Walt Disney World News

Walt Disney World Resort for Adults: The Fun Gets Better With Age

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – They remember vinyl records and CDs. A time when instant communication meant a phone call, not tapping out letters on a mobile phone.

They grew up with Walt Disney World. But they haven't outgrown Walt Disney World.

As Boomers have grown up, so has Walt Disney World Resort. From one Magic Kingdom to a nearly 40-square-mile vacationland consisting of theme parks, water parks, resort hotels, Downtown Disney nightlife/shopping/entertainment district and other magical attractions and recreational centers.

Now that they've paid off the mortgage or maybe the kids' college tuition, it's *their* time. And what better way for Boomers to spend it than to revisit and remember the magic of Walt Disney World Resort?

"Disney has been catering to adult sensibilities for a long time," observed Jill Safro, editor of *Birnbaum's Walt Disney World Without Kids*. "In keeping with the spirit of the World that Walt built, there are no age limits here. Lots of adults are descending on the parks with notions that are vastly different from those of the parental persuasion."

Guests can relive their fantasy-filled youth and ride Space Mountain like they did 20 years ago. Eat around the world in one day. Drop in on the classic Star Wars trilogy on Star Tours – the Adventures Continue. Or plummet in a free-falling elevator in The Twilight Zone™ Tower of Terror — just to prove to the kids they are hip as ever.

Here are some Disney best bets with a "grown-up" slant:

Resorts

Disney's BoardWalk is a whole district of dining, entertainment and recreation that might have shifted 700 miles south. A broad wooden boardwalk on a waterfront is the "main drag" of the resort complex. Stroll the boardwalk or rent a peddle-driven surrey bike built for two or four. Taste the micro-brewed beers of Big River Grille & Brewing Works. Savor celebrity chef Cat Cora's traditional Kouzzina – Greek specialties. Dance the night away in the elegant Atlantic Dance ballroom. The whole scene evokes the charm of early Mid-Atlantic coastal inns.

"A forested wonder" – that's the way *Birnbaum's Walt Disney World: The Official Guide* depicts Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground. It is more than 700 acres of cypress and pine forest that have been carefully laid out as a campground with nearly 1,200 sites. It's a home-away-from-home for everyone from tent campers to folks who prefer one of the Wilderness Cabins complete with fully equipped kitchens, air conditioning, Wi-Fi and housekeeping service. There is a white sand beach and a marina on Bay Lake, a nature trail and waterways for fishing. Canoeing and pedal boating complete this idyllic vacation setting. To make reservations, phone 407/W-DISNEY.

Imagine **times and places long ago and sometimes far away**. The fantasy experiences for which the Walt Disney World theme parks are world-famous extend to the resorts. Across Seven Seas Lagoon from Magic Kingdom are ports of call that welcome guests to the South Seas (Disney's Polynesian Resort) and 19th century South Florida (Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa). Some of the other adventures: the old New England seaside (Disney's Beach Club Resort and Disney's Yacht Club Resort), the heyday of the mid-Atlantic shore (Disney's BoardWalk),

America's great western parks (Disney's Wilderness Lodge), the American Southwest (Disney's Coronado Springs Resort), the Old South (Disney's Port Orleans Resort), exotic Africa (Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge) and the fads and crazes of the 20th century (Disney's Pop Century Resort).

Recreation

If golf's your game, Walt Disney World Resort has days' worth of challenges that have helped earn the Vacation Kingdom a distinction as **one of the country's top golf resorts**. Disney's Osprey Ridge Golf Course was crafted by Tom Fazio, while veteran designer Joe Lee was architect of the Magnolia, Palm and Lake Buena Vista courses. To make reservations, call 407/WDW-GOLF.

Tennis, anyone? Walt Disney World Resort answers with nine locations of the finest courts in Central Florida.

For guests who love the great outdoors, **adventures abound by land or by sea**. There are trails for jogging, biking and horseback riding. And for fun on the water, guests can skim across Walt Disney World waterways aboard a personal Sea Raycer watercraft. These modern-looking mini-powerboats make waves as they cut through open water. Sailboats, pontoon boats, canopy boats, pedal boats, rowboats and canoes are also available rentals at select Walt Disney World marinas. For more information on these activities call 407/WDW-PLAY.

Even **sports fishermen's dreams come true** at Walt Disney World Resort. Guests on BASS-guided fishing excursions routinely catch bass weighing 2 to 8 pounds. And BASS fishing participants at Walt Disney World Resort receive a one-year BASS membership, including 11 issues of *Bassmaster Magazine*, special discounts and more. For reservations, call 407/WDW-BASS (939-2277).

Satisfy your need for speed at the Richard Petty Driving Experience. Get behind the wheel – or passenger seat – in a NASCAR race car around the mile-long, tri-oval racetrack, reaching speeds up to 140MPH. Your dream car can be yours – for six to 10 laps – at the Exotic Driving Experience, where Boomers can take super cars like a Lamborghini, Porsche and Ferrari for a spin.

Relaxing and Eating

Breakfast can be a civilized great adventure if you know the menu. Some ways to start the day at Walt Disney World Resort: Eggs Benedict served with a petit filet or choron sauce (The Wave…of American Flavors at Disney's Contemporary Resort); thick French toast stuffed with bananas (Kona Cafe at Disney's Polynesian Resort); a traditional American Western feast of scrambled eggs, waffles and sausage (Whispering Canyon Café at Disney's Wilderness Lodge).

