

Victorian Elegance Meets Modern Sophistication at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — A grand hotel with gabled roofs and Victorian balustrades typical of the fabled Florida beach resorts of the 19th century is among Walt Disney World's themed resort adventures.

Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa, nestled on the picturesque shores of Seven Seas Lagoon between Magic Kingdom and Disney's Polynesian Village Resort, welcomed its first modern-day time-travelers in mid-1988.

The 867-room resort facilities the days when families enjoyed their winter pilgrimage to the land of friendly sunshine, where rowboats and palm fans replaced snow shoes and pot-belly stoves. Canary palms, southern magnolias and richly colored gardens complete the timeless theme.

Often referred to as "the jewel in the crown" of Disney's Vacation Kingdom, Disney's Grand Floridian also may be the first resort of its kind since the golden era of Henry M. Flagler. But this time, it has all the advantages of 21st century living — including monorail service that stops right beside the 19th century Grand Lobby.

Complementing the guest accommodations are restaurants, lounges, snack bars, an arcade, shopping, swimming pools, children's playground, marina, beauty salon and 10,000-square-foot spa and health club. The luxurious, full-service spa offers an array of fitness and beauty treatments from aromatherapy body wraps to citrus zest massages.

Like Disney's other resorts, Disney's Grand Floridian has a distinctive theme that carries through architecture, landscape, furnishings and even costumes.

The style of the buildings is reminiscent of the Victorian era yet is more playful and relaxed — embellished by intricate lattice work and balustrades and 120 miles of scrolls, turnposts and curved moldings. Snow-white towers and red-shingle roofs make a dramatic first impression.

The resort accommodations are among the most luxurious on Disney property. The club-level and suite rooms with private elevator access in the 225,000-square-foot Sugar Loaf Key building include in-room facilities such as a wet bar and lavish decor. One of the resort's five lodge buildings also features personal concierge service. Guests staying in club-level rooms and suites are eligible for personalized vacation-planning support.

Most rooms include two queen-size beds plus a day bed. Suites include a parlor plus one to three bedrooms.

In the main building, the third-floor concierge lobby includes two concierge desks designed to provide personalized services such as check-in/check-out, reservations, information, etc. The fourth-floor concierge lobby includes a quiet seating area where club-level guests can enjoy, at no additional charge, continental breakfasts and evening cocktails.

Guestroom decor features include soft, spring-like colors and printed wall coverings, armoires and other furnishings in light woods, marble-top sinks with old-fashion fittings, and Victorian woodwork.

An open-cage elevator, aviary, palms and ferns set the mood in the sitting area of the Grand Lobby, which reaches five stories to a Victorian ceiling adorned with three illuminated stained-glass domes, ornate chandeliers and metal scrolls.

Shops carry on the theme in displays featuring turn-of-the-century toys and clothing. Shopping options are abundant at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa. On the first floor,

Sandy Cove Gifts & Sundries carries food, drinks and snack items, plus medicine, suntan lotion,

stamps and other various sundries. Resort logo items for adults and various Disney Parks merchandise make Sandy Cove Gifts & Sundries a must see. Summer Lace - a ladies' shop - offers upscale designer clothing, hair accessories, costume and fine jewelry, watches, swimwear, casual shoes, fragrances and Guerlain makeup in an elegant and airy setting. Resort logo items for women can also be found here.

On the second floor, M. Mouse Mercantile is just a few steps from the monorail. There are toys, costumes, Disney Pin Trading, costume jewelry, princess wear and children's apparel. On the same floor, Commander Porter's - a men's shop - carries Disney golf shirts and assorted accessories. Upscale items by various designers, plus cigars, watches, casual shoes, fragrances and more are offered. Basin White offers all-natural bath, body and hair care products.

Dining opportunities at Disney's Grand Floridian are diverse — from flatbreads, pizzas and grill entrees at Gasparilla Grill and Games to intimate, candlelight, gourmet dinners at Victoria & Albert's, offering elegant service fit for royalty. Cítricos is designed using sun-drenched Provençal colors and an open-air kitchen. 1900 Park Fare hosts character dining at breakfast and dinner plus the popular Wonderland Tea Party. Grand Floridian Cafe serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. Disney's Perfectly Princess Tea is offered daily in Garden View Tea Room.

All major dining locations are in the main building except Narcoossee's, a seafood restaurant situated on a romantic shoreline. Octagon-shaped and open-beamed, Narcoossee's features a show kitchen where cooks broil, steam, sauté and smoke the catches of the day. The Beaches Pool Bar & Grill offers grilled items and specialty entrees.

Hotel recreation is water-oriented — white sand beaches on Seven Seas Lagoon, with a marina and rental craft. Beach Pool offers guests a natural springs setting complete with a waterfall flowing from a 27-foot-tall stone mountain and a waterslide. Little kids can make a splash in the "Alice in Wonderland" themed water activity play area. For the most lavish water experience, the Grand 1 Yacht offers a pampered VIP boating experience on Seven Seas Lagoon overlooking Magic Kingdom. The 52-foot Sea Ray yacht sails on morning, afternoon or evening excursions, with views of a fireworks display above Magic Kingdom on select evenings. For the ultimate cruise, private butler service and on-board gourmet dining is available.

Senses - A Disney Spa at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort is a full-service spa and health club that pampers guests with a variety of personalized treatments including massage therapy, body

treatments, facials, manicures and pedicures. Men's and women's sauna, steam room, whirlpool and a workout room round out the amenities.

Reservations can be arranged through the Walt Disney World Central Reservations Office: 407/W-DISNEY, a

local travel agent, or at www.disneyworld.com.

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