This giant glowing orb is the world’s first floating Apple Store

Apple’s worldwide retail network may be struggling during the coronavirus pandemic, but that hasn’t stopped the company from indulging in its penchant for pricey-looking, unique, and outlandish exterior design. The iPhone maker’s newest retail location, located in Singapore on the city-state’s waterfront and known officially as Apple Marina Bay Sands, can claim a world’s first title: it’s the only Apple retail shop on the planet that floats on water.

The location, part of the luxury hotel and resort of the same name, is Singapore’s third Apple Store following , which opened as Singapore’s first in 2017, and Apple Jewel Changi Airport, located in the world-famous retail sector of Singapore’s transportation hub that also features the world’s tallest indoor waterfall. (Singapore seems cool, huh?)

During the daytime, the new Marina Bay Sands store appears to look like an odd spacecraft of some sort or perhaps some form of futuristic theater.

Photo by Roslan Ragman / AFP via Getty Images

Photo by Suhaimi Abdullah / Getty Images

But at nighttime, when Singapore’s iconic skyline is lit in all its glory in the background, the store really comes alive and you can tell the company clearly designed it as an evening fixture best viewed in the dark. (Although, I get real Rehoboam vibes, that sinister-seeming artificial intelligence from *Westworld*’s third season.)

We don’t have a lot of details on the location, like how exactly the interior is structured. We do know that the store is Apple’s 512th retail shop globally, and that it’s opening sometime soon. *MacRumors* got its hands on a neat little teaser video Apple made to promote the store’s opening, showing a custom graphic meant to emulate the look of the thin light lines that spread across the orb at night.

9to5Mac has published what appear to be marketing images and blurbs promoting the new store, in which the store is referred to as “the lantern on the bay.”

“During the day, the store’s glass panels reflect the towering skyline of the Downtown Core and motion of the rippling water. At night, the sphere glows with a gentle warmth, evoking the design of traditional lanterns carried during Singapore’s Mid-Autumn Festival,” one of the slides reads. “The pavilion dome narrows to an oculus, allowing unobstructed light to flood in. A birds-eye view of the store resembles a glass iris peering into the sky.”

According to the marketing material, the store will “include the same measures found at Singapore’s other Apple Stores” regarding ongoing COVID-19 health and safety efforts, which include limited occupancy, mask wearing, and other sanitization requirements.

https://www.theverge.com/2020/8/24/21399749/apple-store-retail-singapore-floating-design-marina-bay-sands