Need a **lunch break**? If you're spending the day in Magic Kingdom, at lunchtime hop on the monorail for a quick trip to Grand Floridian Cafe at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa, where you'll experience a great meal and a nice change of pace.

Dinner is a regal occasion at Victoria & Albert's, an intimate dining room that seats about 60 in the main dining room at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa. Elegant touches include Royal Doulton china, Cristofle silver and Riedel crystal. Culinary offerings are created daily with the best available fresh ingredients. The coveted Chef's Table provides a front-row seat for the slicing and dicing.

Indulgence knows no boundaries with the pampering guests receive at the two **full-service spas** at Walt Disney World Resort. The Spa at Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort combines Disney's expertise in service with natural spa therapies from around the world. The Grand Floridian Spa & Health Club offers 17 treatment rooms for massage, herbal wraps and aromatherapy. (Note: currently closed for renovation – scheduled to reopen in 2013)

Nightlife

Downtown Disney West Side, a hip corner of Downtown Disney, features some of the world's most exciting restaurants, nightclubs and shopping adventures. Highlights include Cirque du Soleil, House of Blues, Wolfgang Puck Café, Bongos Cuban Café and **AMC Downtown Disney 24 Theatres -** which includes six Includes six Fork & Screen dine-in theatres featuring menu items from quesadillas to flatbread pizzas. Coming in Fall 2012, Splitsville, America's Bowling Alley rolls into a 50,000-square foot, two-story location featuring 30 lanes, two kitchens, a dramatic balcony, ample outdoor seating, billiard tables and live entertainment.

At **Downtown Disney Pleasure Island**, how is this for Boomer nirvana — adults can savor a smoke and premium cocktails at Fuego by Sosa Cigars, a stylish lounge next to Raglan Road Irish Pub and Restaurant.

Watch a **dazzling fireworks** show. Choose between "Wishes" at Magic Kingdom and "IllumiNations: Reflections of Earth" at Epcot. Or catch "Fantasmic!" at Disney's Hollywood Studios or the "SpectroMagic" parade at Magic Kingdom as they light up the night sky.

Theme Parks

Take a **grand circle tour of Magic Kingdom** aboard the Walt Disney World Railroad, churn along Rivers of America aboard a Liberty Square riverboat ("Liberty Belle") and catch a ride on a horse-drawn trolley down Main Street, U.S.A.

Recreate memories revisiting the classic attractions of Fantasyland in Magic Kingdom — "it's a small world"; Peter Pan's Flight; Prince Charming Regal Carrousel; The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh; "Mickey's PhilharMagic" 3-D spectacular. The new and unprecedented Dumbo, the Flying Elephant – featuring not one, but two attractions, flying in opposite directions – in the New Fantasyland, part of the largest expansion project in park history. Already updated, the classic Barnstormer featuring Goofy as the Great Goofini has a new look. Coming in time for the 2012 holidays, Under the Sea ~ Journey of the Little Mermaid. All great ways to feel young at heart.

Epcot World Showcase features **11 nations of the world** in architecture, dining, art and history exhibits, entertainment and shopping. A tree-lined promenade encircling a peaceful lagoon is the byway connecting the countries: Mexico, Norway, China, Germany, Italy, The American Adventure, Japan, Morocco, France, United Kingdom and Canada.

In the Future World section of Epcot, Boomers can get lofty on **Soarin'** — a breathtaking, wind-in-your-hair experience simulating flight over the natural wonders of California. Riders are softly lifted 40 feet into an 80-foot projection screen dome that fills their field of vision with the spectacle of the Golden State.

The **Epcot International Food & Wine Festival** is an annual six-week-long rite of autumn celebrating the food, beverages and cultures from more than 25 regions.

The **gardens of Epcot** are never brighter than during the months of March through early June, when guests discover the Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival. There are lectures, demonstrations and gardens ablaze with colorful displays from the entrance plaza to the far reaches of World Showcase.

The **heyday of Hollywood** is captured in the architecture of Disney's Hollywood Studios. The park has its own Hollywood and Vine, and also a Sunset Boulevard that recalls the glitz and glamour of Tinseltown. The trip down memory lane is completed by The Great Movie Ride, a ride through famous moments from the big screen, and The Hollywood Brown Derby, where the famous Cobb salad of the former Vine Street restaurant is alive and well along with the interior design of the one-time hangout of Hollywood stars. Boomers who grooved to '70s rock will want to take a spin on Rock 'n' Roller Coaster Starring Aerosmith. Immerse yourself in the classic Star Wars trilogy with 50 possible story combinations on Star Tours – the Adventure Continue.

Unleash your inner explorer with a day at Disney's Animal Kingdom. Up-close encounters with exotic animals and adventures of the prehistoric kind await guests at this theme park that sprawls across 400 acres. The park's largest attraction, Kilimanjaro Safaris, is an incredible journey across an "African savannah" where hundreds of animals roam free. Zebras join the family in Fall 2012.

Timing your visit for the cooler months and away from the peaks of family vacationing can add to the comfort of the adventure. Prime time for family vacations is when the kids are out of school — during the summer months of June, July and August, around major holidays and spring break late February to mid-April.

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