Walt Disney World News

From Safaris to Learn to Surf, Lunch with an Imagineer or Animal Expert, Premium Experiences Deliver Fun Options for Walt Disney World Resort Guests

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – Been there, done that? Maybe, but did you know that inside Walt Disney World Resort lies a whole other Walt Disney World Resort? One in which you can…

- “Hang 10? and learn to surf
- Set sail on a pirate adventure for buried treasure
- Get nose to, well, bottlenose with Bottlenose dolphins
- Be pampered in a “couples massage”
- Dine with an actual Disney Imagineer or Disney animal care specialist

Beyond traditional theme park-going, these options and more are available to guests booking premium, add-on experiences at Walt Disney World Resort. Among a whole “world” of choices (prices exclude tax except where indicated):

1. Dine with Animal Specialists . . .New “Untamed” Dining Adventure Transports Disney Guests to Africa

An all-new dining experience hosted by a Disney animal specialist is now available to guests at Sanaa at Kidani Village, located in Disney’s Animal Kingdom Lodge. Over lunch, an animal expert reveals facts and myths about wildlife as guests immerse themselves in the culture and flavors of Africa. There’s no more perfect setting, as Sanaa’s windows frame grazing zebra and giraffes, Ankole Cattle and White-Bearded Wildebeest. The experience accommodates up to 12 guests, offering an intimate, fun insider’s view, with plenty of time for questions.

Adding flavor to the experience, a 4-course African-inspired lunch made in Sanaa’s tandoor ovens boasts many delicacies, such as warm naan bread, savory dips, slow-cooked meats, unusual sweets and more. After dessert, diners venture to a savanna lookout, to observe and learn more about the exotic animals grazing the landscape.

The Animal Specialist experience takes place every Wednesday from 12-1:45 p.m. Cost is $49, $29 ages 3 to 9 (special kid’s menu). The price includes the gratuity plus a $5 contribution to Disney’s Worldwide Conservation Fund . To make a reservation, call 407-938-6922, option 3 or stop by Disney’s Animal Kingdom Lodge concierge. Reservations are also available online at http://disneyworld.disney.go.com/reservations/dining/ or by calling 407-WDW-DINE (939-3463) up to 180 days prior to the experience.

2. Wild Africa Trek

In the newest premium experience, gear up and brace for a safari unlike any other this side of Africa. Guests on **Wild Africa Trek** crouch along trails, traverse swaying footbridges above crocs and hippos and delve deep into the jungly heart of Disney’s Animal Kingdom. Several times daily, expert guides lead small groups of adventurers on excursions across untracked areas of the park. Extended time is spent observing and learning about the animals while on foot or while over-landing in customized safari vehicles. Trekkers close out their experience at a serene overlook above a wildlife-filled savanna while savoring Africa-inspired food and beverage. Reservations for Wild Africa Trek (ages 8 and up) can be arranged by calling 407/WDW-TOUR. The experience starts at $189 per person.

Ask about seasonal specials. More information: Disneyworld.com/disneyafricatrek.

3. Segway Your Way to Fun!

Walt Disney World guests can experience a Segway X2 Personal Transporter for themselves, firsthand, on **Wilderness Back Trail Adventures.** The two-hour Segway tour lets guests explore the natural beauty of the Florida landscape in and around Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort & Campground. Guests can call 407/WDW-TOUR for more information or reservations.

4. Totally Tubular! Learn to Surf

Unschooled in the fine art of surfing? Novices can catch a wave and master the rush of shooting the curls at Disney's Typhoon Lagoon water park. Every 90 seconds, the world's largest wave machine blasts out walls of surf that can tower up to six feet high. Craig Carroll's Cocoa Beach Surf School invites guests to learn from professional surfers how to cut, carve and "hang 10." The 2.5-hour program is available by reservation for $150 on select mornings prior to regular park hours. Guests (ages 8 and older) can call 407/WDW-PLAY for more information.

5. Go "Grand." Luxury Yacht Sets Sail on Seven Seas Lagoon and Bay Lake

Grand 1, the most luxurious watercraft at Walt Disney World Resort, offers a **pampered VIP boating experience** on the waters of Seven Seas Lagoon and Bay Lake just outside Magic Kingdom. A personal captain and deckhand launch the 52-foot Sea Ray yacht from the marina at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa.

Morning and afternoon excursions on the Grand 1 offer guests a spectacular view of Magic Kingdom, Disney's Wedding Pavilion and several Walt Disney World resorts. For an elegant evening voyage, romantic music sets the mood as the sun sets over the gabled roofs of the Grand Floridian. On select nights, cruisers can view "Wishes," a magnificent fireworks display above Magic Kingdom. Those on board are treated to synchronized audio from the show.

