

## UNIVERSAL'S FRIGHT NIGHTS THRILL IN FLORIDA

## GO: ORLANDO

**GETTING/STAYING THERE:** Universal Studios Halloween Horror nights run until November 4. Virgin Holidays has seven nights' room-only at Loews Sapphire Falls Resort from £1,159 per person including Virgin flights from Gatwick or Manchester direct to Orlando, car hire and a Universal Orlando three-park Explorer ticket with Halloween Horror Nights combo. Based on October 30 departure.

## IT'S gone midnight and I find myself alone in a dark, narrow corridor.

I hear screams all around, then spot a man with a pig's head running towards me with a knife.

*The crazy thing is that this is the most fun I've had in years.*

For its 27th year, Universal Orlando's Halloween Horror Nights has brought together some of the latest scary flicks and iconic series.

I'm confronted by the Grady twins from *The Shining*, plus several sharp-toothed clowns wielding deafening chainsaws.

This year's event is themed on three series of TV scare fest American Horror Story – Roanoke, Asylum and Coven.

There is a marathon maze which takes a terrifying ten minutes to complete and this is where I am confronted by the aforementioned "pig man".

Other not-so-friendly faces here include a serial-killer doctor and a coven full of witches waiting to collect your soul.

Next up is *The Shining*, which scores points for being the most visually captivating and inventive event of the night.

With so much attention to detail, I manage to walk right through the Overlook Hotel

without hiding behind the person ahead of me. Though I must confess, when the iconic "Here's Johnny" moment happens, I fall to the floor.

You soon realise it's impossible to keep your cool. Even the most stern-looking muscle giants could be seen screaming in terror.

The creative team at Universal has gone to great lengths to recreate every sight, smell and sound of *The Shining* in a psychological maze that attacks all your senses.

**Scarecrow: The Reaping** is an original concept maze that takes you through an abandoned maze in 1920s America. The catch is that you are joined by an army of zombie scarecrows which wants to harvest your soul.

And if you think you will be safe outside the haunted mazes, you're wrong. A number of "scare zones" keep the screams coming at a relentless pace.

This year's *The Purge* scare zone replicates the hit movie's idea that the US government allows one night when all crimes are legal, leading to havoc on the

**MONSTER FUN . . .** one of Universal's gruesome characters



THRILLS AND CHILLS . . . frights from Scarecrow: The Reaping are among the horror highlights



streets. Bars dotted around the park remain open all night and I cannot stress how important it is to take every opportunity to use the loo.

Many rides stay open throughout the Horror Nights, such as *The Revenge Of The Mummy*, an indoor rollercoaster full of

intense special effects and fast-paced twists and turns.

By now I've lost my voice from screaming and am convinced the ride really is haunted by a mummy's ghost.

The event runs into the early hours and when you make it back to your hotel, you are going to want a good night's sleep.

There are five on-site hotels and a sixth on the way – enough to suit every budget.

We stayed at the Loews Sapphire

Falls resort, which has frequent and direct boat taxis throughout the day and night, plus there's a wealth of dining options.

Another bonus of staying at an on-site hotel is early access to Universal's three theme parks, with free transport door to door.

And the new Volcano Bay water park's Ko'okiri Body Plunge ride, with its vertical drop shooting you from a trap door 125ft up, gives a whole new reason to scream.

JON HORNBUCKLE



hot spot

**PORTUGAL** is 26C – and you can get seven nights' self-catering at the 3★ Vilamoura Golf Apartments from £219pp, including flights from Stansted on November 10. Head to [jet2holidays.com](http://jet2holidays.com) or call 0800 408 5594.

## AIRPORT PREVIEW FOR CITY

LONDON City Airport has revealed artists' impressions of its £400million development to celebrate its 30th anniversary.

Due for completion in 2021, the new illustrations by architecture firm Pascall + Watson, below, include seven new aircraft stands and a modern extended passenger terminal which will increase its existing size by around 40,000m<sup>2</sup>.

There is also a free photography exhibition at Jubilee Place in Canary Wharf showing the airport's history.

London City Airport: 30 Years In Photographs, also celebrates its unique location.

It includes new aerial photography by Andrew Holt and archive pictures which show how the capital's skyline has changed.

See it now, until November 7.



**HEADING to the States?** Passengers can fly from London Southend to 11 cities in North America via Dublin.

The service will be made possible by FlyBe's new Southend to Dublin route, that will connect to Aer Lingus transatlantic flights to the US and Canada.

Customers will also be able to complete US pre-clearance in Dublin ahead of their onward journey.

This means on arrival in the States, they will be treated as domestic passengers – saving up to two hours.

Aer Lingus flies to 11 North American destinations, including New York, Boston, Washington, Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Orlando, Newark, Toronto and Hartford, Connecticut.

The airline also announced a new Dublin to Philadelphia route starting from March.

Glyn Jones, CEO of London Southend Airport, said: "We are excited to announce this service which will save customers time."

hot spot

**SRI LANKA** is 29C where seven nights' all-inclusive at the 5★ Cinnamon Bay Beruwala Hotel costs from £924pp, including flights from Heathrow on November 7. See [awayholidays.co.uk](http://awayholidays.co.uk) or call 0208 705 0107.