



November 23, 2004

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Take Metro to Shop for Unique Gifts, Bargain Prices in Toy, Jewelry, Fashion Districts, Other Special Areas

- Metro is Alternative to Fighting Mall Traffic

Holiday shoppers looking for unique gifts without fighting shopping mall crowds and traffic will find the Metro Bus and Rail system a great way to shop this year.

The Metro system provides easy, convenient access to many special Los Angeles shopping areas, as well as to shopping districts that offer bargain prices to the public.

Downtown Los Angeles provides a treasure trove of shopping districts for every gift-giving need. Whether arriving on Metro Bus or Rail, Metrolink or Dash Buses, the downtown area is a great shopping resource, with entire blocks dedicated to selling everything from jewelry to fashions, toys to flowers, produce and more.

Downtown's Toy District is a popular holiday shopping venue, with 12 square blocks of wholesale-priced toys, including action figures, stuffed animals, games, and knickknacks. Shoppers can access the area, bounded by Third, San Pedro, Fifth and Los Angeles Streets, via Metro Red Line and DASH "D" buses.

The Fashion District, located between Broadway, Wall Street, 7th Street and Pico Boulevard, is another popular area where shoppers can find discounted women's wear, men's wear, children's wear, accessories and textiles. Santee Alley between Ninth Street and Olympic Boulevard is an excellent location for bargain fashion shopping.

In downtown's Jewelry District, located between Hill Street and Broadway, from 5th Street to 8th Street, shoppers can save 50-70 percent off regular prices for such jewelry items as precious gems, gold and silver watches, rings, and chains.

For those planning special holiday celebrations, the Flower District between San Pedro and Wall Streets in downtown offers cut flowers, potted plants and exotic blooms.

Grand Central Market, located at 317 S. Broadway in Los Angeles' Historic District, is the oldest of all concession-type markets on the Pacific Coast, offering produce, dried goods, spices, meats, poultry, seafood and 13 ethnic eateries.

Both Chinatown and Olvera Street are within walking distance from downtown's Union Station. Chinatown, also accessible via the Metro Gold Line and Dash "B" Buses, provides shoppers with jewelry stores, herbal medicines, teas and clothing. Many specialty stores sell fine art, Chinese antiques and jade. Olvera Street, at 845 N. Alameda Street, offers festive holiday shopping, including clothing, curios, toys, candles and fragrances.

Little Tokyo, yet another ethnic enclave bordered by 3rd Street, Alameda Street, Central Ave and 1st Street, gives shoppers the opportunity to buy original holiday gifts. Metro and Dash Buses connect shoppers from both the Civic Center Metro Red Line and Pico and 7th/Metro Blue Line Stations.

The Original Farmer's Market and the Grove, located at Third and Fairfax, are excellent areas to sample the cultural offerings of Los Angeles and to shop for authentic arts and crafts, antiques, jewelry, clothes and souvenirs. It is accessible via Metro Bus 217 and Fairfax Dash Bus.

Choices also abound for upscale shopping via the Metro system. Metro Red Line stops at Hollywood/Highland give high-end shoppers a choice of boutique shops offering designer clothing, watches, perfumes and more. The

Universal City Metro Red Line Station provides shopping opportunities at Universal City Walk for, among other things, collectible items and Hollywood souvenirs.

On the Metro Green Line, shoppers can access Plaza Mexico, located adjacent to the Long Beach/I-105 station. Considered the Mexican Universal City Walk, the plaza offers everything from clothing to fresh vegetables, electronic equipment to beauty supplies. There's also a meat and seafood market and bakery.

Busy shoppers can still go Metro to their local shopping malls. Metro serves most major shopping malls in Los Angeles County, including Northridge Fashion Center, Topanga Mall, Macy's Plaza downtown, CityPlace in Long Beach and Hastings Ranch Shopping Center in Pasadena.

Metro shoppers can ride all day long using the Metro Day Pass. At \$3, the pass gives unlimited local access to both the Metro Bus and Rail system from time of purchase until 3 a.m. the next morning.

Shoppers can plan their trips online using Metro's Trip Planner, available at WWW.METRO.NET. Additionally, they may plan their trips over the phone at 1-800-COMMUTE. Shopping and other destinations available by Metro can be found at WWW.EXPERIENCELA.COM.

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