



Holiday Shopping Offers Big Savings

By CSM Victor Garcia

AT the Defense Commissary Agency, we are fond of saying "The Commissary – It's Worth the Trip!"

Throughout the year, these words hold true for the millions of authorized shoppers who have made the commissary their destination of choice for groceries. However, the prospect of saving 30 percent or more becomes even brighter during the holidays.

As the senior enlisted advisor to the DeCA director, one of my responsibilities is to ensure that authorized shoppers know what I know: you cannot do better than the commissary. As you prepare for those family feasts from Christmas through New Year's Day, it's important to keep the commissary on your shopping list.

With the money you save on groceries by visiting the commissary – nearly \$3,300 a year for a family of four – you can channel those savings elsewhere for the holidays.

As you plan for how you're going to stretch your paycheck over this season for giving, consider the following ideas.

Commissary Gift Vouchers

Since Oct. 15, we have been offering gift vouchers at all 255 commissaries. The gift vouchers are available in \$25 denominations and redeemable by any commissary-authorized shopper. Anyone, including those who are not authorized shoppers, can acquire gift vouchers by visiting any commissary's customer service department.

There is no limit on the number of vouchers someone can obtain. But for large orders of more than \$1,000 in vouchers at a time, you must notify the store at least one week in advance to ensure they have sufficient quantities on hand. Over the years, thousands upon thousands of our customers, the friends and families of customers, and various installation charitable organizations have used the gift of groceries to help make the holidays brighter for military families.

Surf the Web

The DeCA Web site at www.commissaries.com has a wealth of features for you to plan your holiday shopping. Go to the site's "Savings Aisle" to view prices and percent savings of specific sale items in the store where you shop – before you go. You can also check commissaries.com for the latest holiday recipes from Kay's Kitchen, health and wellness tips from the DeCA dietitian or look up the holiday hours of the nearest commissary.


Use Coupons

All commissaries honor Internet coupons, and most commissaries make paper coupons available near the store entrance, in the checkout area or sometimes attached to the products themselves.

Facebook and Twitter

You can always find new information about DeCA online by accessing Facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/Defense-Commissary-Agency/131694158961?ref=ts and Twitter at <http://twitter.com/TheCommissary>. And, remember you can always go on commissaries.com to select from a number of holiday gift baskets through "Virtual Commissary."

Traditions run deep in the military, and one of the oldest is taking care of "our own." In keeping with that legacy, I ask you to help us pass on the good news about the commissary benefit so all service members – active-duty and Guard and Reserve alike – and their families know they can use it.

And, on behalf of the 18,000 employees of the Defense Commissary Agency, I'd like to wish our service members and their families a happy and safe holiday season and a peaceful and prosperous year in 2010. Whether you are stateside, overseas or deployed downrange, our hearts and prayers are with you. 

Eat Healthy-Be Active Your Way!



THE COMMISSARY
...It's Worth The Trip!

