Walt Disney World News

Disney Season: Spring 2013

Monstrous Topiaries, Athletic Events and Weekly Surprises Spring to Life at Walt Disney World Resort in 2013

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – Full of special occasions at the Vacation Kingdom, Spring 2013 celebrates with Limited Time Magic, the 20th anniversary Walt Disney World Marathon, 5th anniversary Disney's Princess Half Marathon and 20th Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival. January-April will also see the return of professional baseball to Champion Stadium, waterful fun at Disney's Water Parks and dreams coming true at Disney's Dreamers Academy.

Here's a look at what's in store…

Disney Parks Rolls Out the Unexpected in 2013 with Weekly Surprises, Delights – Each for a Limited Time Only

Beginning January 1, guests will find an extra sprinkle of pixie dust each week when they visit Walt Disney World and Disneyland resorts throughout the year.

While 2013 is already a momentous year for Disney Parks – with New Fantasyland as the largest expansion in Magic Kingdom history at Walt Disney World Resort and the first full year of a reimagined Disney California Adventure at Disneyland Resort – Disney plans Limited Time Magic: 52 weeks of magical experiences big and small that appear, then disappear as the next special surprise debuts.

Imagine an Independence Day celebration – only it lasts an entire week….Main Street mainstays the Dapper Dans rocking out with boy band hits in barbershop style….a Friday the 13th dance party with Disney villains that lasts to the 13th hour….a Valentine's Day in 2013 that becomes Valentine's *Week* with Disney castles blushing pink, surprise meet-and-greets with Disney princes and princesses, and candlelit dinners for couples in love.

These and many more special experiences to surprise and delight Disney Parks guests will roll out each week in 2013. Unique, magical, memory-filled – and each for a limited time only.

Disney officials noted that Limited Time Magic was inspired by the reality that many of life's most cherished memories are made during those special, but fleeting moments when families spend time together with shared experiences.

The experience of the week will be announced in a variety of ways including in-park, Disneyworld.com, Disneyland.com, Facebook, Twitter, and the Disney Parks Blog – adding to the element of surprise.

For more information about Limited Time Magic, guests should visit www.disneyparks.com.

20th Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival Promises Floral Fantasy and Topiary Triumphs from March 6 – May 19, 2013

The Fab Five are having a party, and everyone's invited to join the fun during the 20th Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival March 6-May 19, 2013 at Walt Disney World Resort. Colorful, whimsical topiaries of Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Goofy, Pluto and Donald Duck will welcome topiary Daisy to their Epcot front-entrance celebratory barbecue. The 14-foot-tall topiary Goofy will bobble an anniversary cake while Donald and Daisy play badminton, Mickey fires up the grill, Pluto swipes a link of hot dogs and Minnie chills out on a colorful blanket of blossoms.

And that's just the festival opener. New topiaries, gardens, children's play areas and interactive gardening seminars will set the stage for 75 days of festival fun as Disney's horticulture team revs up for its 20th year of beautiful blooms and creative whimsy.

For the first year ever, Mike and Sully from DisneyŸPixar "Monsters Inc." will join the festivities with their DisneyŸPixar "Monsters University" topiary on the walkway from Future World to the park's World Showcase. A new DisneyŸPixar "Cars" playground– Radiator Springs–brings favorite movie characters to life in topiary on the Test Track Walkway. And 2013?s Fawn's Butterfly House flits to life with hundreds of butterflies and eight fairy topiaries including Tinker Bell, Fawn, Vidia and Terrence.

The opening weekend Flower Power Concert Series at America Gardens Theatre will present fan favorite Micky Dolenz ("I'm a Believer") March 8-10. Other pop acts set to perform include Chubby Checker & the Wildcats, The Guess Who, Paul Revere & The Raiders and Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone.

More than 100 topiaries, 240 floating mini-gardens, dozens of flower towers and sweeping beds of multi-colored blooms will add floral splendor to the park landscape. Daily hands-on gardening seminars, HGTV celebrity presentations, and other Festival Center events will offer innovative ideas, design tips and gardening know-how to park guests.

For more information about the 20th Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival, call 407/W-DISNEY (934-7639). The festival, including all gardening programs and exhibits, is included in regular Epcot admission.

20th Anniversary Walt Disney World Marathon Weekend Marks the Occasion with Sold-Out Events

More than 55,000 runners from throughout the United States and beyond will lace up their running shoes and head to Walt Disney World Resort for the sold-out Walt Disney World Marathon Weekend presented by Cigna, Jan. 10-13. Several celebrities including Drew Cary ('The Price is Right,') Sean Astin ('Goonies' and 'The Lord of the Rings,') and Alison Sweeney ('The Biggest Loser,') will join the celebration as runDisney marks the 20th anniversary of the Walt Disney World Marathon.