For the ultimate cruise, the Grand Floridian private-dining staff can prepare anything from an evening snack to a gourmet five-course meal with fine wine pairings. A private-service butler can also cater to guests' every need.

As many as 18 people can sail for $553 per hour, including charter fee, boat captain and deckhand. Dining service and private butler are available for additional fees.

Reservations for the Grand 1 can be made by calling 407/WDW-TOUR.

6. Take a Sunrise Safari at Disney's Animal Kingdom

Picture the morning sun rising in the Florida sky, illuminating a landscape rich with animals catching the first light of day. And you have a front-row seat. Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge invites Kilimanjaro Club Level guests to an amazing two-hour experience. During an approximately 45-minute safari, guests will have the opportunity to learn more about animal care, the grounds of the theme park and the operation. Included in the cost of the tour is a lavish breakfast buffet in the park, at the Pizzafari Restaurant.

The **Sunrise Safari** is offered Sundays and Thursdays at 7:00 a.m. Cost is $65 adult, $32.50 child (ages 3-9). Call 407/WDW-TOUR.

7. Afternoon Game Drive Paired with Dinner at Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge

Savannas surrounding Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge offer up a panorama of wildlife as creatures large and small roam the grasses, forage for food and play in harmony. The grounds are home to approximately 200 mammals and exotic birds representing a cross-section of the African palette – bongo, greater kudu, zebra, wildebeest, impala, African spoonbills and Eastern white pelicans, to name a few.

Just before sunset, eager adventurers gather outside the lodge with a guide for a thrilling game-viewing safari. Up to 12 persons can board a specially designed vehicle for a bird's-eye view of a typical North African safari.

Safari-goers are wide-eyed as many animals move within feet of the vehicle. Cameras and videos are poised to capture the Africa-like wonders.

The second part of the journey leads to the resort's signature restaurant, Jiko-The Cooking Place, where a savory South African feast awaits safari-goers. Flavors of Africa fill the air in a memorable multi-course meal served family-style and blending regional spices and grains. Popular South African wines are paired with each course, which includes a sweet display of desserts.

The **Wanyama Safari** is offered to guests (age 8 and up) staying at Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge and Disney's Animal Kingdom Villas, seven days a week at 4 p.m. For reservations, guests can call 407/938-4755, or visit the concierge desk at Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge upon check-in.

8. Dine with an Imagineer

Here's a one-of-a-kind opportunity to **dine with a real-life Disney Imagineer** and enjoy engaging behind-the-scenes conversation over a delectable lunch at the chic Bamboo Room of the Hollywood Brown Derby at Disney's Hollywood Studios theme park. Up to 10 guests join in stimulating discussion with one of the incredible creative artists who bring the magic to Walt Disney World attractions and resort hotels. Learn from these talented men or women what it's like working in the most magical place in the world. Guests feast on a four-course meal and will receive a souvenir plate designed exclusively for this experience that can be personalized by the Imagineer. Price is $64.96 per guest ages 10 and older, $37.27 ages 3-9, tax included. Guests can also ask about dinner with an Imagineer at Flying Fish Café at Disney's Boardwalk Resort, which offers the same fascinating peek "under the curtain" at Disney's creative process while being treated to a tantalizing four-course meal. Cost is $105.83 per guest ages 10 and older, $74.70 ages 3-9, including tax. Call 407/WDW-DINE for more information and reservations.

9. Grand Pirate Adventure: Little buccaneers sail the high seas to exotic "Ports of Call" in search of treasure.

Donning pirate garb, kids venture on foot and by sea in search of buried treasure during **Disney's Pirate Adventure,** which departs from Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa marina and sails the waters of Seven Seas Lagoon and Bay Lake. Young and eager adventurers visit many exotic "ports of call," following clues to help lead them to the treasure. During the voyage, children (ages 4-12) enjoy a reading of "The Legend of Gasparilla" (a real Florida pirate), lunch and other surprises. The Pirate Adventure happens Mondays through Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. It is one of four resort-based pirate adventures available for guests. Cost is $34.00 per child. Call 407/WDW-PLAY.

