

24th Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival Welcomes Spring with New Outdoor Kitchens, Topiaries and Entertainment

Festival Runs March 1-May 29, 2017

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – Celebrating 24 years when it kicks off March 1, 2017, the [Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival](#) will jump-start spring with blooms aplenty and gardens of edibles including toothsome morsels from the new Northern Bloom and The Berry Basket Outdoor Kitchens. A new, next-generation Belle topiary from “Beauty and the Beast” will debut in France, and a redesigned “Cars” play garden will introduce a colorful new character topiary sure to capture children’s imaginations.

The 90-day festival, open March 1-May 29, will feature an irresistible array of new gardens and character topiaries, popular entertainers and tasty food and drink offerings:

- Fresh, farm-market food and beverage flavors will debut at the new Northern Bloom and The Berry Basket Outdoor Kitchens that will join 13 returning [Outdoor Kitchens](#). Delectable chef-inspired bites from Northern Bloom include Seared Scallops with French Green Beans and Butter Potatoes with brown-butter vinaigrette and Applewood smoked bacon. A Maple Popcorn Shake for sipping can become an adult libation with the addition of some Crown Royal Maple Whiskey. At The Berry Basket, the Lamb Chop with Quinoa Salad and Blackberry Gastrique can pair with the new Founders Raubeaus Pure Raspberry Ale.
- The new generation of princess [topiaries](#) (Snow White, Anna and Elsa – the first to be designed and created with topiary facial features) will welcome a brand-new Belle topiary as fans remember her from the Oscar-winning Disney film, “Beauty and the Beast.” Located outside the France Pavilion with the Beast topiary, Belle will come to life with sculpted facial features and her yellow ball gown created with golden blooming Joseph’s Coat and Creeping Jenny plants.
- Another festival first will be a 6-foot-tall topiary of Figment, the feisty dragon mascot of the park’s Imagination! Pavilion, perched atop a 5-foot-diameter ball fashioned from yellow Joseph’s Coat.
- This year’s Epcot front-entrance topiary garden, “Welcome Spring Fun, Food and Flowers,” inspired by a vintage Walt Disney short film will spring to life with a floral-festooned maypole featuring Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Daisy and Pluto.
- The popular [Garden Rocks concert series](#) will expand to four days each week, with three concerts each Friday through Monday presenting pop musicians that span multiple genres over five decades. New acts this year: Simple Plan, Exposé and Berlin featuring Terri Nunn. Festival favorite Jon Secada kicks

off the series March 3 and 4, and Dennis DeYoung featuring the music of STYX wraps the long weekend March 5-6.

- New [Garden Rocks Dining Packages](#) will be available on select days at several Epcot restaurants. Guests can book packages at 407-WDW-DINE.
- Redesigned interactive play gardens will include the new “Cars”-themed Road to Florida 500 garden introducing the new “Cruz” character topiary from the June 2017 release of Disney•Pixar’s “Cars 3.” Music Garden Melodies play area will return with a new garden design, musical note topiary elements and climbing nets.
- During the first festival week, the [Festival Center](#) will open Wednesday, March 1 and each day through Sunday, March 5 with an entertaining mix of gardening seminars and DIY workshops. Throughout the rest of the festival, the center will be open each Friday through Sunday.

One of the popular Outdoor Kitchen gardens, Urban Farm Eats, will return with savory bites, sweet treats and ideas for planting produce that can inspire growing numbers of guests who want to learn to grow their own edibles.

“A lot of people, including young children, are serious foodies now, and they have lots of questions about gardening,” says Eric Darden, festival horticulture manager. “We’re getting more and more people in their 20s and 30s asking, ‘How can I grow this?’ I think we’ll be creating more gardeners because people can see what’s possible.”

The 2017 festival forecast will be sunny with colorful floral bursts by day and a nighttime landscape aglow with twinkling lights:

- Topiaries of Donald Duck and nephews Huey, Dewey and Louie will share Future World space with Chip ‘n’ Dale for a “Fresh Epcot” selfie and family photo opportunity.
- Anna and Elsa topiaries will return to the Norway Pavilion festival landscape in celebration of the park’s new [Frozen Ever After](#). Nearly 100 festival topiaries in all will include up to 70 character creations such as Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Lady and the Tramp, Simba, Timon and Tinker Bell.
- Guests can plan on special appearances related to Earth Day and other spring activities including: March 31-April 2 and April 28-30: Disney’s Animals, Science and Environment and Conservation Specialists from Disney’s Animal Kingdom; April 22-24: Celebrate Earth Day with featured personalities and activities; May 5-7: Discover the Bounty of Florida Agriculture by learning from Sunshine State specialists; May 12-14: Florida Federation of Garden Clubs presents floral designs that defy description.
- The Butterflies on the Go garden will return with the story of the Monarch’s epic journey across the continent and featuring butterflies emerging from their chrysalises.
- On the way to the new [Soarin’ Around the World](#) attraction in The Land Pavilion, guests can discover gardens featuring edible flowers, plants that benefit health and healing, and a pollinator paradise.

Dozens of Disney-crafted “flower towers” and beds of multi-colored blooms will transform the park’s landscape. At least 70,000 bedding plants will surround the Future World east and west lakes alone; on the water, 220 mini-gardens will be set afloat.

The festival, including all gardening programs, exhibits, concerts, complimentary English Tea Garden tours and special appearances, is included in regular Epcot admission.

For more information about the 24th Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival, call 407/W-DISNEY (934-7639) or visit www.epcotinspring.com.

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