

Zawadi Marketplace Celebrates African Art and Culture At Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — At Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge, guests on a "gift safari" venture into a realm where each treasure and trinket tells a tale in a fusion of vibrant colors and bold textures.

Zawadi Marketplace, the signature retail shop at Disney's newest deluxe resort, celebrates the romantic and adventuresome spirit of Africa through the stories and cultures represented in its merchandise.

Disney sent a team of researchers to Africa to locate one-of-a-kind treasures to showcase amid the natural finishes, patterns and textiles featured throughout the marketplace. At nearly 5,500 square feet, Zawadi Marketplace will be among the largest shops at Walt Disney World Resort.

Guests also can watch as a native artisan perfects crafts amid the rich, dynamic showcase of wares. Featured marketplace items include:

- Zulu baskets, tightly woven in a variety of shapes and sizes from the plentiful grasses of Botswana. The centuries-old art of basket weaving is passed traditionally from mother to child. The weaver becomes the narrator. Each pattern woven into the basket symbolizes a certain life stage and social status.
- Hand-loomed fabrics and textiles, hand-woven in vibrant colors, posing as floor coverings and tapestries. Whether the textile's patterns reflect the love of a family or the heroism of a tribal chief, each textile bears a unique story.
- Hand-carved masks, a significant part of a tribe's religious and cultural life. Songye Masks, one of the featured selections, would customarily welcome important visitors to the village while a round carved mask, crafted from dark wood with etchings, was believed to add youth and strength to a tribesman.

The Zawadi Marketplace also features beaded gourds, hand-carved chess sets and an assortment of authentic accents.

The marketplace has items in store for the Disney collector as well, including distinctive headwear, T-shirts, picture frames and

more featuring the Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge logo.

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