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### Hip Tip:
**Use the worthpoint.com iPhone app to pull up-to-the-minute prices on a similar item.**
—Sally Schwartz, founder of Randolph Street Market in Chicago, Illinois

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# Get the
# Goods

Arm yourself with these expert tips so you
can negotiate purchases with aplomb.

BY HILLARY BLACK

Oh, the joy of trying to get what you want.
In some cultures it's common to negotiate before settling on a price for anything
and everything; but for most of us, that skill doesn't come naturally. The good
news is, the art of negotiation can be learned. If you try just a few of these ideas,
you'll discover your bargain-hunter persona and be able to express it with honor.

For example, like any relationship, building rapport with the seller yields positive
results. But when you come upon a great find, try to keep your elation to yourself.
"Make compliments about the object—but not too much," Alexandre Gourevitch
of Discover Walks advises. "Don't remind the merchant how great his object is; it
can only make the negotiation tougher."

Gourevitch and his partners run the Flea Market Insider's Tour in Paris, a "two-
hour stroll through the largest flea market in the world," where guests discover
hidden market gems and learn negotiation techniques. "Never put the word of the
merchant in doubt or you will humiliate them, upset them and possibly get yourself
kicked out of the shop," Gourevitch says.

"Treat vendors with respect and kindness," Bob Richter of PBS's Market Warriors
confirms. "If you take time to have a real conversation, you might just get a better
price and make a friend."

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Market Warriors, a new show on PBS by the producers of Antiques Roadshow, follows four antique pickers on a treasure hunt to find antiques and vintage valuables throughout the U.S., to sell for profit at auction. Market Warrior Kevin Bruneau advises to use cash to assist in getting the best deals. "Cash will usually buy something for at least 10 percent less than any other form of payment. Bring $100 bills…dealers love them. Flashing a few can get you even a better deal," he says.

Lidy Baars of French Garden House travels to European markets every year to replenish her fine wares and confirms the importance of common sense. "Be courteous," Baars says. "Most dealers price their items with some negotiating room. I usually decide for myself what a certain item is worth to me before I ask 'What is your best price?' and then I smile." Plus, if you buy several items "they'll usually be amenable to a group discount."

Sally Schwartz, founder of Randolph Street Market in Chicago, Illinois concurs. "Always ask, 'What's your best price?' or 'Can you do any better on the price?'" and have cash. "It's the quickest transaction and less cumbersome for the vendor," she says.

Anything that helps you move on to the next great find is good for you too.

See Shopping Guide, page 126.

# Notes
## from Abroad

**Discover these important points for successful marketing via the Paris Flea Market Insider Tours.**

BY ALEXANDRE GOUREVITCH

French flea market dealers are now required by law to label and price all their goods. That is a good starting point on price negotiation. Also, the Internet has changed the market a lot; you can't fake a price because people can check easily. As a result, in most cases at least, the price being shown is close to being "fair." That said, after negotiating you can hope for up to a 20 percent discount. Here are a few more tips.

• **Talk a lot first, make friends with the dealer and be nice.**
• **Know that every object must be negotiated.** Ask for a reduction on the official price. Right before shaking hands, ask for an extra discount for paying in cash.
• **When you make your last offer, everything matters;** not just the price, but also the way you say it—sound firm and confident. As for body language, if you keep the object in your arms it shows that you're already too attached to it. If you put the artifact down and start taking a step out the door—it will put pressure on the dealer.
• **Think about your market's schedule.** For example, it's best to buy on Monday afternoon because that evening the flea market closes for four days and the dealer is more likely to have the desire to close that sale.
• **Buy not only one, but two objects at a time; and ask for a bigger discount.**
• **If you know about the object, let it show.** If the dealer initially puts a high price, but thinks that you know its real or fair price, he or she will be more likely to bring the price down. Do not act like you are an art dealer; being an art lover is enough.
• **Ask what restoration work has been done and ask to have it described in writing.**
• **Never put the word of the merchant in doubt.**
• **Most importantly, make friends.** Deep down dealers are passionate collectors, who are sorry to have to part with their objects. Make the merchant feel good that you are the one taking the object home, and that his or her object will be in good hands.