

12 Quiet Corners of Walt Disney World Theme Parks Let Guests Relax, Meditate, Smell the Roses

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – You can take a safari ride on the wild side across an African savanna, battle space aliens with a laser gun, “hang glide” over Yosemite National Park and narrowly escape Darth Vader’s wrath — all during action-packed visits to Walt Disney World theme parks. And if you need a place to stop and recharge in the midst of all that high-energy fun, Disney offers a dozen quiet oases where you can chill out, regroup and even meditate if the spirit moves you.

After the high adventure of a Kilimanjaro Safaris tour at Disney’s Animal Kingdom, families can wind down on the quiet Discovery Island Trails that feature animal habitats surrounding the park’s iconic Tree of Life.

Quick-draw laser shooters who’ve saved the universe at Buzz Lightyear’s Space Ranger Spin in Magic Kingdom can ease back to Earth by stopping at the Cinderella Wishing Well near Cinderella Castle and taking in the sights while making a special wish. Don’t miss the photo op.

At Epcot, after the thrill of flying high on Soarin’, guests can kick back for a leisurely Living with the Land boat ride through the lush greenhouses of The Land pavilion, where produce is grown and fish are farmed for Epcot restaurants.

Disney’s Hollywood Studios may be packed from one end to the other with movie-magic thrills, but a respite beckons inside Walt Disney: One Man’s Dream, where guests can set their own leisurely pace for a self-guided walking tour past museum-quality displays. A 15-minute film about Walt Disney in a cozy theater completes your rejuvenation.

Seek out these other quiet corners of Walt Disney World theme parks.

At Magic Kingdom:

Tom Sawyer Island- Hop a raft from the splash and thunder of Frontierland. Children can explore the “woods,” dark caves and mystery mines. Adults enjoy going along for the stroll. Huck Finn never had it so good!

Tomorrowland Transit Authority – Board the oh-so-quiet PeopleMover for a long, relaxing ride through Tomorrowland. The high-rail course gently whisks you through a Space Mountain and Buzz Lightyear viewing area and offers expansive views of the park.

At Epcot:

United Kingdom courtyard – Discover a garden filled with blooms and dotted with benches along cobblestone walkways where you can sit a spell and take in the calm behind rows of bustling shops. Fans of British rock bands should time their visit to performances of the “British Revolution.” Tykes can’t resist burning up energy in a small hedge maze by the gazebo stage.

China showcase – Enjoy the embrace of a zen-like ambiance in the tranquil garden complete with reflecting pond dotted with water lilies that fronts a 3-tier Temple of Heaven replica. Enjoy the wait for a “Reflections of China” 360-degree film presentation by browsing the House of Whispering Willows gallery exhibit and replica of the famous 1974 terracotta tomb-warrior excavation in Xi’an, China.

At Disney’s Hollywood Studios:

Beauty and the Beast—Live on Stage! Be our guest and let the Oscar-winning music lighten your spirit during this

long-running stage play based on the 1991 animated Disney film classic, “Beauty and the Beast.” Who doesn’t love a “tale as old as time?”

Echo Lake — Grab a light snack at Min and Bill’s Dockside Diner or an ice-cream cone at Dinosaur Gertie’s ice cream bar by the lake, then chill out on a bench and enjoy the cast of characters strolling by.

At Disney’s Animal Kingdom:

Wildlife Express Train – All aboard for a leisurely ride out of Africa and into the conservation-conscious Rafiki’s Planet Watch. Every 5-7 minutes, a train departs at a laid-back pace offering backstage views of some of the park’s animal facilities. At Conservation Station, enjoy a critter encounter and take time to explore whatever eco-cause inspires.

Oasis, Africa and Asia animal trails – Learn how to relax by watching the sloth that inhabits one of several Oasis habitats. Take in the majesty of Bengal tigers that roam among palace ruins on the Maharajah Jungle Trek in Asia. Grab a gazebo seat along the Pangani Forest Exploration Trail to spy comical meerkats standing sentry and breathe the plant-cleansed air and lose yourself in the setting.

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