, people ask me how to give even more support to downtown businesses. Buying gift cards at your favorite restaurants and retailers is one of the best ways to do this. You can invest now for all the fair-weather shopping and dining that we all plan to do soon.

In addition to Beyond Main, the Montclair Center BID has been working on a number of initiatives to help with pandemic recovery:

- Distributing more than \$500,000 in grant money directly to 130 qualifying small businesses downtown through a grant from Main Street NJ.
- Developing a strategic plan that will provide a road map for success for 2021 and beyond.
- Working closely with the Township of Montclair's COVID-19 Recovery Task Force.
- Offering in-depth business owner education classes on salon management, WordPress, e-commerce and more.
- Identifying new revenue streams and innovative in-store designs for our businesses with Storefront Mastery.
- Improving district maintenance with additional vehicles and staff.
- Increasing the district's visibility with dynamic and targeted earned media campaigns.
- Partnering with key stakeholders in developing programs for 2021 and beyond.

Additionally, as we move forward to warmer weather and more vaccinations, your favorite downtown restaurants offer multiple dining options – including outdoor dining, increased indoor seating, takeout – and even some brand-new ideas like the takeout cultural basket from Mesob's Berekti Mengistu (check out the Montclair Center Instagram account, [@montclaircenter](#), for a sneak peek).

We are all looking forward to a healthier, happier and more successful 2021. As always, our boutique retailers, savvy service providers, renowned restaurants and world-class salons need your help and support moving forward.

On behalf of the Montclair Center BID board of directors and staff, I invite everyone to check out the wide variety of cool gifts and services on [BeyondMain.com](#) and look forward

to welcoming you downtown soon.

*Jason Gleason is the executive director of the Montclair Center Business Improvement District.*