

Cinderella Castle: Regal Icon of Walt Disney World Resort

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — It inspires awe and wonderment. Its fairy-tale finesse captures the imagination of millions of Disney guests every year. Lights bathe it in rainbow hues, and Tinker Bell flies gracefully from its turrets. Hundreds of fireworks perform a celebratory dance above it. Once, it was transformed into a giant pink birthday confection.

Since its storybook spires first graced the Florida sky in 1971, Cinderella Castle has been the magical centerpiece of Walt Disney World Resort.

From its subtle color palette to rich gold detail, Cinderella Castle exudes fairy-tale charm. In the castle breezeway, more than 300,000 pieces of colored Italian glass and enamel make up the five-panel mosaic tiles that tell the rags-to-riches story of Cinderella. A sculpted coat of arms and a clock of ancient styling add authenticity.

Cinderella Castle, the regal icon of Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World Resort, radiates magic inside and out with its salute to medieval European styles from 13th century French fortresses to late Renaissance palaces.

Before designing the castle, Walt Disney Imagineers studied famous European palaces and castles, including Fontainebleau, Versailles, and the chateaus of Chenonceau, Chambord and Chaumant. Chief designer Herb Ryman also turned to the original designs for the 1950 film, "Cinderella," prepared by the Disney animation staff.

Imagineer and master color stylist John Hench carefully selected castle colors that would complement, not compete with, the strong blue skies of central Florida. Seven shades of gray were used for trim pieces, and the subtle color palette has since been warmed to let the castle stand out even more against its brilliant natural backdrop.

Cinderella Castle Fun Facts

- **Towering Height:** Cinderella Castle soars 189 feet into the sky and can be seen from two miles away.
- **Architectural "Wows":** The castle boasts 18 towers and its spires are topped with sparkling gold-painted finials.
- **Mosaic Masterpiece:** Five tile mosaics designed by Imagineer Dorothea Redmond tell the story of Cinderella just inside the Castle Breezeway. Each of the panel tile mosaics is 15 feet high and 10 feet wide.
- **Wishing on a Star:** The nighttime fireworks extravaganza "Wishes" explodes in a dazzling display of color each evening, with sage Jiminy Cricket narrating to classic Disney film tunes.
- **Flight of the Fairy:** Tinker Bell, the mischievous pixie of "Peter Pan," wows guests as she "flies" from a castle turret each evening during "Wishes."
- **"A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes":** As part of "The Year of a Million Dreams Celebration" through 2008, Imagineers built a fourth-floor castle suite with centuries-old charm and modern amenities. During the celebration, a Walt Disney World guest and up to five members of his or her party were selected randomly to experience a dream-come-true overnight stay in the suite.
- **Disney Family Salute:** The sculpted coat of arms posted over the castle front and rear entrances belongs to the Disney family.
- **Clock Oddity:** The numbers on the face of the clock on the front of Cinderella Castle all are Roman numerals except for the number "IV," which instead consists of four straight lines. Why? Ancient Romans used "IV" interchangeably with "IIII" (which can be seen above one of the Coliseum's doors), and it's easier to

differentiate “IIII” from the number “6” or “VI” on a clock or sundial.

- **Castle Confection:** In 1996-97, to celebrate Walt Disney World’s 25th anniversary, the castle was transformed into a huge “cake” with large decorations and more than 400 gallons of pink paint.
- **Royal Feast:** Cinderella’s Royal Table, featuring one of the most popular Disney character dining experiences, is located upstairs inside the castle. Formerly known as King Stefan’s Banquet Hall (with a nod to the father of Sleeping Beauty), the restaurant was renamed in 1997.
- **Makeover Magic:** Inside the castle breezeway, fairy godmothers-in-training at Bibbidi Bobbidi Boutique perform magical makeovers on kids, ages 3-12, eager to become a Disney Diva or a Pop Princess. A special Knight Package is also available.
- **Fairytale Garden Fun:** In the shadow of the castle, Belle of “Beauty and the Beast” gathers guests for story time in the Fairytale Garden several times daily.
- **Sincerest Form of Flattery:** Cinderella Castle at Tokyo Disneyland features an exterior that replicates the one at Walt Disney World Resort. Instead of housing a restaurant, the Tokyo castle interior features the Cinderella Castle Mystery Tour attraction.