

## Eclectic Florida Shopping Caters to Student Tours

Educational travel combines elements such as adventure, cultural encounters, and learning experiences to open students' minds to new opportunities. Travel provides an element of learning totally unique from the classroom. But let's be honest, while on an extended tour students also need some leisure time, shopping and entertainment to fit the bill. Not only is shopping most teenagers' favorite pastime, it's also a great way to experience a locale, such as Orlando, Florida. Here, student tours are treated to exciting shopping/entertainment complexes that offer hours of fun.

Universal CityWalk is a 30-acre hot spot for entertainment, shopping and dining. It includes everything from memorabilia at The Universal Studios Store to the latest teen apparel at Fossil. For a quick snack, students can head to TCBY, Starbucks Coffee, or Cinnabon.

When it comes to dining, the CityWalk has great restaurants such as the Hard Rock Cafe, NBA City, or Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. After dinner, groups can catch a performance by the Blue Man Group at Universal Orlando Resort. For those interested in movies, the 20-theater AMC Universal Complex features first-run movies and stadium seating. Finally on select dates, students can hit one of Orlando's hottest dance floors on Teen Night at "The Groove"

Located in Kissimmee, Old Town is a unique shopping and entertainment complex. The stores along Old Town's brick-lined streets feature a variety of specialty shops, including an old-fashioned general store, souvenir and collectible shops, and clothing boutiques. The stores not only offer shopping, but opportunities for students to have an old-time portrait taken, learn how to pull taffy, or visit the petrified rock forest.

Old Town also offers a number of amusement rides, including the new Super Shot. This thrilling ride slowly creeps its way up to 150 feet in the air and then shoots riders down in one full drop. The Old Town Slingshot catapults riders up 363 feet into the air.

Old Town has student friendly eateries offering up American fare, pizza, or British-style fish and chips. Every night at 7:30 p.m., live entertainment is enjoyed from the Old Town main stage.

Designed to reflect the tropical weather of central Florida, Pointe Orlando is a 17-acre shopping and entertainment complex with more than 60 stores, numerous restaurants, and attractions. Student tours enjoy the brightly colored buildings, towering palm trees, and outdoor plazas, complete with benches and fountains, where musicians and jugglers can often be seen performing. Shoppers indulge at Disney Worldport, Magnetville USA, and FAO Schwartz, where a 33-foot Raggedy Ann sits at the entrance to the store. For non-shoppers in the group, Pointe Orlando also offers an IMAX 3-D theater and WonderWorks. Wonderworks features virtual reality experiences and simulations of natural disasters. Johnny Rockets, B.B. King's Blues Club, and Tommy Bahama's Tropical Café and Emporium top the list of dining options.

The world's most famous surf shop, Ron Jon's Surf Shop was first begun in 1959 in New Jersey by Ron DiMenna, who was just discovering the sport of surfing with fiberglass surfboards. When he headed to Cocoa Beach several years later, the Ron Jon Surf Shop really took off. Today, it has grown into a world-famous surfing mecca. The Cocoa Beach store encompasses more than two acres, overflowing with surfwear, sportswear, and beach gear. The store also features an indoor waterfall and a glass elevator. Students enjoy purchasing a Ron Jon's logo t-shirt – one of the shop's most popular souvenirs. The store is open 24 hours a day.

At Downtown Disney Marketplace, students head to the World of Disney Store for the ultimate interactive shopping experience. Every corner bursts with fun-filled goodies and unique gifts. Two expansive floors at the Virgin Megastore feature the latest movies, music, and books. At Arribas Brothers, student groups discover the age-old art of glass blowing from European artists. Other highlights of Downtown Disney include Planet Hollywood on Location, the Rainforest Cafe Shop, and Orlando Harley Davidson.

## About the Author

[travel adventures](#) Travel Adventures is a student tour provider staffed by educators who understand the needs of teachers. It has served over one half million students since 1987 and its mission is to "empower teachers to create change by expanding the classroom to the world."

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