



AT A GLANCE

Insider's Guide to Walt Disney World® Resort

9 TIPS AND TRICKS FOR A MAGICAL VACATION.

BY RONA GINDIN



1 Watch the fireworks (on your own terms)

If you've already caught the *Magic Kingdom*® fireworks while standing near Cinderella Castle, consider booking a table near a window at the California Grill or Narcoossee's restaurants. Both pipe in the show's soundtrack. Or find an outdoor perch at any of the hotels that circle the theme park, such as the beach at *Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort & Campground*.

2 Score great restaurant reservations

Restaurants can fill up quickly, so if there's a place where you know you'd like to eat, consider planning ahead. Try to get a reservation 180 days (about six months) in advance by calling 407-939-3463 at 7 a.m. EST or logging on to the online reservations website (disneyworld.disney.go.com/dining). No success? Simply show up. No-shows and cancellations are a given, so guests with a little patience often step right in.

3 Get a taste of wonderland

If you visit *Walt Disney World Resort* a lot—say, if you're a Passholder, *Disney Vacation Club*® Member or Florida Resident—signing up for Tables in Wonderland may be a smart move. After paying \$150 to \$175 for the year, you'll receive 20 percent off meals and beverages (including alcohol) for up to 10 people at more than 100 restaurants. You'll also get invitations to private events and complimentary valet parking for meals at hotels.

4 Go again and again—for less

Walt Disney World Resort tends to reduce one-day ticket prices when fewer people are in town. "Value" rates are the lowest and run from late August to after Labor Day. "Regular" pricing is more common, but aim for the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas, when the parks are less busy. "Peak" days coincide with school breaks. If you'll be in Orlando for a while, a multiday ticket offers a lower per-day ticket price year-round.

5 Hang out with Mickey Mouse and the gang

Meals inside the Park at which kids can meet some of their favorite Disney Characters book quickly, so consider making reservations somewhere outside the gates. *Walt Disney World Resort* gives its blessing to character meals in the dining rooms of hotels it doesn't own but are on *Walt Disney World Resort* property, such as the Hilton in *Walt Disney World Resort* and *Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort*.

6 Learn how the magic happens

Walt Disney World Resort offers behind-the-scenes tours for small groups that last anywhere from one hour to all day. For example, you can learn about locomotives on "The Magic Behind Our Steam Trains" tour, or in "Behind the Seeds" found at the Land pavilion in *Epcot*®. To check out what's on offer now, type *tours* into the search bar at disneyworld.disney.go.com.



7 Dress up and see the sites

Encounters with characters at theme parks may be a signature *Walt Disney World* Resort experience, but there are other entertainment options. Case in point: Kids can dress up for a formal tea at *Disney's Grand Floridian* Resort Perfectly Princess Tea Party or Afternoon Tea at the Garden View Tea Room. At *Disney's Polynesian Village* Resort, you can watch the daily sunset torch-lighting ceremony, and at *Disney's Wilderness Lodge* Resort, the Fire Rock Geyser shoots water 120 feet into the air every half hour. Or head to *Disney's BoardWalk*, where jugglers, comedians or sword swallows perform in the evening.

8 Find family fun

You will find unique entertainment for the entire family every day at *Disney Springs*™. Enjoy complimentary live entertainment at Raglan Road Irish Pub & Restaurant, Paradiso 37, House of Blues Front Porch and throughout all four neighborhoods.

9 Skip the lines

If you're visiting at a peak time of year, be sure to load the *My Disney Experience* app on your smartphone to find out the wait times at each attraction. You can beat the lines on some rides, such as *Expedition Everest*®, by queuing up on the single-rider lines, which fill empty seats that pop up among larger parties. Timing is important too: Lines for toddler-centric rides, such as *Dumbo the Flying Elephant*®, tend to be shorter after dinner, when tykes fall asleep.

Above, clockwise from left: During Mickey's Not-So-Scary Halloween Party, the lines for many attractions tend to be shorter; the main dining room at the *Beauty and the Beast*-themed Be Our Guest restaurant; a picnic under the stars at the Sci-Fi Dine-In Theater, through Tables in Wonderland.



STAY

**RCI® AFFILIATED
RESORTS NEAR
WALT DISNEY
WORLD RESORT
INCLUDE:**

Vacation Village at Parkway 4940

Swimming pools and a picnic area make this retreat a fun base for exploring Orlando. 2949 *Arabian Nights Blvd.*, Kissimmee
MEMBER REVIEW: "The location cannot be beat."

Wyndham Cypress Palms 3995

Guests can consult with the resort's on-site Disney Planning Center. 5324 *Fairfield Lake Dr.*, Kissimmee
MEMBER REVIEW: "Great atmosphere and comfortable units."

The Fountains 7605

Set on 54 scenic acres surrounding Lake Eve. 12400 *S. International Dr.*, Orlando
MEMBER REVIEW: "I would definitely stay there again!"

Silver Lake Resort 2610

Amenities include a movie theater, heated outdoor pool and clubhouse. 7751 *Black Lake Rd.*, Kissimmee
MEMBER REVIEW: "The rooms are huge, clean and nicely furnished."

Summer Bay Orlando by Exploria Resorts 3175

Family-friendly, with an 18-hole miniature-golf course and an aqua park. 17805 *U.S. Hwy. 192*, Clermont
MEMBER REVIEW: "Gorgeous setting!"

RCI® TIP

Want more ideas and tips to help you plan your Orlando vacation? Visit RCI.com/EVOrlando to learn more!

For complete member reviews (as member reviews have been condensed) and additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 800-338-7777 (Weeks) or 877-968-7476 (Points). Club Members, please call your specific Club or RCI telephone number.

OTHER VACATION OPTIONS:

Bahama Bay Resort & Spa

Amenities include a fishing dock, nature trails and a white-sand beach that overlooks Lake Davenport. 400 *Gran Bahama Blvd.*, Davenport; 866-796-2165; wyndhamvacationrentals.com; doubles from \$84 a night

Caribe Cove Resort

A quiet retreat conveniently located just minutes away from Orlando's action-packed amusement parks. 9000 *Treasure Trove Ln.*, Kissimmee; 866-796-2165; wyndhamvacationrentals.com; doubles from \$81 a night