

The Ultimate Divisoria Guide: An Event Stylist's DIY Sourcing Secrets Revealed

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THE SECRET NO ONE WANTS TO SHARE

For those mummies who have already DIY-ed (or at least attempted to) their child's party, we are kindred spirits. **After all, Party Magic all began with a sketch, an idea, and my wild assumption that I could DIY-to-death my own daughter's party.** And as kindred spirits, we all share a secret.

And it is this: no matter how wild or amazing your decor ideas, none of that matter if you can't turn vision into reality. And translating your dreams to reality requires one indispensable skill you will probably also need in other areas of life:

Sourcing.

And in the Philippines, sourcing *is* Divisoria.



MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH DIVI

My relationship with Divi began ever since I was a little girl. In the summers I would help my mom pick out items for her business, and I still remember being slack-jawed at it all: the toys! The candies! Never mind the heat and the crowds: it was paradise.

Then, when I started Party Magic, things turned up a notch as I suddenly had real money and reputation on the line. I switched to overdrive mode, and went to Divisoria a few times a week. Back when I was just starting and still had the time, I even wandered all the nooks and crannies, searching for hidden gems.

So in this post you will have it all: my years of experimentation and exploration, my years of getting lost and of learning, my 7-10 years of Divi experience, all distilled into one blog post.

AN IN-DEPTH GUIDE TO PARTY SUPPLIES IN DIVISORIA

I've thought a lot about how best to organize this blog post, and **I've decided to categorize it based on the class of item you are interested to source, instead of tackling it store by store.** I've also split it into 2 parts 1.) The Essentials, and 2.) Accessories, Supplies, Fabrics, and Raw Materials.

I. THE ESSENTIALS

1. BALLOONS! Latex balloons, mylars ("shiny", foil balloons), giant balloons, small balloons
2. Paper decorations: Lanterns, pompoms, paper tassels, honeycomb lanterns, paper fans, etc
3. Artificial flowers and greenery
4. Candies, marshmallows, and other sweets for your dessert table

THE 4 ESSENTIAL STORES TO VISIT IN DIVI:

If time is limited and I only had to choose 4 establishments to visit in Divi, I would go for these:

1. **801 Balloons / 801 One Stop Party Shop**
2. **Sun Master Candies and Toys**
3. **Morning Glory (accessories)**
4. **Anding's Toys and Flowers Shop**

Because of these are well-established, large one-stop stores, almost everything you need for your party will be found in these three stores.

In truth, I've been cooking up this idea of an Ultimate Guide to Divisoria post for more than a year now, but I've been putting it off because I really didn't want to share these "secrets" with anyone else. What really pushed me to do this guide was a different frame of mind: I realized that the industry has been good to me, and it's now time to pay it forward.

Now on to the in-depth guide. Are you ready? Let's dive right in.

I. THE ESSENTIALS



This is a map of Tabora St. (see the red arrow), and M. de Santos St. (perpendicular to Tabora St.), with all the Essential Stores listed!

1.) **BALLOONS, PAPER DECORATIONS, PARTY FAVORS – 801 BALLOONS / 801 PARTY STORE**

801 Tabora St. corner M. de Santos St.

Tel num: (02) 242 7378

Cell num: (0919) 417 7213 (look for Ate Rose)

If you ever arrive late in Divisoria and only had to visit *one* store, you'd better visit 801 Balloons Store. **801 Balloons is probably the most important party store you'll find in Divisoria**, as it offers the **most affordable (yet high quality) and widest selection of rubber latex balloons in the market**. 801's balloons are the only balloons I use in all of our events.



The entrance to 801 Balloons



Balloons Galore at 801 Balloons

Another great thing about 801's balloons is **the range of color that they have**, which is very important for me as I'm very particular about color grading in events. For example, instead of the usual "blue" color, I get to use periwinkle, lavender, mint, aqua, blue-violet, and silver mylar in this awesome display of color graded organic arch for Luca's first birthday:



It's a little known industry secret that **not all balloons are made equal**. Some balloons sold are low quality, easily prone to discoloration and oxidation. Some are sold close to their expiration date (yes balloons do expire!). On the other spectrum, yes, you can definitely go for the highest grade balloons such as Qualatex, but these are so expensive that they are impractical to use, especially if you need a lot of balloons.

