



Tax-Free Guam Shopping: A Duty Free Dream

Guam is deservedly known as an island with a rich history, a place of vibrant culture and an exciting playground for adventure. For those who love exploring both the memories of the past and the possibilities of the present, Guam will not keep you wanting. At the same time, however, Guam also has an eye concentrated towards tomorrow and a committed dedication to living in the mood of the next moment. Perhaps no industry on Guam exemplifies this mood more expressively and completely than our robust shopping and high end retail scene, where international fashion houses, world renowned brands, friendly retail staff and exciting tax free deals await, especially during holiday season at year's end. Tumon is undeniably the center of Guam's fashion and

shopping universe, with a numerous collection of boutiques within several stores including The DFS Guam Galleria, The Plaza along The Pleasure Island strip and the Tumon Sands Plaza. A brief walk or trolley ride along Pale San Vitores Road offers access to a world of style within the span of just a few blocks. Here luxury, elegance and fashion forward trends come together in air conditioned harmony, and the tune is always a sweet one. Beyond Tumon, Guam has more shopping in store with three large malls: The Agana Shopping Center in Hagåtña, Guam Premier Outlets in Tamuning, and Micronesia Mall in Dededo. Each of these malls has a distinct flavor, and a different shopping experience is waiting within each. With an amazing amount of retail space to satisfy even the choosiest



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visitor to our shores, whatever one is looking for, it's a good bet they will find it on Guam. Furthermore, Guam has an ace in hand that makes it an irresistible winner with international shoppers: shopping on Guam is duty free. Tax free shopping just makes the game more exciting.

Tumon Style: Boutiques along the Boulevard

Within the cool, creamy white confines of the Tumon Sands Plaza, one can discover firsthand what the duty free shopping experience is all about. All shopping on Guam is tax free; however for our adventures in increased purchasing power, this is as good a place to start our story as any. A quick glance at the marquee signs displayed above boutique entrances in this two storied plaza reads like a veritable who's who in the international fashion world: Bally, Tiffany & Co., Bree, Rolex, Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Dunhill, Coach, Marimekko and Chloe to name just a random sample. In other words, it is possible to revitalize oneself from head to toe with fresh new gear, and potentially spend hours just taking in the extravagance and sumptuousness of all the merchandise awaiting. After the frenetic burst of shopping likely to ensue, tired feet can be rested and heels (or sandals) cooled at Café Del Mundo for a light meal and beverage. Of course, like all great couplings, robust shop-

ping often pairs well with hearty dining. Luckily, Tumon Sands Plaza offers this option as well with the Japanese dining experience Joinus, a wise choice to satisfy the inevitable hunger that will arise when patrolling boutiques and carrying baggage.

Only a short walk away up Pale San Vitores Road, both The Plaza and The DFS Guam Galleria are just ahead. DFS Galleria stores are found all over the world, yet the impressive building which houses the DFS Galleria Guam is a flagship store and offers an overwhelming variety of luxury goods – all, as the name implies, duty free. Upon entering the building, a circular area of cosmetics, fragrances, treats and precious spirits greets the guest. This is a good place to get stocked with makeup and scents, with Anna Sui, Chanel, Clinique, Givenchy, Lancome and M.A.C., just some of the many labels available for testing and spraying. DFS Galleria Guam also has a decadent range of chocolates, rare spirits, liqueurs and even some wine. Further in, boutiques line the promenade of two wide walkways which bustle with shoppers moving in and out of designers such as Burberry, Ralph Lauren, Fendi, Hermes, Loewe, Prada, Dior and many, many more. The wide selection of goods at hand is impressive and as with Tumon Sands Plaza, many hours can be spent just taking it all in.

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Across the street, The Plaza pokes out from the Outrigger Guam Resort and hugs Pale San Vitores Road with large colorful storefronts inviting the passerby through their many entrances. High end designers and boutiques are represented in this multilevel shopping



center, with Coach and Gucci taking up two floors in their respective boutiques, however there are also trendy designers throughout who are more hip chic than exclusive luxury. The corridors of The Plaza are lined with just such designers, many whom remain closer to the street than the runway, including DNA Evolution and Stussy Guam, plus a wide range of others who over the years have carved out their own niche in the fashion world - LeSportsac, Gap, Folli Follie, Cole Haan, Marc Jacobs. These are names associated with easy style and fun. The Plaza also has several eateries, with The Hard Rock Café and The Sea Grill being only the largest. Many smaller, less well known vendors also have boutiques and storefronts located throughout the store, so there is a great opportu-

nity for some exploration and discovery. Furthermore, beyond the comprehensive selection found in the Tumon Sands Plaza, DFS Guam Galleria and The Plaza, there are several boutiques and stores lining Pale San Vitores Road up and down Tumon.

Beyond Tumon: Walking the Malls of Guam

Beyond the luxuries of Tumon, three large malls await in three different villages to the south, west and north, all with easy access by bus, trolley or taxi. To the south of Tumon, in Hagåtña, The Agana Shopping Center and its surroundings have more of a local flavor which is reflected in the variety of stores. Many local shop owners have retail space here and sell all kinds of interesting items, large and small,

which when mixed with well know U.S. and international retailers, makes for an interesting shopping experience. When hungry, restaurant options include Italian eatery Capricciosa, American favorite Tony Roma's and others, as well as a Payless Grocery store, Guam's largest grocery chain. The Agana Shopping Center's convenient location and close proximity to sightseeing opportunities in Hagåtña makes it easy to access and shop in.

Closer to Tumon is the village of Tamuning, where the bustling shopping center known as Guam Premier Outlets attracts visitors, locals and other businesses alike. This always busy mall is full of retail outlet stores selling goods at outlet prices, and when combined with Guam's already duty free retail





shopping, there are some great savings to be had here. Along with the major retailers who sell clothing, jewelry, books, electronics and health & beauty products at excellent values are specialty kiosks and shops that offer one of a kind merchandise.

The Micronesia Mall in the village of Dededo is close to the north end of Tumon and is definitely worth the trip to take in all of the sights, sounds and most importantly incredible merchandise of one of Guam's largest shopping centers. The "Funtastic Park" is a miniature amusement park located on the second floor of the mall, abounding with bumper cars, arcades and surprisingly, even a mini rollercoaster! Next door is the "Fiesta" food court and over twenty food and beverage outlets conveniently located to refuel when the need arises. Like both the Agana

Shopping Center and Guam Premier Outlets, the Micronesia Mall has a movie theater which plays Hollywood new releases, as well as the occasional independent or foreign film. As for the shopping, this mall has a broad spectrum of retailers and is an excellent place for gifts and souvenirs, as well as clothing, jewelry and beauty supplies available for all budgets. Teeming with visitors carrying bags full of items that are hard to find or too hard to resist, and trendy locals who enjoy shopping in this American style retail experience, the Micronesia Mall is an ideal stop on any buying tour.

A Design for Buying

It is often said that Guam is a modern shopping paradise, and there is truth to that. International designers, state of the art shopping centers, and the

staggering choice and variety of things to buy may indeed feel like paradise, and with the benefit of a tax free shopping experience, more can be had with less. By no means an exhaustive account of all shopping on Guam, the stores mentioned in our conversation are nonetheless the heart and soul of the islands modern shopping experience and stand at the front lines of style and fashion. If you want it, on Guam we probably have it. Yet, beyond the modern, or more appropriately preceding it, are the arts, crafts and locally made products that are available throughout the island and speak directly of the island traditions. You can find that, too, so long as you are ready for a little adventure. ■

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