Walt Disney World News

What’s New, What’s Next in Walt Disney World Dining

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla – Some of the newest menu items and dining spots, and a look ahead:

- **Katsura Grill** at the Japan pavilion in **Epcot World Showcase** recently opened, replacing the Yakitori House. The exterior is inspired by the strolling gardens at the historic Katsura Imperial Villa outside Kyoto, Japan, established in the 1600s and one of Japan’s cultural treasures. Sit outdoors or inside and enjoy Asian flavors from sushi to Japanese curry, teriyaki and udon noodles, edamame, ramen noodle salad and *Okonomiyaki*, a Japanese pancake made with veggies and topped with a tangy sauce. A more American taste is the panko-breaded chicken sandwich. Sip a Kirin beer, plum wine or hot or cold sake and enjoy the gardens.
- Also at **Epcot World Showcase**, **San Angel Inn** in the Mexico pavilion has a new look, with white linens and new china adding a casual elegance to the classic restaurant. Romantic, relaxing, sophisticated, but not stuffy you can sip a flight of tequilas or signature margarita (blood orange or wild passion fruit are delicious) as you peruse the menu. Appetizers include *tlacoyos de chilorio*, savory corn cakes topped with refried beans, pork, queso fresco, sour cream and green tomatillo sauce; and *tacos de filete*, grilled tenderloin on a soft flour tortilla with chipotle pepper sauce, scallions and avocados. Among new entrées are classic *ensalada César*; pan-seared tilapia with *huitlacoche* (sometimes called the “Mexican corn truffle”); *carne asada a la Tampiqueña*, grilled tenderloin with cheese enchilada, black refried beans, red bell pepper, onion, Mexican rice and guacamole; and pork tenderloin with a sauce of pumpkin, chiles and almond.
- **How about a waffle sandwich?** “We saw waffle sandwiches in California and decided they’d be a perfect fit for the Magic Kingdom,” says Executive Chef Robert Adams. “Guest love them!” Crisp and light, the fresh, hot waffles at **Sleepy Hollow in Liberty Square** are the perfect packaging for generous fillings – starting with the breakfast creation, a prosciutto egg omelet waffle sandwich. ‘
- On to lunch, with combos such as the fried chicken with an Asian kick, creamy slaw and peppery arugula or Nutella, the gooey, Italian hazelnut-chocolate spread, folded into the waffles with strawberries.
- **Or a designer dog . . .** At **Disney’s Hollywood Studios**, check out the dog topped with mac ‘n cheese and a drizzle of truffle oil. Or the one with barbecued pork and slaw (a version is also served at Downtown Disney Marketplace). Maybe the burrito dog with lettuce, tomato, cheddar, jalapeños and sour cream. In the **Magic Kingdom**, Casey’s Corner on Main Street, U.S.A., serves the classic Chicago-style dog topped with tomato slices, dill pickle, relish and banana peppers. The popular eatery has its version of the ‘cue dog with pulled pork, slaw and barbecue sauce. Over in Tomorrowland at the Lunching Pad, order a Philly cheese steak hot dog topped with beef, onions, peppers and cheese sauce. Or the taco dog with ground beef, lettuce, cheese, salsa and sour cream.

- **Queen Victoria’s Room** . . . is the latest addition at **Victoria & Albert’s** at **Disney’s Grand Floridian Resort & Spa**. Behind closed doors, it’s different from V&A’s elegant main dining room; the staff under the direction of maitre d’ Israel Perez expertly revives the European art of tableside finishes for each dish. Every single dish has last-minute finishes before diners. With just four tables, you’re encouraged to savor each bite – and even to take a walk around the Grand Floridian between dinner and dessert if you choose. Cost for dining in the Queen Victoria’s Room is $200; add wine pairings for $95. For reservations, call 407-939-3862. A jacket is required for men. Valet parking is complimentary—and you car will be waiting at evening’s end.
- **Lunch with the experts** . . . There’s a personal way to learn about the animals on the savanna at Disney’s Animal Kingdom Lodge, plus enjoy a delicious African-inspired lunch at Sanaa at Kidani Village. With a view out the restaurant window onto the savanna, one of the resort’s animal specialists joins a small group (no

more than 12) around the table for **“Dine with an Animal Specialist”** and a fun insider’s view, with time for lots of questions. A giraffe gallops by; a zebra grazes unaware while guests enjoy a four-course lunch. The Animal Specialist experience is every Wednesday from 11:30 a.m.-1:15 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 up to 180 days prior to visiting. If you’re more interested in Disney animation, you can have lunch with one or two Disney animators in a private room at the **Hollywood Brown Derby Restaurant** at Disney’s Hollywood Studios. **“Lunch with an Animator”** includes a four-course lunch and an autographed, decorative plate. Lunch is 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. on select weekdays for groups of two to 10. Price is $60.99, $34.99 ages 3 to 11. Reservations can be booked up to 30 days in advance by calling 407-WDW-DINE.

Coming Soon

- **Gusto**, a new wine bar in Tutto Italia in the Italy pavilion at **Epcot World Showcase**, offers more than 200 wines, including grappa; beers imported from Italy; Italian specialty drinks; coffee drinks, and a small-plate menu.
- **Landscape of Flavors** at **Disney’s Art of Animation Resort**. Opening May 31, 2012, the food court at the newest Disney resort features “better-for-you” options at five mini shops serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. There’s a big focus on beverages, too. Fresh fruit smoothies are made to order, ditto for lemonade and pomegranate limeade. They’re stocking organic teas, beer (including gluten free), wine, coffee and juices. Half bottles of wine are paired with cuisine from the food shops.
- **Epcot International Food & Wine Festival . . .** Sept. 28-Nov. 11 is the 17th annual extravaganza, a one-of-a kind festival that serves up international cuisine, culture and entertainment from six continents, with more than 25 international marketplaces featuring tapas-sized portions paired with beer, wine and inventive new cocktails. Also cooking demos and dining events, mixology classes and wine tastings, and live musical performances nightly. The festival attracts a diverse audience – from wine connoisseurs and epicures to novices wishing to boost their culinary IQs.
- **Construction underway** . . . on the New Fantasyland in the Magic Kingdom, where Beast’s castle will stand majestically upon a hill. Cross over a stone bridge to Be Our Guest Restaurant with seating for up to 550 guests with “great food fast” service by day and table service dining for dinner, opening in time for the “Holidays.”

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