What's even better is that this store has most of the other essential items you will need. These are listed below:

Other items you can find in 801 Balloons Store:

1. Pompoms, lanterns, paper tassels, honeycomb lanterns, paper garlands
2. Letter balloons, party poppers, birthday candles, sparkling candles, banderitas, happy birthday banners
3. Assorted Mylar balloons with Happy Birthday / Happy Mother's Day etc greetings
4. Nylon strings, ribbons, helium tanks (mini), balloon inflators, smoke machines
5. Cupcake liners, party hats, party bags, loot bags, candy cups, paper plates, paper cups
6. Acrylic letters (happy birthday, it's a boy, etc)
7. Faerie / butterfly wings



2.) ASSORTED CANDIES, TOYS – SUN MASTER CANDIES AND TOYS

569-571 M. de Santos St., near corner of Tabora St. (right beside 801 Balloons, to the left)

Tel num: (02) 242 7379

Mobile num: (0915) 740 2513 (look for Sir Aboi)

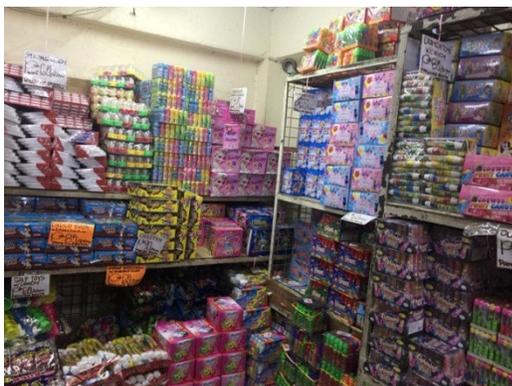
If you are enamored with the idea of having a dessert table or candy buffet, but tight on budget, Sun Master is your best bet. They have the most affordable sweets offered in Metro Manila. **Best of all, their candies / sweets are quality-checked and export-ready!** Some of their products are actually being sold in the US and in Australia, so you know that the quality is high grade.



The entrance to Sun Master

Sun Master is the best place to stock up on candies and goodies for your dessert table and have the most bang for your buck. **My best picks are Sun Master's jelly beans, gummies, cotton candy, marshmallows, and gumballs. I have personally tried all of these and they are flavorful and delicious.**

Also, you might want to consider buying Sun Master's candies and sweets for your child's loot bag / giveaway.



Items you can find in Sun Master:

1. Jellybeans, Jelly candies
2. Marshmallows
3. Cotton candies
4. Toys on pad
5. Bubble gums
6. Spray candies, liquid candies, etc.

3.) GENERAL STYLING ACCESSORIES – MORNING GLORY

From 801 Balloons at the corner of Tabora St and M. de Santos St, just walk along Tabora St. Morning Glory will be on your left (you will find Morning Glory BEFORE Anding's)

Tel num: (02) 241 8948

Mobile num: (0916) 530 5605

If you are more of the DIY-decorating mom type, and don't mind getting your hands dirty with creating props, then your main store for accessories and materials should be Morning Glory.



Morning Glory has almost all accessories that you will need. The most important is of course the ribbons. They have all the sizes (half-inch, 1-inch, 2-inches, and so on), and all the colors available. Any ornaments you will need such as sequins, beads, are also there.



Come Christmas season, Morning Glory stocks all the accessories you also need for the season: Christmas balls, garlands, etc.

Items you can find in Morning Glory:

1. All sizes and colors of ribbons
2. Sequins, sequin glitters, glitters
3. Beads and other ornaments
4. Glue sticks

4.) ALL MANNERS OF TOYS, ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS, GREENERY, LIGHTING – ANDING’S TOYS AND FLOWERS

Main Store: from 801 Balloons at the corner of Tabora St and M. de Santos St, just walk along Tabora St. Anding’s will be to your left.

Bodega Sale: 2nd Flr. NDCC Bldg., Bodega Sale Center Sta. Elena St.

