

Pandora – The World of Avatar at Disney’s Animal Kingdom: Explore the Magic of Nature in a Distant World Unlike Any Other

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – [Pandora – The World of Avatar](#) immerses guests in a mystical world of massive floating mountains, bioluminescent rainforests and breathtaking new experiences. Fun and adventure await in this entirely new land found in [Disney’s Animal Kingdom](#) at Walt Disney World Resort. Here guests explore an awesome alien landscape, encounter a larger-than-life Na’vi shaman and soar over Pandora on the back of a fearsome mountain banshee.

The largest addition in the history of Disney’s Animal Kingdom, Pandora carries on the park’s tradition of celebrating the intrinsic value of nature, transformation through adventure and a personal call to action.

Based on Oscar-winning filmmaker James Cameron’s record-breaking box-office hit, *AVATAR*, the new land welcomes guests to the lush world of Pandora long after the human conflict with the Na’vi has ended. The dramatic daytime beauty of the land transforms to glow by night when bioluminescent flora and intricate nighttime experiences add a dreamlike quality to Pandora.

Pandora – The World of Avatar is a creative collaboration of Walt Disney Imagineering, Cameron and Cameron’s Lightstorm Entertainment.

“We are taking our guests on a journey to this world in an experience that’s as realistic and immersive as possible,” says Joe Rohde, Walt Disney Imagineering portfolio creative executive. “In the movie, the world of Pandora is a setting for the action and characters whose story we follow. Here, guests are the primary characters immersed in an extremely vivid, authentic experience.”

Guests to Disney’s Animal Kingdom cross the park’s Discovery River onto Pandora – The World of Avatar and continue along a winding rainforest path for their first glimpse of the land’s iconic “floating mountains.”

“When guests come across the bridge, they are transferred light-years away, to the Alpha-Centauri solar system and Pandora,” says Jon Landau, *AVATAR* producer, Lightstorm Entertainment. “It’s an otherworldly, fully-themed experience.”

As guests explore the verdant terrain sprawling beneath mountains that appear to float in the sky, they see waterfalls cascading down the mountainside into meandering streams and pools, and they discover two thrilling new expeditions: Avatar Flight of Passage and Na’vi River Journey.

[Avatar Flight of Passage](#) launches each guest on an exhilarating, wind-in-your-face experience on a winged mountain banshee over the awe-inspiring world of Pandora. Guests will actually feel the banshee breathe beneath them as they soar through the forest and past floating mountains. What was a rite of passage for Na’vi in Cameron’s film becomes a multisensory experience for guests seeking the ultimate adventure – an encounter with the most feared predator of Pandora, the Great Leonopteryx.

On the family-friendly [Na'vi River Journey](#), guests travel down a sacred river deep into a bioluminescent rainforest. Aboard reed boats, they float past exotic glowing plants and Pandoran creatures into the midst of a musical Na'vi ceremony. The mystical journey culminates in an encounter with the breathtakingly realistic Na'vi Shaman of Songs who is deeply connected with Pandora's life force and sends positive energy into the forest through her music.

"This is an attraction that the entire family can enjoy," Rohde says. "We put you into a magical experience that comes to life through the bioluminescence, the plant and animal activity and the shaman's music. There's a wonderful harmony in the entire glowing scene during this lyrical, uplifting journey that builds to a really beautiful crescendo."

In addition to the bioluminescent plants of Pandora, with species names like Spiny Whip, Dapophet and Vein Pod, other wonders of the land include the creatures that guests encounter and, in some cases, interact with.

"The landscape will be alive with creatures," Rohde says. "We're bringing to life everything from the largest creature you might encounter to the most microscopic. Animals will appear out of the underbrush – big Pandoran animals will appear at the edge of the forest, and you'll hear the very complicated calls they issue back and forth."

The thriving Pandoran landscape reinforces messages intrinsic to Disney's Animal Kingdom such as transformation through adventure and conservation and stewardship. A similar value system underlies the AVATAR film, Landau says, and he's hopeful guests are inspired to find meaning in their expedition through Pandora.

The artful storytelling on Pandora continues as guests stop for sustenance at the land's [Satu'li Canteen](#) (pronounced "Sa-too-lee"), a Quonset-hut-style building with a spacious dining area that pays tribute to the Na'vi and their culture with special décor. The menu at this fast-casual restaurant is inspired by the healthful bounty of Pandora – wholesome grains, fresh vegetables, and hearty proteins. Guests can also grab a drink at nearby Pongu Pongu, where a friendly expat serves out-of-this-world beverages including a bioluminescent frozen cocktail and indigenous beers. There's even a sweet snack that guests won't find elsewhere.

Windtraders is a shopper's delight where guests can choose from Na'vi cultural items, toys, science kits and more.

The creative team employed exhaustive research to develop the realistic appearance of Pandora, a fictional exoplanetary moon mined by humans in Cameron's movie. Set a generation after a great conflict, the Na'vi and humans are at peace, and the land is experiencing a rebirth. Pandora now welcomes Disney guests as eco-tourists.

Since 2012, Walt Disney Imagineering and Lightstorm Entertainment have collaborated to imagine and create Pandora through the talents of a team of designers, artists, sculptors, structural engineers, robotic technicians and a host of other professionals. The team traveled to rainforests and tribal areas and worked with artisans, weavers and carvers, including Bali artisans who contributed works to Discovery Island when it opened at Disney's Animal Kingdom in 1998.

Authenticity and realism were drivers in the creation of Pandora, and the result truly is a world beyond belief.

"The attractions have very deliberate emotional moments crafted into them, the way a good story does, the way a good film does," Rohde says. "It's not as simple as just coming to a place that looks realistic. It's a place that's been deliberately imbued with the emotions of awe, of wonder, of respect, of harmony."

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