

Inverness  
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**CITY CENTRE STARS**  **INVERNESS LOVES LOCAL**



# The shop where everything is handmade

FIND the perfect unique handmade gift this festive season at Aeternum gift shop in the picturesque Victorian Market.

The award-winning shop offers a range of crafts and jewellery, taking inspiration from owner Pat Błoczynski's Polish background.

Since the opening of her shop, Pat (below) has been passionate about showcasing the wonderful qualities of Poland in the Highlands, particularly amber.

Pat told us more about the hardships she has overcome to get where she is now, and the passion and care she puts into every element of



her shop Aeternum, which originates from the Latin word, eternal.

**Q: Please tell us about your jewellery collections.**

A: We've got about 40 different jewellery collections, we started with the amber jewellery because my father was Polish, and I wanted to bring a bit of Poland to Scotland.

Everything's handmade that we sell in here, weather it be jewellery or handcrafts.

I go and meet all the artists regularly, and I know them all.

We have artists from 10 different countries from all over the world in Aeternum.

**Q: What's happening at Aeternum during the festive season?**

A: We have a 20 per cent sale all this month on all of our jewellery, which is quite a saving – especially on our more expensive pieces!

We've had lots of new

stock in from Italy, and we have some more coming in from Greece – a beautiful collection of cork bags.

They are made by a family firm in Greece, and what I loved about it was they included olive wood in the design, I'm quite excited about them!

We've also got a collection of Italian silk scarves coming in the new year, which will be a collection made just for us, and it's going to be based on Scottish flower colours.

It will be a nice thing for tourists to take home, and remember their holiday here.

**Q: What is it about the Highlands & Islands that makes for an ideal inspiration?**

A: People come here for our beautiful scenery. The tourists love it, they love the lochs, the hills, the mountains and they love the people here too. They love coming to Inverness for the small shops that we have here, they are all so unique.

**Q: Tell us something about Aeternum that might surprise people.**

A: I used to have a shop

up in Crown, it was tiny. During that time Poland had just joined the EU, and the councils and agencies started sending Polish people up to me because nobody could speak the language, but my cousin who was working with me could.

I had no experience in it, but I just loved helping people.

Unfortunately, because I didn't get any funding from any government bodies, I took my eye off the business, and I ended up bankrupt. I was homeless for about eight months.

It has been hard. I've never given up, just keep going.

**Q: Who are your Inverness city centre stars?**

A: The Mustard Seed for eating, my sister and I go in there regularly – we love it. Maggie Blyth has got some really beautiful clothes, Hastie and Dyce the butchers are very popular, and do very tasty steaks pies – one of my favourites! Leakey's Bookshop, we send loads of people looking for a nice bookshop to Leakey's, and they just love it.

**Q: What makes Inverness**



Aeternum Jewellery store in the Victorian Market.

**city centre a great place to visit, shop and work?**

A: The beautiful scenery. It's just a lovely place to stay. It's home.

**Q: At the heart of every city centre are the events which make it, what are you most looking forward to in Inverness this festive season?**

A: Having a busy season, and helping people to find that special gift for family,

friends and loved ones. I'm also hoping that my hip operation comes quite soon! It's supposed to be before the end of the year...

**Q: Why is the Inverness city centre gift card the perfect present this festive season?**

A: Because you can use it in so many different shops, and there's always good variety for you to choose from. #InvernessLovesLocal

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