Tel num: (02) 241 9378

Mobile num: (0927) 453 7154 (look for Ate Meanne)



Anding's is a huge store located along Tabora St. that contains all different types of toys (board games, toy cars, balls, etc.) that are perfect for prizes for your party. (Almost) all toys you need will be found here. What's more, Anding's also contains some really needed styling essentials, such as faerie lights, Christmas lights, artificial greens and shrubbery, artificial flowers, and more!

Here's a tip: for the styling essentials, go to the main store along Tabora St. For better deals on toys, head over to Bodega Sale (see address above).



Items you can find in Anding's:

1. Christmas lights, faerie lights
2. Board games, toy cars, lego blocks, cheap plastic toys, various branded toys, various balls
3. Mirror balls, Christmas balls, mason jars, halloween props, Chinese lanterns
4. Various artificial flowers and greenery



II. ACCESSORIES, SUPPLIES, FABRICS, RAW MATERIALS

1.) FABRICS AND TEXTILE – TABORA ST. (RIGHT SIDE). From 801 Balloons, head down along Tabora St. At around the middle of the street, head right into one of the many corridors branching inside the building. Keep heading inside the building until you reach an intersection filled with stalls selling all types and colors of fabric.

2.) PAPER MACHE BLOCK LETTERS AND OTHER PROPS – TABORA ST. From 801 Balloons, head along Tabora St. and look at the street vendors.

3.) RIBBONS, TRIMMINGS, TASSELS, FEATHERS, BEADS, ETC – GOOD MORNING COMPANY AND WELLMANSON ALONG TABORA ST. Near Morning Glory, you will also find another store called Good Morning Company. This is a good place to find accessories that you can't find in Morning Glory.

For more options: try Wellmanson. It's on the same side as Morning Glory, but further along Tabora St., almost to the end.

4.) BOXES, STYRO BALLS, OTHER PACKAGING ITEMS – COMMONERS COMMERCIAL. You can find Commoners along Ilaya St., which is very near Tabora St.

5.) NATIVE BASKETS, NATIVE ROPES, FILIPINO HATS (ANY FILIPINO FIESTA THEMED PARTY) – UNDERNEATH DIVISORIA MALL. Standing outside 801 Balloons, look across. You will see a green mall. That's Divisoria Mall. Underneath this mall you will find all the native Filipino items that you will need if you are planning a Filipino themed party.



6.) MOSS, MORE ARTIFICIAL GREENERY AND FLOWERS – 168 MALL SOLER SIDE, GROUND FLOOR. When you reach 168 Mall, head over to Soler Wing, ground floor. There you will see a large shop with various artificial greenery for more options

7.) GENERAL SUPPLIES SUCH AS PACKAGING TAPE, FOAM TAPES, DOUBLE SIDED TAPES, GUN TACKERS, ETC. – 168 MALL GROUND FLOOR, STA. ELENA SIDE. Walk along 168 Mall's ground floor, near the side of Sta. Elena St., where the stalls are smaller. You will run into stalls that sell hardware items such as various tapes, gun tackers, scissors and the like.

8.) MORE PREMIUM FABRICS – 999 MALL, BASEMENT. Head over here if you are buying smaller volume and looking for something more premium.

9.) GIFT WRAPS, JAPANESE PAPERS, COLORED PASTEL PAPERS, AND OTHER BOOKSTORE PRODUCTS – GEPPCO PAPER SUPPLY AND GEORGE ENTERPRISES ALONG M. DE SANTOS ST. From 801 Balloons, head along M. de Santos St (going towards the direction of 168 Mall). You will find George Enterprises to your right and Geppco Paper Supply further along to your left.

10.) CUTE NOTEBOOKS, STATIONERY, AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS – LUCKY CHINATOWN MALL A, GROUND FLOOR. On the ground floor of Lucky Chinatown A, you will find a semi-large corner stall selling all manners of adorable stationery, notebooks, erasers and other related items.

That about wraps things up! If you found this guide useful, or if you have some questions, drop me an email at michelle@michellelao.com

Love,

Michelle