

Owl Post, sweets, spells: Universal's 'Harry Potter'

BY PIYA SINHA-ROY
REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Just as author J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" stories unmask hidden magical secrets, Universal Studios' new "Wizarding World of Harry Potter," opening Thursday, has concealed little magical mysteries for fans to uncover.

Mail from Hogsmeade

Blurring the lines of reality, The Owl Post is an actual post office where visitors can have their mail branded with the Hogsmeade stamp if they buy Hogwarts stationery. Be like Hermione and stack up on parchment paper and quills, or watch a Howler scream and then shred itself in the window display.

Pro tip: Watch out for "The Monster Book of Monsters" lurking in a cage, and recall Hagrid's advice for opening it.

'Wing-gar-dium Levi-o-sa'

With the aid of an interactive wand, purchased at Olivanders wand store for about \$50, attendees can perform spells at 11 windows throughout Hogsmeade. Just as Hermione corrects Ron's "Wingardium Leviosa" levitating spell, make sure to point the wand directly at the windows with a flick of the wrist, which will activate a reaction in the window display, such as spinning cake stands. The windows can be identified by little markers embedded in the cobblestone streets.

Pro tip: When picking a wand at Olivanders, check out Rowling's scroll of notes by the checkout desk on what attributes each type of wand wood has.

Indulge your sweet tooth ... cautiously

Remember when Ron warned Harry to be careful about Bertie Bott's Every-Flavor Beans, which range from chocolate to boogers? Watch out for the earwax-



MARIO ANZUONI | REUTERS

A general view of "The Wizarding World of Harry Potter" attraction during a special preview opening at Universal Studios Hollywood in Universal City, California, recently.

and vomit-flavored beans at Honeydukes sweet shop, which provides an assortment of treats from pumpkin pasties, chocolate frogs and the precarious jelly beans in detailed packaging, just like the films.

Pro tip: In the back of Honeydukes is Zonko's Joke Shop, where you can buy Extendable Ears, a favorite of the mischievous Weasley twins.

Find hidden set pieces

Props from the eight "Harry Potter" films are em-

bedded throughout Hogsmeade. Step behind the Hogwarts Express train station and there's the interior of a train compartment featuring luggage racks and seat fabric from the set. In Gladrag's Wizardwear, Hermione's Yule Ball gown stands in a display cabinet. Those waiting in line for the Forbidden Journey ride will go through the Defense against the Dark Arts classroom, featuring the actual desks that Harry, Ron and Hermione sat at during the films.

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So it's no surprise, really, that the Bangor Daily News is holding an essay contest for Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Venturers. Registered Cub Scouts, ages 7 to 10, Boy Scouts ages 11 to 17 and Venturers ages 14 to 20, can write a short essay (300 to 500 words) for a chance to win one week at Camp Roosevelt in Eddington, ME. www.katahdinarebsa.org

The facts are these:
Who's eligible: The contest is open to U.S. citizens or legal residents who are current Cub Scouts (ages 7 to 10), Boy Scouts (ages 11 - 17) and Venturers (Ages 14 - 20).
How to enter: Answer one short essay question on "What does Leave No Trace mean to me as a Scout."
Deadline: May 1, 2016
Prizes: One full week at Camp Roosevelt in Eddington, ME during the summer of 2016:
 • 1 week of Cub Scout Resident Camp will be awarded to a Cub Scout winner.
 • 1 week of Boy Scout Resident Camp will be awarded to a Boy Scout or Venturer winner.

WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AND FEATURED IN BDN'S OUTDOOR MAGAZINE

Send all submissions to:
Bangor Daily News, Attn: Scout Essay Contest,
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