



## Backgrounder

### **Bass Pro Shops at the Pyramid**

#### ***One of the Most Dynamic, Immersive Retail Adventures in the World***

**MEMPHIS, Tenn.** — Bass Pro Shops at the Pyramid, a national destination experience located in downtown Memphis, opened in 2015 as one of the most dynamic, immersive retail adventures in the world. Located inside a massive transformed sports arena, the Pyramid is a “must-see” for families and outdoor enthusiasts. In addition to a vast assortment of outdoor gear, the Pyramid includes a wilderness hotel called Big Cypress Lodge, nearly 600,000 gallons of water features, a cypress swamp with 100-foot-tall trees, the interactive Ducks Unlimited Waterfowling Heritage Center, and The Lookout, a breathtaking glass-floored cantilevering observation deck at the top of the 32-story steel Pyramid.

“With an array of retail, educational and fun attractions for guests of all ages, Bass Pro Shops at the Pyramid is much more than a store; it’s one of the most dynamic, captivating retail adventures in the world,” said Bass Pro Shops founder/CEO Johnny Morris. “The Pyramid is a truly must-see destination for outdoor lovers and families from across the country.”

The ambitious project represents the single largest investment in size and scope that Bass Pro Shops has ever made outside of its national headquarters in Springfield, Missouri, and includes a number of amenities and attractions including Big Cypress Lodge, the first hotel located inside a Bass Pro Shops store.

Standing 32 stories tall along the banks of the Mississippi River, the Pyramid is an icon of the Memphis skyline. First envisioned as a sports and entertainment venue, the complex opened in 1991 and hosted professional sports and concerts until it closed in 2004. After years of uncertainty about the Pyramid’s future, the City of Memphis invited Bass Pro Shops to establish an innovative retail destination that could revitalize the building.

A fish tale in the making, Johnny Morris contemplated the project while fishing in the shadow of the Pyramid with longtime friend, world-famous fisherman and local Memphian Bill Dance, as well as Bass Pro Shops’ first fishing manager, the late Jack Emmitt. Johnny Morris said if they caught a catfish weighing 30-pounds or heavier he would commit to the Pyramid transformation. As the legend goes, they caught a 34-pound catfish and the rest is history. Today, a tribute to the story and the legacy of world-renowned fisherman Bill Dance can be found in the grand entrance of the Pyramid.

Known for his innovative vision and attention to the smallest detail, Johnny Morris and his team embarked on a bold, new vision to transform the Pyramid into a national destination for families, tourists and outdoor enthusiasts. After four years of design and construction, Bass Pro Shops at the Pyramid celebrated its grand opening in April 2015.

Johnny Morris, often referred to as the “Walt Disney of retail,” was awarded for a second time by the National Retail Federation Foundation in 2014, recognized by his peers in the “Giver” category for retailers who use their power, presence and resources to spark positive change for customers and communities. In 2008, his visionary spirit earned him the NRF Foundation’s “Innovator of the Year” award.

“Throughout the entire process it has been inspiring to work alongside Johnny Morris,” said Memphis Mayor A.C. Wharton in 2015. “Johnny is kinda like the Walt Disney of retail as far as creating exciting customer experiences. It’s been fun to work with Johnny and the remarkable Bass Pro Shops team to make sure that every detail, from the signature décor of the Big Cypress Lodge to the alligator pond, will create as unique experience that will launch the Pyramid as a national tourist destination.”

### **More Than a Store**

Inside the expansive 535,000-square-foot space are many experiences and features that offer something for everyone. Once visitors step inside, they are immersed in a giant cypress swamp environment with ponds, towering 100-foot cypress trees, an 84,000-gallon alligator habitat, and underwater ecosystems including aquariums teeming with more than 1,800 fish from largemouth bass to blue catfish to lake sturgeon and alligator gar.

Visitors can bowl in the ocean amid underwater scenery at Uncle Buck’s Fishbowl and Grill, a nautical-themed restaurant and bar with a saltwater aquarium and a 13-lane ocean-themed bowling alley. Casual family dining is available and a sunken ship-themed bar area offers visitors the experience of feeling like they are underwater exploring the skeletal remains of a ship. Those who want to practice their aim can also visit the live pistol and archery ranges onsite.

