Walt Disney World News

# Fairytale Elegance, French-Inspired Cuisine Celebrated At Be Our Guest Restaurant in New Fantasyland

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – Be Our Guest Restaurant in New Fantasyland magically takes Magic Kingdom diners into the splendor, elegance and fairytale charm of Disney's "Beauty and the Beast," with a setting right out of the classic animated feature film: the magnificent castle of The Beast, where guests dine in three richly appointed rooms that bring the story to life.

"This is a whole new level of theming for a Disney restaurant," said Maribeth Bisienere, vice president of Food & Beverage and Merchandise Operations Integration for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts. "More than ever, we're using storytelling and creativity as we develop our menus."

Be Our Guest Restaurant is the next step in the evolution of creating delightful dining experiences for Disney theme park guests, she added.

## The Setting

The storytelling starts with a forbidding castle situated in the hills above the Fantasyland "countryside." Guests pass through the ruins of an old gateway to a stone bridge and through massive wrought-iron gates flanked by six beastly figures – the first of many design elements that reinforce the story of the Beast's transformation.

The restaurant's spacious interior re-creates the look of the film in great detail. Lunch guests enter through the **Armor Hallway**, where six suits of armor stand along the wall (listen closely for an occasional whisper from the metal figures), and into the **Beast's Parlor** to place lunch orders on five guest-activated terminals. For dinner, guests enter directly into the majestic **Ballroom** for table service needs.

There are three dining rooms: the stately **Ballroom**, the forbidden, dramatic **West Wing** and the delicate **Rose Gallery**.

The Ballroom conveys the elegance of the film's memorable scene in which Belle and the Beast whirled around a dance floor. A coffered, 20-foot ceiling painted with fluffy clouds and cherubs, sparkling chandeliers and a terrazzo floor sets the scene. At the far end of the room, 18-foot-tall arched windows look out to the French countryside, where a light "snow" falls through the starry sky, adding a touch of magic.

The "forbidden" West Wing dining room is darker and more mysterious, with the glass bell jar containing the enchanted rose slowly dropping petals as time runs out for the beast. Over the fireplace, a portrait of the young prince in human form is slashed by the claws of the beast. As lightning flashes, the image in the portrait transforms, changing from prince to Beast.

The Rose Gallery dining room features a large music box centerpiece nearly 7 feet tall with Belle and the Beast slowly twirling atop. Along the walls are paintings and tapestries that celebrate the characters from the story, with four of the tapestries inspired by background art from the film. Throughout the room, decorative roses are featured, including intricate tile mosaics on the floor.

Music is an important element throughout the restaurant, with musical themes from the film adding to the ambience.

In the Ballroom, guests will hear music from the film recorded by a 50-piece orchestra. IIn the adjacent Rose Gallery, special music box arrangements were recorded of the same pieces heard in the Ballroom, in perfect synchrony, so that guests moving from room to room will hear the same tune transformed from one style to another. In the West Wing, a somber, melancholy arrangement creates yet another mood.

The restaurant seats 546 for lunch and 340 for dinner (when the Rose Gallery is closed).

## The Cuisine

About four years ago, the Disney Food & Beverage team started creating a menu to match the theatrics. A team of Disney chefs, including longtime Disney Chef Roland Muller, a native of Alsace, France, developed the French-inspired dishes, creating both a quick-service menu for lunch and more elegant table-service menu for dinner.

“Our role is to finish the story,” said Walt Disney World Executive Chef Lenny DeGeorge. He describes lunch as more of a French bistro, with dishes such as a classic Croque Monsieur (ham, Gruyere cheese and béchamel), braised pork *coq au vin* style, vegetable quiche and a tuna Niçoise salad.

Guests order at touch-screen devices and head for tables where high-tech touches ensure that food quickly is delivered to each table.

“We wanted dishes that are recognizable, but also movie-themed,” said DeGeorge. “Everything is fresh, made to order, and for lunch we are hoping for the bustling kind of energy like the movie scene in the dining room.”

Dinner is a more elegant affair with starters such as mussels Provençal, French onion soup and charcuterie (cured meats with cornichons, pickled onions and toasted whole-grain bread). Entrées pay homage to a castle feast in the 1400s with whole roasted hen, thyme-scented pork rack chop, and pan-seared salmon with leek fondue and saffron potatoes.  Gourmet cupcakes – strawberry cream cheese, triple chocolate and lemon meringue — and mousse-filled cream puffs are finished tableside.

And just for dinner, select wines and beers will be offered that complement the French-inspired cuisine.

“As part of the overall theming, we wanted to offer wine that enhances the guest experience and complement the French-inspired cuisine,” says Stuart McGuire, beverage director, Walt Disney Parks and Resorts.  ”The wines focus primarily on France’s famous wine growing regions including Champagne, Alsace, Loire, Rhone, Burgundy and Bordeaux.

“We’ll also offer the leading French beer, Kronenbourg 1664,” says McGuire. “And, staying in the general region, we’ll also offer Belgian beers.”

*L’amour Vrai*, French for “true love,” is a souvenir, castle-themed goblet with one of two signature non-alcoholic drinks: an all-natural fruit juice punch and wild berry extract sweetened with organic cane juice and topped with lemon-lime foam, or an all-natural pure squeezed lemonade sweetened with organic cane juice and topped with wildberry foam.

## Just for Kids

For lunch, the kids’ menu includes a grilled carved turkey sandwich, braised pork with sautéed green beans and potato-vegetable mash, turkey meatloaf (shaped like Mickey Mouse) and seared mahi mahi. Dinner is grilled steak, fish or chicken breast with fresh vegetables.

“We’re even making the ketchup from scratch using carrots,” said DeGeorge. “And the meatloaf also has vegetables, so kids are getting their vegetables and don’t even realize it.”

## ‘Every Detail Part of Story’

Servers complete the picture, dressed in a style inspired by European fashions from the 1400s to the 1600s: a royal purple embroidered doublet, or vest, over a shirt with knickers that reach just below the knee. For evening service, a jabot or ruffle, buttoned at the throat, is added.

“From the moment they cross the bridge into the castle, it’s all about immersing our guests in the dining experience,” says Bisienere.  “Every detail is part of the story.”

To make a reservation, guests can call (407) WDW-DINE or book online at www.disneyworld.com/dine. On the Disney Dining Plan, Be Our Guest Restaurant is on one QSR entitlement for lunch or one TSR entitlement for dinner.

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**BE OUR GUEST: 11-5-12:kb**