

GIRLS GONE SHOPPING

By Kasey Loudermilk

It's a ritual. As soon as Thanksgiving dinner is cleared, it's time to go. The men of the family are parked in front of the TV watching football games, as the women of my family pack up the SUVs and set out for Myrtle Beach and a weekend full of shopping.



The goal is simple: my two aunts, two cousins, grandma, mom and I must reach the condo in time to unpack and get some sleep. Tomorrow is a big day for us, and we need to start in top shape.

By 5 a.m. Friday we will be in line at the door of the major retailer of choice ready to snatch up the best early bird deals! We move with skill. We are women on a mission.

Then it's time to move on. Lucky for us, Myrtle Beach has two Tanger Outlet malls—a shopper's dream. Each outlet (one at Hwy. 17 and Hwy. 22 and another at Hwy. 501) boasts over 100 stores. But we are up to the task. We work quickly and efficiently through Old Navy, GUESS Factory Store,



rue21 and pretty much every other shop there. However, all this shopping has its price. The SUVs are bulging and our feet are aching. We take a lunch and unpacking break to get a little rest before the afternoon's schedule.

This time, we go for the non-traditional shopping, the flea market. Myrtle Beach and Surfside have some fabulous flea markets, and we do our best to hit them all. In particular, we love Hudson's Flea Market on Hwy. 17 Business in Surfside Beach and Myrtle Beach Flea Market on Hwy. 17 Business just across from Myrtle Beach State Park. These flea markets aren't your typical "used items for sale." You'll find things new and used, unique and unusual, useful and just for fun. My favorites are watches, kitchen items, handbags and one-of-a-kind embroidered pieces.

By the time we visit several dozen booths, even the hardiest of shoppers is tired, hungry and ready for a break.



This calls for dinner out on the town. No problem. Myrtle Beach has almost as many options for dining as it has for shopping. We could choose anything from fast food to elegant dining. But we usually set out for a seafood buffet to try to make everyone in the party happy and to get proper nourishment. After all tomorrow is another shopping day.



On Saturday, we're up—not so early this time—and ready to head to two of Myrtle Beach's most popular destinations, Barefoot Landing and Broadway at the Beach. Barefoot Landing boasts 100 shops, over a dozen restaurants and 14 entertainment venues while Broadway at the Beach counts 100 specialty shops, 20 restaurants, 15 attractions, 10 nightclubs and three on-site hotels. Obviously we have our work cut out for us. Both locations offer a mix of specialty boutiques and retail chains, enough choices to fill several shopping bags with things we might not find elsewhere. I, for example, always



have to get something for my brother at the John Deere® store, while my mom takes in the children's shops for her grandchildren.

We have now shopped for almost 24 hours—an admirable achievement for even the most dedicated shoppers. It's time to celebrate with one of Myrtle Beach's famous shows. Our crowd favorite is Dolly Parton's Dixie Stampede® Dinner Attraction where we can enjoy a four-course meal while being entertained by riders and a cast of animals, music and pyrotechnics. While the show is exciting, I've got to admit—we're beat. We go to bed knowing that tomorrow we head home and back to the real world.

We rise on Sunday, fill every inch of our vehicles and set off for home. But first we stop at those ubiquitous shops—Wings, Eagles and Sparky's. These beach shops carry every souvenir imaginable from the coast, and I certainly can't go home without some salt water taffy. Finally, after we've exhausted every shopping opportunity in and around Myrtle Beach, and we've certainly exhausted ourselves, we go home. It was a great start to the holiday shopping season. But best of all, we've had a great time together and are ready to do it again next year.

Find out more in *Places...*

Turn to page 123 in the "green pages" for more on shopping in the Myrtle Beach area.



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