

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Zoofari Market at the Detroit Zoo features unique souvenirs and one-of-a kind gift items

Unique jewelry, African carved masks, unusual plush, educational toys, “tweens” clothing and gourmet snacks are just a few of the thousands of items that more than one million visitors to the Detroit Zoo can now purchase in the newly renovated Zoofari Market “Adventure Shopping” Gift Shop.

The five-month project resulted in a contemporary glass walled shop, which is located at the Zoo’s entry and exit plaza. This \$550,000.00 project was funded entirely by Service Systems Associates (SSA), a national visitor service company that partners with the Detroit Zoological Institute to provide concessions, retail, and catering within the Zoo. Renovations included gutting the inside of the old shop and extending the enclosed building from 1,200 square feet to over 2,400 square feet. A new elevated roof over the entrance adds to the shop’s spaciousness feel. Inside the shop, staff installed innovative display fixtures, slot walls and new lighting; all complemented by a natural slate floor and earth tone wall paints.



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Tony Thomas, SSA’s General Manager at the Zoo, said the renovation doubled the size of the gift shop as well as doubled the selection of Zoo souvenirs, clothing and gift décor. “The Detroit Zoo is world class, and we wanted a world class gift shop. The merchandise we sell helps the Detroit Zoo achieve its purpose: celebrating and saving wildlife,” added Thomas.





The new retail space contains an expanded merchandise mix. An apparel section features Detroit Zoo-logo jackets, sweatshirts, tee shirts and baseball caps in sizes infants through adults. A new jewelry department displays animal-themed earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings and pins. Other new sections include infant and “tweens,” promoting fun clothing and decorative accessories specially designed for those age groups and appealing to those niche markets. An expanded plush toys section offers a variety of animals representing animals from regions all over the world.

A highlight of the shop is an 800-square-foot Educational and Family Activity Center. With help from the zoo’s education staff, the center includes a large assortment of books as well as interactive toys, games and puzzles. A special added attraction is the African section, featuring hand-carved and

hand-painted animals, masks, musical instruments and decorative accessories.

A popular addition to the Zoofari Market involves the specialty coffee and homemade fudge shop. Other food items offered include fresh baked muffins, gourmet salads and sandwiches. The Zoo’s Chef Tim will prepare these items on-site. During the zoo’s off-season, chairs and tables will be available for customers to relax and enjoy their snacks. The animal-themed market is open to Zoo visitors during normal zoo hours.



Besides the new Zoofari Market, Zoo guests may shop in the Artic Outpost shop, a specialized retail outlet located at the Zoo’s popular award-winning Artic Ring of Life exhibit.

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