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The Only in America Tour—Part 5

Buc-ee's: America's "Disney World" of Convenience Stores

Every journey requires a pit stop or two. So, this month I'm taking a break from writing a full-length blog. During our "Only in America" Tour, my friend Thea and I stopped at the Buc-ee's in Hillsboro, Texas. Wow! Who knew a gas station could be a tourist destination in itself?

Founded in 1982, Buc-ee's is located in nine states, primarily in Texas. The Buc-ee's in Luling, Texas, holds the title of the largest convenience store in the world. It offers 120 fuel pumps and spans 75,593 square feet (7,023 square meters). By comparison, the average size of a Walmart Supercenter is 170,000 square feet (15,794 square meters). It takes 120 staff members to keep the Luling store running smoothly in the daytime. Every Buc-ee's is open 24 hours, 365 days a year. The store and its restrooms are immaculate.



When Thea and I first walked into the Hillsboro Buc-ee's, I felt like I had indeed entered a spacious Walmart. In the center was a large circular serving station called the "Texas Round Up" where staff members sliced brisket. Customers could also savor sandwiches made from pulled pork, turkey, sausage, or chicken. What a carnival for carnivores!

Buc-ee's also offers salads, fresh fruits and veggies, fresh baked goods, fudge made in-house daily, and an astonishing selection of jerky, seeds and nuts, trail mixes, candies, flavored popcorn, and rows of jellies, jams, and pickles. And don't forget the coconut pie or banana



pudding in a cup. Besides all this, one can find all the usual hot and cold beverages, including ICEEs made from—you guessed it—Dr Pepper. Honestly, the variety of choices was overwhelming!



Turning to the other side of the store, I felt like I had entered an enormous Cracker Barrel gift shop, but everything was spread out enough so that I could actually walk without knocking items off the shelves. Here I found clothing, home decor, souvenirs, and even fishing gear.

The Buc-ee's mascot is a beaver, so I had to buy a T-shirt with the buck-toothed logo. The store's founder, Arch "Beaver" Aplin III, formed its name by combining his childhood nickname with the name of his Labrador Retriever, Buck. Thea and I were delighted to have our photo taken with Buc-ee the Beaver—just like posing with Mickey Mouse at Disney World!

On the road trip of life, pit stops aren't optional: they're essential, and they can even be fun. Even busy beavers need a break.

Have a delightful day!



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