



— 150 —
BOOKSTORES
YOU NEED
TO VISIT BEFORE
— YOU DIE —

By Elizabeth Stamp

Lannoo

Introduction by Elizabeth Stamp

For as long as I can remember, I have been happiest while wandering the aisles of a bookstore. My small hometown of Wheeling, West Virginia, had two independent bookstores (shoutout to The Paradox Book Store and the late, great Words & Music), and I learned from a young age that bookstores are magical places. As I gathered the bookstores for this book, I began with a very general qualification: Is this a bookstore I'd want to visit? However, since every bookstore is a bookstore I'd want to visit, I had to come up with more specific criteria. There is something special about each bookstore in this book, whether it's wondrous architecture, a highly specialized inventory list or the impact it makes on the community it serves.

In the age of Amazon, bookstores face incredible challenges, which is why it's important to support your local independent bookseller by stopping in, buying from them online, or giving them a call to ask for their expert recommendations. There's a popular saying amongst indie booksellers that I learned at the lovely Indigo Books on Johns Island, South Carolina: "Find it here, buy it here, keep us here." I hope you'll enjoy being transported to these unique stores as much as I have, and that you'll pay them a visit and keep them around for the next generation of book lovers.

Elizabeth Stamp

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**YANJIYOU CAPSULE
BOOKSTORE**

East side of Liuyun Xiangshu Hotel, Tonglu County, Zhejiang Province, China

TO VISIT
BEFORE YOU DIE
BECAUSE

It's an
architectural
wonder set in an
awe-inspiring
natural landscape.

Nested in the forest of Tonglu in Zhejiang Province, Yanjiyou Capsule Bookstore is worth the trip for book and nature lovers alike. Architecture firm Atelier tao + c repurposed an old two-story wood and mud building on the rural site, adding a capsule hotel with 20 sleeping spaces, a bookstore and a library. Shelves made of local bamboo line the double-height space, and visitors can enjoy a book and the view of the surrounding landscape in the sunken reading room or the curved sitting area beside the towering transparent eastern façade.









02 SHSH BY JETLAG BOOKS

303-2, Dongsì North Street, Dongcheng District, Beijing, China

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Jetlag Books offers creative books and magazines in a gallery-like setting.

Founded in 2020, Beijing's hip Jetlag Books reinvents the city newsstand by offering a carefully selected array of magazines and books in inventive settings. Its latest outpost, SHSH by Jetlag Books, opened in 2022 alongside the Chinese co-working space company 5lmeet, and is part bookstore, part café and part co-working space. The contemporary interior was transformed by +C Architects, who added inventive rotating stainless-steel shelves that provide a sleek contrast to the rough concrete walls and acrylic displays that make the books on art, design, fashion and poetry appear to float. Once you find your source of inspiration du jour, you can grab a seat at the bar along the window-lined storefront and watch the world go by.



03 ZHAOXI BOOKSTORE

2F, Longhuli, No. 67-3, South Longhu Zhonghuan Road Jiuru Road, Jinshui District, Zhengzhou City, Henan Province, China

TO VISIT
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BECAUSE

The peaceful bookstore is a welcome respite from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Architecture firm Atelier tao + c designed Zhaoxi Bookstore to be a calm destination in a busy shopping center in the Zhengdong New District of Zhengzhou. The store serves as a gathering place for neighborhood residents and includes a bar, café, auditorium and reading areas for both adults and children. Arched and rectangular passageways lead shoppers between the different sections of the store and create a sense of modern grandeur, while the white walls and minimalist shelving make it easy to browse and allow the books to be center stage.







04 READING MI

L3 Floor, Shuncheng Darong City, No. 30 Nanguo East Road, Jinliang Community, Daliang Street, Shunde District, Foshan City, China

TO VISIT
BEFORE YOU DIE
BECAUSE

This architectural stunner of a bookstore feels like a cathedral of knowledge.

It's easy to forget that Reading Mi is located in the central atrium of a busy shopping center in Foshan. The serene bookstore was designed by Panorama Design Group to be a place of exploration and cultural conversation. Visitors enter through the awe-inspiring "Hall of Knowledge," a double-height space topped with wooden slats that recall the shape of an open book. The nearly 27,000-square foot store is filled with peaceful areas to read, a 100-seat theater, a café and a delightful family zone outfitted with thousands of children's books and a stage for storytelling.