To mark two decades of the Walt Disney World Marathon, runners will enjoy several unique features, including a special 20th anniversary medal, course enhancements taking runners onto the track at Walt Disney World Speedway and through ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex, a Mile 20 spectacular featuring special entertainment

and a new post-race party at Downtown Disney.

Marathon weekend features runDisney Kids' Races, a Family Fun Run 5K on Friday, the Half Marathon on Saturday and the Marathon on Sunday. Thousands of runners will run Goofy's Race and a Half Challenge, which involves running the Half Marathon and the full Marathon – 39.3 miles! The Health and Fitness Expo runs throughout the weekend at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex and features the latest in running technology and fashion, as well as renowned running experts like Jeff Galloway, the official training consultant for runDisney. For more information, visit rundisney.com.

Pro Soccer Classic Among Events for New Soccer Spring Training Initiative

Beginning Feb. 9, 2013, eight professional soccer teams, including six MLS teams, will converge on Central Florida to take part in the Walt Disney World Pro Soccer Classic, culminating with the championship game on Feb. 23 at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex.

The Disney Pro Soccer Classic is the marquee event of Central Florida's Soccer Spring Training initiative, joining events such as a college soccer combine, professional trials and coaches academy. Soccer Spring Training was created by the Central Florida Sports Commission to boost interest in soccer throughout the region and develop Orlando as the prime destination for training and competition for professional soccer clubs.

The Disney Pro Soccer Classic is just one of more than a dozen prestigious soccer events held at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex, which is the leading multi-sports venue in the nation and the official preseason training home of the AS Roma Football Club. Among the most high-profile soccer events at ESPN Wide World of Sports are Disney's Soccer Showcase, the Disney Cup International and the MAAC Men's Soccer Championships.

runDisney Princesses Celebrate Five Years

A royal celebration is planned for the 5th anniversary Disney's Princess Half Marathon Weekend at Walt Disney World Resort, Feb. 22-24. Runners completing the 13.1 mile course though the Magic Kingdom and Epcot will be awarded a special commemorative 5th anniversary medal fit for a princess.

Disney's Princess Half Marathon Weekend is one of the largest women-specific running events in the country and focuses on healthy active lifestyles for women and young girls. After nearly 7,500 runners ran the inaugural 2009 event, the popularity had grown considerably with more than 19,000 competing in 2012, and more than 20,000 runners expected for 2013.

Weekend events include the Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse Royal Family 5K and runDisney Kids' Races on Saturday, followed by the Half Marathon on Sunday. The weekend also includes the Disney Fit for a Princess at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex, featuring the latest running apparel and equipment, as well as a speaker series involving running experts like Jeff Galloway, the official training consultant for runDisney. For more information, visit rundisney.com.

Now Batting: Atlanta Braves Spring Training

Major League Baseball's Atlanta Braves return to ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in February 2013 for their 16th season of spring training at Walt Disney World Resort, including a schedule of "Grapefruit League" games in March at 9,500-seat Champion Stadium. For more information, guests can visit espnwwos.com or call 407/WDW-

GAME.

Dreams Come True for High School Students

The sixth annual Disney's Dreamers Academy with Steve Harvey and Essence Magazine takes place at Walt Disney World Resort March 7-10, 2013. During the event, 100 high school students from across the nation are immersed in a career-inspiration program that includes motivational seminars, networking events, hands-on creative experiences shared with entertainment experts, motivational speakers and business professionals who encourage them to succeed and follow their dreams at Walt Disney World Resort. More information is available at disneysdreamersacademy.com.

Spring and Splash into Fun at Disney's Water Parks

Walt Disney World Resort guests visiting in spring 2013 can get a head start on summer at two distinct water park paradises.

Guests visiting Disney's Blizzard Beach will discover a melting wonderland where a freak snowstorm hit Florida. Icicles, ski gear and steep slopes grace the ski resort landscape, home to some of the most thrilling water rides in the United States.

Disney's Typhoon Lagoon treats guests to a water park escape to a tropical paradise left behind by a storm. Surfboards, fishing gear, boats, including the iconic shrimp boat, Ms. Tilly, once strewn about by a typhoon, adds to the ambiance.

For the most up-to-date park hours, please visit disneyworld.com/waterparks.

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