For a small fee, visitors can ride the tallest freestanding elevator in America 28-stories to The Lookout, which is located at the top of the Pyramid. The Lookout features glass-floored observation decks offering 360-degree views 300 feet above Memphis and the Mississippi River. The Lookout at the Pyramid, a signature dining experience, is also located at the Pyramid’s apex, offering visitors a chance to wine and dine while overlooking Memphis. This full service fine dining restaurant and bar specializes in southern-inspired comfort dishes and includes a stunning 10,000-gallon catfish aquarium in the restaurant’s center.

The Pyramid also offers direct access to the Mississippi River for local, regional and national fishing tournaments.

### **Big Cypress Lodge**

Big Cypress Lodge, a 103-room wilderness hotel inside Bass Pro Shops at the Pyramid, is the first hotel inside any Bass Pro Shops location. The rustic-elegant and well-appointed guest cabins and suites capture the spirit of the great outdoors including special treehouse suites and cabins featuring interior and exterior views. Most rooms offer a private screened-in porch with rocking chairs that offer a commanding view of the sprawling cypress swamp below.

The hotel also offers a boardroom, conference rooms and a patio space for business meetings and celebrations. Premium amenities include a full-service spa and fitness center.

Guests receive access to everything the Pyramid has to offer, including elevator rides to The Lookout. With easy access to downtown Memphis, Big Cypress Lodge is the ultimate way to experience everything Bass Pro Shops at the Pyramid has to offer. Guests can book a stay at 1-800-BC-Lodge and [www.big-cypress.com](http://www.big-cypress.com).

The experience was inspired by another Johnny Morris hotel, Big Cedar Lodge, a stunning wilderness resort in the Ozarks outside of Branson, Missouri. The resort is consistently ranked as one of the best hotels in America.

### **Ducks Unlimited Waterfowling Heritage Center**

Another signature experience inside the Pyramid is the new Ducks Unlimited Waterfowling Heritage Center, an interactive wetlands education museum showcasing the history of waterfowling and wetlands conservation. Created in partnership with Memphis-based Ducks Unlimited, the world's leader in wetlands and waterfowl conservation, the Center allows visitors to learn more about the incredible wildlife found along the Mississippi Flyway and the importance of conserving wetlands. Guests can enter a duck blind and try their hand at duck hunting in a fun, interactive 4D simulation experience, learn to identify different waterfowl species, chat with experts, and marvel at the craftsmanship of the largest collection of waterfowl decoys along with taxidermy, calls and sporting art.

### **One-of-a-Kind Retail Experience**

Located along the Mississippi River and famous Mississippi Flyway, Bass Pro Shops at the Pyramid offers the largest assortment of waterfowl and related hunting equipment ever assembled and a wide selection of other high-quality outdoor gear. Guests can explore the vast retail complex featuring several outdoor specialty shops such as the Beretta Fine Gun Center, which offers premium grade firearms and other shooting-related accessories, custom fittings, and outdoor apparel for men and women. Guests can also choose from a full range of big and small water boats from White River Marine Group with selections from Tracker, Nitro, Tahoe, Sun Tracker and more on a floating showcase inside the cypress swamp. This waterfowler's paradise also includes a center for engraving, tuning and customizing duck calls.

Store hours are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

**Admission to the store is free.** Select attractions require a fee. Elevator access to The Lookout, the observation deck located at the top of the Pyramid, is \$10 (kids can ride for \$5 until 4 p.m.). Admission is included for Big Cypress Lodge guests.

The ambitious project created more than 1,600 jobs in Memphis, including more than 450 contract personnel during peak construction and 600 Bass Pro Shops associates staffing the retail store, restaurants, hotels and attractions.

Bass Pro Shops at the Pyramid is located at 1 Bass Pro Drive, Memphis, Tennessee, inside the iconic Memphis Pyramid.

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