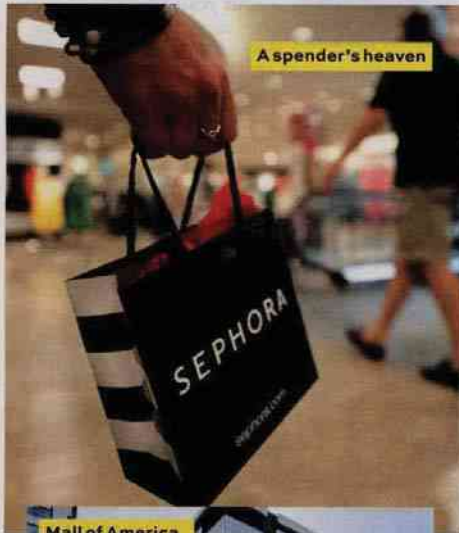


Ready, steady... shop!

Black Friday sales, Christmas gifts... whatever the reason, what better place to experience the ultimate retail therapy than the largest mall in the US of A?

EXECUTIVE EDITOR **SIOBHAN WYKES**



Aspender's heaven



Mall of America

PICTURES: GETTY

TRAVEL SNAPSHOT

We're not saying this shopping centre is vast, but you can fit 347 Statues of Liberty inside the Mall of America. It's the largest one in the country, has more than 500 shops (clothes and shoes are tax-free), contains an amusement park with 27 attractions – including an amazing virtual ride across all the States – and is kept at a constant 70 degrees – the perfect shopping temperature for a bargain queen. The Radisson Blu (see *Staying There*) is just a short taxi or train ride away from the airport and attached to the mall, so all you need to do is drop off your (obviously) almost empty case, and whizz off to check out one of the on-screen maps.

INSIDER'S GUIDE

Minnesotans love the outdoors. Just step outside the mall and you'll see why. The further out you go, the more you'll be struck by the greenness of this state and its many lakes. Modern Minneapolis and the charming town of St Paul – known as the Twin Cities – are just minutes away (see *visit-twincities.com*). Take a coach ride past the early home of *Gatsby* writer F Scott Fitzgerald, and cycle around Minnehaha Falls Regional Park.



There's so much to do this mall will keep the whole family entertained

BEFORE YOU GO
Got a question? Tweet @mallofamerica or visit mallofamerica.com. For more info on the area, and to learn about The Big Ticket – the three-day attractions pass – go to bloomingtonmn.org

GETTING THERE
Delta flies daily from London Heathrow non-stop to Minneapolis. Fares start at £635.57 per person, including all taxes. Customers can book via delta.com, through the call centre on 020 7660 0767, or through their travel agent.

STAYING THERE
My America Holiday (myamericaholiday.co.uk) and Travelpack (travelpack.com) can tailor-make a holiday to the Mall of America, staying at the Radisson Blu Hotel (radissonblu.com/en/hotel-mall-of-america). Booking direct costs around £115 a night.

DON'T MISS
Prince fan or not, you can't help but be moved by a tour of the late singer's home, Paisley Park. Now a museum, you'll see instruments, costumes and one very special item – his ashes. Opt for a VIP tour and you can enjoy a vegan breakfast prepared by the star's former chef (officialpaisleypark.com).

FOOD & DRINK
For music fans, the Dakota Jazz Club in Minnesota is a must. The Purple Rain legend would sit at table 299, always on the lookout for new talent. Book dinner there, then grab a nightcap at the W hotel's Prohibition Bar.

ROLLING DOWN THE RIVER
If you want to sample real Southern hospitality, a paddle boat cruise down the St Croix River will add a sense of style to your holiday. The river is a good hour's drive from your base, but it flows between the Minnesota and Wisconsin borders, until it unites with the mighty Mississippi – so it's a must for fans of Tom Sawyer.

Minnehaha Falls

Get on board!

Flying the flag high