

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 10, 2020**

## **NEW Zoo Introduces Touchless Shopping**



After months without visitors, the NEW Zoo’s reopening strategy focused on ensuring safe and convenient guest experiences. As we continue to prioritize safe, socially distanced experiences, the Zoo is introducing a new mobile ordering system for both the Mayan Restaurant and the Paws and Claws Gift Shop. Guests can access both shopping links by scanning QR codes displayed throughout the Zoo. In addition, access to the Zoo’s online gift shop experience is available to everyone at [newzoo.org/shop](http://newzoo.org/shop).

“As a result of a noticeable shift in shopping preferences due to COVID-19, we’ve researched and implemented touchless purchasing options for both our food and retail locations,” said Neil Anderson, NEW Zoo & Adventure Park Director. “By introducing this mobile shopping experience, we know we’re offering our guests a more efficient and streamlined experience – today, and in the future.”

Ordering on-site starts with the simple scan of a QR code, which gives customers easy access to online stores and menus. This means guests can now order and purchase food from the Mayan Restaurant from anywhere in the Zoo! The Mayan’s full menu of meals, snacks, beverages, and treats is available. After check-out, customers are provided a link to a page that will be refreshed as soon as their order is ready for pick-up at the Mayan’s outdoor, walk-up window.

The Paws and Claws Gift Shop online store, available both during zoo visits and from home, offers customers a selection of “Secret Shopper Packages” of varying sizes. The customer selects from a variety of options during check-out, and the Zoo’s expert shoppers will take care of all the details, putting together a made-to-order package that

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can be ready for pick-up in as little as 30 minutes. Customers can also select a future date and time for pick-up. For those who prefer to purchase at the Zoo, the Secret Shopper Packages are also available inside the Paws and Claws Gift Shop.

“This new shopping experience extends safety precautions to not only our customers, but also to employees working at our food and retail locations. As we planned for our reopening, we had to reimagine every aspect of our operations, from how tickets are purchased, to the on-site guest experience,” said Patricia Jelen, Operations Manager. “We’ve made it a priority to research and implement this new way of meeting our customers’ needs. Of course, people can still come into the Paws & Claws Gift Shop to make purchases or stop at the Mayan Restaurant walk-up window to pay for food, but this gives our guests more options for a more convenient and safe experience.”

According to Zoo Director Anderson, “The NEW Zoo tried touchless shopping while the Zoo was closed in March and April by selling customized, springtime Easter baskets with curbside pick-up. It was an instant success, and customers really loved it. We know that offering these new, touchless experiences is just one more way that the NEW Zoo is safely serving our customers.

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*Connecting the community with wildlife and nature through engaging, interactive experiences.*

The NEW Zoo & Adventure Park is one of only eight AZA accredited zoos in the country that does not receive local or regional public tax support for annual operations.