

# THE WORLD METJAKARTA

## THEME MEETS RETAIL IN A HISTORICAL LOCALE

by Kimberly Rily

As world travel becomes easier, communication evolves and different cultures mingle, it's possible for one to create new entertainment projects all over the world. Inspired by a location where cultures come to meet, Gary Goddard and his company are working with developers on an exciting new project in Jakarta, Indonesia called The Crossroads of the World. Built on the historical site of the Indonesia Hotel, (now the Grand Indonesian) the first 5-star hotel on the archipelago has been visited by great heads of state and U.S. Presidents since Eisenhower. The history of the location adds to the charm of the Crossroads of the World, raising the experience beyond what one would see at a standard shopping mall. "In a way, the world met Jakarta at this historic spot," Mr. Goddard says.

The developers of the Crossroads of the World wanted to not only restore the Grand Indonesia to its former reputation, but have a modern day retail mall as well. "Once I heard the history of this location, I reasoned that this was indeed where the world came to meet Indonesia, so if a retail mall was planned, why not carry out this idea to another level? Why not create a Crossroads of the World on this site, and provide an immersive experience that brings influences from the four corners of the world to this very site, echoing it's known historic past, but building upon it in a new way?" Goddard explained.

So this would-be standard shopping mall is now going to be so much more. Divided into four districts, the Garden District with an Asian flair, the Market District, with the flavor of a Middle Eastern bazaar, the Fashion District with the feel of European sophistication and the Entertainment District, with an exciting American nightlife pizzazz, the Crossroads will bring together everything one would want to have into one shopping display. Goddard, who worked on the development of some of the EPCOT Pavilions, as well as the Forum Shops at Caesar's Palace says, "I didn't want to repeat myself and simply do themed streets of the world, so we dug deeper into the psychology of cities and towns and in particular shopping areas within cities. The building structure (which had already been determined by architects, RTKL Associates) was designed into four connecting structures, which clearly lent themselves to distinct areas for development. We decided we would create a unique district for each of these four structures. We thought there was a good balance between the Entertainment, Fashion, Garden, and Market districts, each one offering a different set of unique sights, sounds, and experiences."

The Crossroads of the World is part of a large mixed-use development that, while aimed at the local audience first and tourists second, expects to draw people from all over. Anticipating the new project will become the premiere shopping experience in Jakarta, Goddard reasons that "This is not like any other retail mall that's been done before." The overall feeling of each district will surround guests,

Construction continues on the Crossroads of the World in Indonesia based on the lush designs for retail and entertainment districts created by Gary Goddard Entertainment. Photos courtesy of Gary Goddard.



communicating a feeling of each separate location with minimal icon use but a general atmosphere and design that will combine to enhance the experience of what otherwise would simply be shopping.



This mall is not being built around Western retail staples such as Old Navy, Gap, or Banana Republic, although familiar stores will be present. Goddard says, "There are a variety of exciting things that are staged throughout the entire area. Everything is designed with a purpose in mind— to build upon the theme and entertain the customers of course— but the primary goal is to ensure that everyone explores each and every area of the mall. These shows and unique events provide people with the motivation to traverse the entire mall in order not to miss any of the exciting attractions."

The Entertainment District is home to, among other things, the mall's signature attraction— the Water & Light Spectacular that takes place in the huge Rockefeller Plaza Hall.

In the Fashion District, there will be huge video screens with live cameras that are placed throughout the district catching people 'on the street' as they stroll and shop in the Moulin Rouge-style surroundings. A live VJ will intercut fashion and music videos with real-time live camera shots of the customers themselves.

In the Garden District, a more Zen-like atmosphere prevails, with fountains, statues and gardens staged

throughout the area providing for a respite from the energy of the other areas.

The Market District will offer a variety of 'street peddlers' with wares in the open, making the shopping experience itself the entertainment here. But in total, the combined set of experiences, of which we have just touched on a few, will create a true must see experience. "Equally important," claims Goddard, "is that this is a place where you will want to return again and again as you'll never feel that you saw everything during your first, second or third visit."

It seems that the Crossroads of the World seems to truly walk a tightrope between themed entertainment venue and retail establishment. While guests' enjoyment of the experience is the main goal, of course, this is a retail project with many tried-and-true shops. This is not a theme park. Goddard continues to explain that, "the products (in each district) will not necessarily be true to (each district's) theme. That would reach beyond what a retail mall is. However, we have strongly recommended that certain kinds of shops and cafes and outlets go into each of the areas to help keep the overall ambiance right. So if you're looking for the cinemas, karaoke bar,

game arcade, electronic gadgets, sports bar or other entertainment-oriented places, you'll find them in the Entertainment District. If you're looking for a tea garden cafe, or candles, soaps, perfumes and other products for the mind and body, the Garden District would be place to find these things. Fashion, cosmetics, accessories, shoes and jewelry will be found in the Fashion District, and everything from books, to pens, to art objects, to toys will be found in the Market District. So, to the greatest degree possible we have tried to cast the stores to the area, and in turn, this enhances the overall experience."

However, while the theme of the Crossroads of the World certainly adds to the appeal of this shopping attraction, just like every other attraction, one needs substance first, and theming second. Goddard warns that, "A themed environment is not the solution in and of itself. In fact, if anything – theming is overused today. Theming is the equivalent of production design in a movie or

Broadway show, which means theming is only the background. But most architects and developers don't understand this. They think the theme is the thing, but the theme is only the backdrop. We have not created literal streets but rather have created highly immersive environments that provide a theatrical backdrop to shopping."

Themes, while entertaining and engrossing, don't necessarily ensure monetary results. Gary points out that, "I think it's a very tricky thing when you talk about theming a retail mall. You have to make sure that the selling experience is the star and that everything you design contributes to the experience of shopping. So, in our case, the theme is one element of many. But when all of the many design factors are at work, then sales definitely go up." ■■■

*For more information on this and other projects, visit [www.garygoddard.com](http://www.garygoddard.com)*

# Smiles by Design

## Creative Aquatic

Planning ▲ Designing ▲ Consulting



**RAMAKER**  
& ASSOCIATES, INC.

Sauk City, Wisconsin 53583  
Voice: 800-332-7532  
Web: [www.ramaker.com](http://www.ramaker.com)