LET'S BEGIN

ENTRY PORTAL

Flooded Forest

Sandstone Cliffs

Cloud Forest

Agricultural Terrace

Mayan Ruins

Exit Portal

The Rainforest is made of 7 sections:

1. Entry Portal
2. Flooded Forest
3. Sandstone Cliffs
4. Cloud Forest
5. Agricultural Terrace
6. Mayan Ruins
7. Exit Portal

Explore the Rainforest

The Rainforest building has 13,000 square feet of exhibit space with the jaguar exhibit adding an additional 2,000 square feet. The heights is 52 feet to the top.

Flooded Forest Tunnel

Descending into the Flooded Forest, vast networks of enormous tree roots form the edges of the dark tropical waters. Most of the tall trees, fallen logs and vines are carved concrete. The concrete was sprayed over rebar and wire mesh forms. They were then carved, textured and painted.

Smooth-fronted Caiman

Meet Gomez and Morticia. They are both 45-years-old and have lived in the Rainforest building since it opened in 1997. Each of their individual scales are filled with bone.

Gomez & Morticia

Monster Fish

ARAPAIMA: This ancient species is the largest freshwater fish in the world, reaching lengths of 10 feet. This species can be seen swimming in the lagoon though an acrylic window separating the two pools.

PACU: In the wild, this fish feeds only 6 months of the year on fruit and nuts that fall from trees during the rainy season.

The Environment

Entering the Rainforest, you will notice the warm temperatures (72-82°F) and humidity (averaging eighty-five percent). Both are vital requirements for the plants and animals of the world’s tropical rainforests. The perimeter of the building even has a special fog system that provides additional humidity.

This is a replica of an Olmec Colossal head. The original is about 3,000 years old and was found in Vera Cruz, Mexico. It’s thought these heads were carved as portraits of rulers during the Olmec civilization. The Olmecs were an advanced culture that originated glyph writing and the bar/dot system of counting.

Prince of Flowers

This popular photo-op bench is called the “Prince of Flowers”. Fashioned after an Aztec design, the figure is a replica of a statue found on the side of Popocatépetl, a volcano sacred to the Aztec. The Aztecs were great lovers of plant life, flowers in particular.

Green Anaconda

Meet Annie our green anaconda. At 31-years-old, Annie is very old for an anaconda. Green anacondas are the only member of the boa family that inhabit both land and water. She shares her habitat with another 14-year-old female.

Deep Roots

The Rainforest building was built without a foundation underneath, so plants could grow as normal in the soil. Additionally, the ceiling has translucent panels, which allow sunlight in.

Did You Know?

A hidden face can be found in the mud ceiling of the Flooded Forest tunnel. Can you find it? Take a look!

Petroglyphs

These petroglyphs represent South American rock art and are about 4,000-5,000 years-old. They can be found in Brazil.

Paca

Meet Tater Tot! Tater Tot is a lowland paca. This species is related to guinea pigs and capybaras. Tater Tot is primarily nocturnal and can often be found sleeping in his straw burrow.

Black Howler Monkey

Meet Uly (short for Ulysses), who is 27-years-old. Howler monkeys are one of the most vocal primate species. The males are black, while females and young are blonde.

Did You Know?

The return air duct and center roof support are both disguised as concrete trees. See if you can tell which trees!
Originating in Asia, but commonly found growing wild and being cultivated in South America, banana plants never grow a woody stem. While many people call these plants banana trees, they're actually the largest herbaceous plant in the world.

The towering 52-foot kapok tree replica reaches toward the highest point in the exhibit. Cloaking the main structural support of the building, this large concrete buttressed tree also has a zookeeper service area in its base.

There are 5 murals within the Rainforest. Two are forest scenes, two are Mayan murals showing figures and events and the last one is a pictograph (stone painting).

Within the 30,000 gallon lagoon, aquatic species such as the arapaima and midas cichlids swim with multiple species including the yellow-spotted Amazon river turtle.

Yellow-rumped caciques make complex, hanging woven nests. Look closely through the tree canopy for examples of their impressive weaving skills.

Meet Mango! Although you may find Mango hanging out in a variety of places throughout the Rainforest, this is his favorite branch. Mango is a green-winged Macaw. Its namesake green wing feathers distinguish this large bird from the similarly-colored scarlet macaw. Their powerful beak is used on a varied diet that includes nuts, fruits, berries, seeds and other vegetation.

Though not as toxic as other poison dart frogs, this species is one of the largest and loudest of its kind. They get their toxicity from their prey in the wild. Their food at Tulsa Zoo does not contain the same toxins, so the frogs in the Rainforest are not poisonous.

This tree has soft wood, which is used for paper pulp. It is also the preferred habitat tree for sloths.

The Maya lived in city/states spread across parts of Central America. Their accomplishments are many: writing skills, extremely accurate calendars and astronomical tables, maps and scientific agriculture. Our numbers mural depicts a system of mathematics first recorded by the Olmecs and adopted and perfected by the Maya.

Adding 2,000 square feet to the 13,000 square foot Rainforest, the Jaguar exhibit was originally fashioned with a large mural backdrop and rockwork modeled after an ancient Mayan site, called Tikal, in Guatemala. Encompassing two pools, lifelike concrete heated trees and a large stela as the focal point of the exhibit.

A stela is a large slab of stone which may depict a single event or chronicle a king's life. This large stone slab is called Dancing With The Kings. It is an exact replica of a piece discovered in Guatemala. The central figure is thought to be the king of the village of Machaquila leading a festival dance.

This exhibit has fascinated millions of guests over the last 25 years and it holds a special place at the Tulsa Zoo. We hope you enjoyed this special tour of the Rainforest!

Within the Rainforest Exhibit, we have a number of free roaming species. Sunbittern, turaco, yellow crowned night heron & the green iguana just to name a few.