Walt Disney World News

No Passports Required! Epcot is the World Tour of Shopping

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Imagine searching for silken clothes among the lantern-lit marketplaces of China, or darting in and out of Europe, Asia, Canada and Africa to purchase unique, one-of-a-kind, handcrafted gift items found only in these native lands. Imagine a whirlwind shopping spree around the world without need for a passport or plane ticket.

Imagine no longer — it's Epcot World Showcase at Walt Disney World Resort.

It's the ultimate one-stop-shopping: an international merchandise mecca where more than 65 boutiques, emporiums and outdoor merchants offer a bounty of authentic wares from more than 11 nations. Exotic settings transport guests to marketplaces of lands both near and far offering one of the largest collections of foreign goods in one location.

Guests can enter a meandering maze of shops in exotic Morocco, where embroidered caftans and woven baskets line the walkways and musicians entertain those who pass by. Just a few steps away, guests find themselves in The Mitsukoshi Department Store in Japan, examining the collection of clothing, including a wide array of kimonos; housewares; toys and more.

From a trinket bell in China to a fine Italian wine to Moroccan furniture worth thousands of dollars, there is something for everyone in the global shopping bazaars of Epcot. If you really want to take home a gem, cultural ambassadors throughout the shops and boutiques are eager to share stories of craftsmanship and homeland history with guests.

Here are a few of the shopping discoveries at Epcot:

MEXICO

Colorful piñatas and sombreros can be found at Plaza de los Amigos, where the central courtyard has volcanoes that rumble under a blue and purple sky. La Familia Fashions features silver and beaded jewelry. La Princesa Cristal, an Arribas Brothers shop, features extravagant crystal and glass artwork with a glassblower creating beautiful new pieces before guests' eyes. Artisans at Ring Carvers, a quaint outdoor stand, offer just that — rings carved with a name or message in minutes.

NORWAY

Whether it's trolls, sweaters or for the person who has it all — an imitation Viking helmet with long braids — guests will set sail on a shopping adventure at the Norway pavilion. With its signature stave church and rich wooden and stone structures, guests are truly transported in this unique shopping experience. Here the shops feature pewter gifts by Konge Tinn, trolls by Ny-Form and ski sweaters from Dale of Norway. Laila surrounds you in fragrance, body creams and scented votives. Christmas items and Helly Hansen clothing are also offered.

CHINA

Delicate hand-painted umbrellas in assorted colors shimmer in this exotic marketplace. Silk ties and silk lanterns lead the eyes from one adventure to the next. The aroma of fresh foods steamed to perfection fills the air and courtyard

acrobats add to the mystique of this unique marketplace.

Yong Feng Shangdian is a huge Asian bazaar with Yixing teapots, brocade pajamas, butterfly hair combs, furniture, rugs, slippers and cloisonné. Guests can discover a wide range of treasures, from T-shirts with Chinese zodiac signs to a jade statue of a Chinese sailing ship.

THE VILLAGE TRADERS

The Village Traders is an open-air marketplace featuring authentic African carvings created before your eyes with a traditional tool called a ngomo. Also offered are safari-style hats, African drums and hand-carved walking sticks.

GERMANY

It’s Octoberfest year-round, with festive shops and cheering restaurants.

Old World charm is set to music and motion at the Germany pavilion. Ticking cuckoo clocks provide cheerful tunes in a charming shop called Volkskunst, and toys and dolls are music to children’s ears at Der Teddybar.

The Germany pavilion at Epcot is one of only eight outlets worldwide to carry a complete collection of Hummels. Both Goebel and Hummel items are featured at Glas und Porzellan.

Christmas is year-round at Die Weihnachts Ecke, with its traditional German Christmas items including pickle-shaped tree ornaments. Steins, glassware and hand-painted eggs can be found at Das Kaufhaus, and for those with a palate for fine wine, Weinkeller boasts assorted German wines and accessories.

ITALY

Beneath the columns of the Doge’s Palace and near the canals and bridges of a setting that could only be Venice and historic St. Mark’s Square, guests will discover treasures past and present. Il Bel Cristallo offers elegant leather handbags, Italian sterling silver and gold jewelry, and fragrances by Gucci, Valentino and Ferragamo.

Luscious Italian chocolates and candies, plus gourmet foods, pastries, wines and cookware can be found at Enoteca Castello. Unique finds include Carnivale Masks, a special part of the Carnivale experience in Italy since 1268. Each mask is a festive piece of art that can be worn or used as a decorative home accent.

AMERICAN ADVENTURE

True-blue shoppers will take notice of the Colonial setting as the “Stars and Stripes” take center stage in this American shopping adventure. At Heritage Manor Gifts, guests will discover Americana items, clothing and books on U.S. history. Hand-carved wood figurines by Jim Shore depict favorite Disney characters as classic American heroes, for example Mickey Mouse as Paul Revere galloping through the night during his famous midnight ride.

JAPAN

The tranquil rock gardens, pools filled with koi fish and the sounds of falling water set shoppers at ease in the houses of Japan. The Mitsukoshi Department Store offers everything from carved pieces of ivory and delicate tea serving sets to the latest toys and animated figures. Tucked in a private corner of the sprawling shop is Mikimoto, featuring shimmering pearl jewelry.

MOROCCO

The king of Morocco sent his own artisans to this Epcot setting to create carvings and tiles found only in his nation. These treasures create the exotic tones and textures of a marketplace like no other.

Guests will explore an authentic maze of shops filled with magical offerings. Traditions of the past intertwine with the present in wares such as the red Fez and men's gondura. Guests can take home handcrafted straw bags, traditional beaded headdresses and finger cymbals. Elegant carpets in a tapestry of colors transport guests to another world.

FRANCE

Guests sensing true shopping pleasures will enjoy the sweet smells of timeless fragrances at the boutiques of the France pavilion. As artisans paint the lovely courtyards, and as champagne corks pop at nearby cafes, those searching for that "something special" will soon discover their heart's desire.

La Signature, sponsored by Guerlain, features one-of-a-kind perfumes, make-up and personal accessories. The France pavilion is one of only two locations in the world to feature signature Guerlain. Designer fragrances can be found at nearby Plume et Palette.

Guests can bring a bit of Southern France to their kitchen table with dinnerware, tabletops and decorative items from L' Esprit de la Provence or savor the flavor of wines from Les Vins de France, sponsored by George DuBoeuf.

For those who simply want their own replica of the Eiffel Tower, Souvenirs de France has it all.

UNITED KINGDOM

Whether it's tea for two or two for tea, the United Kingdom pavilion features the finest Royal Albert bone china teapots, cups and accessories, plus an array of Twinings Tea. With a setting of English gardens fit for a queen, the smell of fish and chips in the air and even a few of those fine red telephone booths dotting the landscape, guests are transported to the streets of the royal kingdom.

Guests can get into the action with a men's and women's sportswear collection representing English football at The Sportsman's Shoppe. Fragrances by Taylor of London, Burberry, and Woods of Windsor fill the air with sweet scents at The Queen's Table.

The Toy Soldier features games, stuffed animals, toys and books from favorite English tales and Disney characters such as Winnie the Pooh, Alice in Wonderland and Peter Pan.

CANADA

Guests are invited to get back to their Roots, the premier shopping brand of the nation. From Roots logo sweaters, hats and fragrances to the Northwest Mercantile shop boasting real maple syrup, guests will enjoy a shopping adventure that is oh so Canada.

The World Showcase stroll at Epcot is only about a mile in physical distance, but it encompasses a world-shopping experience from the boutiques of France to the colorful marketplace of Mexico charmed by hanging baskets and piñatas – a treasure trove for shoppers around the world.
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