10. Pirates and Pals Fireworks Voyage

Ahoy me hearties, ye be setting sail for fun and adventure with Captain Hook and Mr. Smee on this adventure. Departing from Disney's Contemporary Resort, mateys receive a true buccaneer's welcome as they chow down on hearty pirate grub and grog before setting sail on an unforgettable moonlight voyage around Seven Seas Lagoon. Play Disney trivia games, sing songs and sea chanteys and savor "Wishes" fireworks lighting the night sky above Cinderella Castle. On the sail home, your pirate hosts enchant you with the tale of Peter Pan, plus more trivia questions and special prizes. Once tied up, the voyage concludes with a visit from a very special guest. **Pirates and Pals Fireworks Voyage** is scheduled Fridays through Mondays. Cost is $53.99 adults, $30.99 children ages 3-9. Call 407/WDW-PLAY.

11. High-Speed Adventure Around Walt Disney World Speedway

The **Richard Petty Driving Experience** at Walt Disney World Speedway is the place of dreams, offering race fans and adventure-seekers the ultimate thrill of riding in or driving a race car around the one-mile tri-oval Walt Disney World Speedway. Guests are offered several ride and drive experiences as they follow their dream of leaving the grandstands and climbing into a racecar, just like The King himself.

- **Ride-Along Program**: A 3-lap thrill ride as a passenger at a top speed of 145 mph.
- **Rookie Experience**: A 3-hour program that includes eight laps of driving thrills.

- **King's Experience**: Features 18 laps of driving divided into one 8-lap session and one 10-lap session.

Beyond these core options available to Walt Disney World guests, riders with an insatiable "need for speed" can turn up the thrills with these premium experiences:

- **Experience of a Lifetime.** Talk about pulse-pumping, thrill-seekers choosing this Petty track will experience 30 laps of white-knuckle, heart-pounding speed in a NASCAR race car. The "Experience" is divided into three 10-lap driving segments and between each session, drivers will receive one-on-one feedback from the Pit Road instructor. Priced from $1,299 per person.
- **Speedway Challenge.** Imagine the high-octane rush of this one-of-a-kind driving program. This 50-lap program consists of five 10-lap sessions as well as a Ride-Along, shop tour with tech talk and lunch with the instructor and crew chief. Priced at $2,099 per person.

The sessions at Walt Disney World Speedway run daily. Driving experiences are available for those at least 18 years of age with a valid driver's license and the ability to drive a vehicle equipped with a standard transmission. Fans at least 14 years of age can participate in the Ride-Along Program with proof of identification.

For information or reservations, visit drivepetty.com or call 800/BE-PETTY.

12. Exotic wheels and high-speed thrills

Starting Jan. 16, 2012, get behind the wheel of a "supercar" by Ferrari, Lamborghini, Audi or Porsche, and fly down a track specifically designed to experience some of the world's finest automobiles and their awe-inspiring acceleration, speed and handling. The adrenaline-pumping experience starts at $169 for six laps around the "Exotics" course; a ride-along experience with a professional driver at the wheel is available for $99. It's all part of the Richard Petty Driving Experience at Walt Disney World Speedway. Phone toll free 1-855-822-0149 or exoticdriving.com

13. The Couple that 'Spas' Together…..

What's more enjoyable or relaxing than a luxurious spa treatment? Imagine sharing it with that special someone. Did you know The Spa at Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort features a **"couples room"** where guests can enjoy specialized spa treatments – such as massages and facials – with the one they love? For information about spa treatments, call 407/827-4455.

14. Commune with Dolphins

Imagine getting up close and personal in the water with Atlantic Bottlenose dolphins. The Seas with Nemo & Friends pavilion invites guests on a three-hour, behind-the-scenes experience aimed at providing a keener understanding and heightened appreciation for these marvelous creatures. The 30-minute dolphin interaction takes place in waist-deep waters (maximum 8 guests per day) so guests don't need to be SCUBA certified or even know how to swim. Signups for "**Disney's Dolphins in Depth**" learn about how Disney cares for the dolphins each day, how researchers study and train them backstage, what issues are affecting marine life worldwide – and what we can do about it. Cost is $194 per person.

Theme park admission is not required or included in this experience. Call 407/WDW-PLAY.

Want more? Learn to design like a Walt Disney World Resort Florist (Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort)….get made over in full buccaneer regalia at The Pirate's League (Magic Kingdom)….Tea anyone? Try the Wonderland Tea Party for Children (Disney's Grand Floridian Resort)…..Treat your child to a first haircut at the Harmony Barber Shop (Magic Kingdom) which comes with its own Barber Shop Quartet (never know when they will stop by)….book a trail ride (Disney's Ft. Wilderness Resort and Campground) or a romantic horse-drawn carriage excursion (Ft. Wilderness or Disney's Port Orleans Resort)…

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