

DisneyWorld is a fantasy land for young and old alike, but Dan Acosta has some tales to tell about visiting the Magic Kingdom that give Tinker Bell goose bumps and make Mickey Mouse cry. See Page 6D.

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Shopping for shoes? Eeeney, meeeney . . .

By Loraine McClah
staff writer

Eeeney, meeeney, miney, mo. Avia, Reebok or Avia? Adidas, Nike or Brooks? Eeonle, Ellesse or Mitre? The choices in athletic shoes are endless — up to 15 brands each offering as many models.

If you make your selection because one is more trendy than the other or the blue is cuter than the pink, you might end up with a \$300 pair of orthopedics or what Dr. Marshall Solomon has coined "the \$500 bag."

"The bag is filled with three or four pairs of shoes, running from the off-the-shelves \$39.95-er to the \$100 latest fad," he said. "It contains over-the-counter heel-lifts, arch supports, insoles, toe caps, paddings, moleskins, cushions."

"It cost its owner at least \$500, and this guy is hurting."

Solomon and his partner, Dr. Charles Young, are both athletes, and they specialize in sports medicine. They've have rummaged through the \$500 bag more times than they want to remember in their "Foot Specialist" offices in Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield and Center Line.

They work with high school coaches from a half-dozen surrounding areas and helped bring the Michigan Panthers to their championship.

Their patients run from toddlers to seniors who "sometimes started their walking regimens too much too soon," Solomon said.

THEIR ATHLETIC patients might be skiers or roller skaters, but foot troubles and injuries are most prevalent among those who run track, play basketball or football, or participate in high-impact aerobics.

"The biggest complaint from the joggers is in the knees, but often the problem is in the foot," Solomon said.

The most important piece of advice Solomon can offer to anyone experiencing discomfort is "learn the difference between pain and stiffness. Never run through pain. Pain is the body's warning signal that something is wrong. Aches, stiffness and sore muscles are going to go away. Pain will persist."

Paul Coughlin, owner and operator of Running Gear in Waterford boasts of having one of the largest varieties of athletic shoes in the state and said there shouldn't be a problem with selection.

"If the salesperson doesn't im-



Chris McKay, who's having problems with her shoes, gets some assistance from Paul Coughlin, owner of Running Gear in Waterford.

RANDY BOST/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Plugging in your Pumas

A \$200 computerized shoe? There's computerized toasters, watches and televisions, so why not a shoe.

Puma's computer shoe comes with its own preprogrammed floppy disk, an owner's manual and two cable hookups so you can literally plug it into your home computer for a readout on what you've done running.

The shoe contains an impact meter with its own computer sealed in the back of the shoe. The unit when hooked up to a home computer provides information on how many miles were ever run in the shoe, miles just run, miles per hour and calories burned off.

"It's more for the runner who has absolutely everything else," said Paul Coughlin, owner of the Running Gear in Waterford. "It's a very nice shoe, but it's more of a fun thing — something you can play with."

The shoe's good for about 1,000 miles of wear and tear.



For just a few dollars — \$200 to be exact — you can literally plug your shoe into your home computer. Puma's computer shoe comes with its own user's manual and a floppy disc.

mediately start to question you on your history, your problem, your sport, your needs, you know you are in the wrong store," he said. "If he asks the right questions, you are in the right store."

All the brands have their special thing.

Tiger has gel that acts as a shock absorber as though it were your own fatty tissue.

Nike has air shoes — a bag filled with freon gas that makes a pillow of air that can't bottom out and lasts much longer than conventional foam.

BROOKS HAS its kinetic wedge.

"But not one of these are for everyone," Coughlin said. "That's why I stock so many brands and models."

Running Gear's many models start with a size 0, for \$29.95, "which I think I've only sold to grandmothers," he said, to the Puma Computer for \$199.95.

The \$200 number comes with its own user manual, cable hookup and preprogrammed floppy disc. It records the distance run, miles per hour, calorie burn off and total time.

Within that gamut is Adidas' Olympic Model Track Spike for \$99.95, "a shoe I'll bet can't be found in but maybe three other stores in Michigan," he said.

And a big selection of New Balance, which is the only brand that offers six different widths.

Whether a weekend gladiator or a seasoned athlete with a foot problem, Solomon and Young's first-time patients get a computerized gait evaluation. The computer printout spells out the problem.

"It was developed for the Olympics, and its credibility is so high it's been used in court cases," Solomon said. "We can tell if the body is out of alignment, if a different shoe is needed, if there has been an overuse of a joint or muscle. High arch, flat feet, it's all there."

"MAYBE ALL you need is a shock absorber or thicker insole. But experimenting on your own can be costly."

So can following trends be costly.

"I think I must have lost \$1 million in sales by discouraging customers from buying the new hot number," Coughlin said. "I was in track and field since junior high, made the hurdles in the NCAA, then coached for Kettering High for a while."

"I know what pain is, and I know the price for buying a shoe because it's fashionable."

R.U. Syrius

Karllos Barney



Traveler's notebook: Portugal's pousadas

(Second of a two-part series)
By Iris Sanderson Jones
contributing travel editor

SETUBAL, PORTUGAL — From the Pousada San Felipe, high on a hill above the ancient city of Setubal, I can see beyond the castle walls to the boats crossing the huge harbor below.

There are fishing boats in two docking ponds within the high-rise city, ferry boats sailing back and forth to the resort hotels at Troia and a distant freighter slowly moving out to sea.

Setubal is on the coast of Portugal 25 miles south of Lisbon. It has been here through 500 years of Arab rule and centuries of historic turmoil. It was King Philip II of Spain who built this great castle on top of the hill in the 16th century and the Portuguese government that created an inn within its stone walls in 1976.

San Felipe, or Sao Filipe in Portuguese, is one of 29 state-owned pousadas, or inns, ranging from castles to simple country homes. If "government inn" sounds grim, think again. Think of castles on high hills, country houses tucked into river bends, whitewashed modern hotels with red tile roofs, each wrapped in regional architecture, dress and food.

The word "pousada" roughly translated means resting place and that's all that little inns really were in the Middle Ages. Now they are resting places that reflect the best of a region, contemporary beds and old fashioned service, often in romantic settings.



MICKY JONES

The Villa Real along the Algarve on Portugal's sea coast is one of the government established pousadas, or rest stops.

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