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Insider's Guide

Walt Disney World Resort

Look what's FREE
at Walt Disney World Resort





Disney Insider's Guide

Look what's **FREE** at Walt Disney World Resort

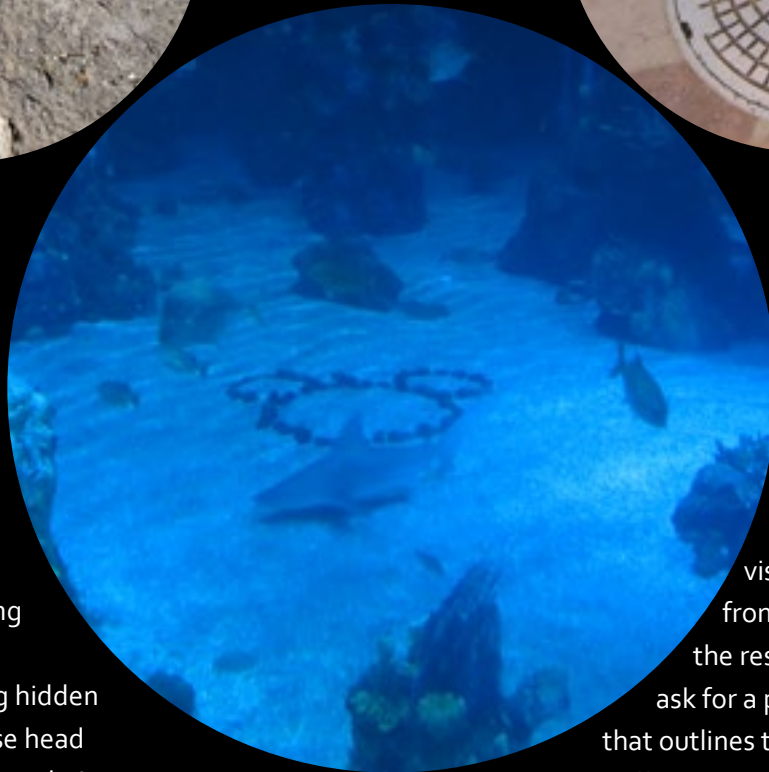
From travel expenses and theme park tickets to souvenirs, accommodations and meals, the costs of a Walt Disney World vacation can add up quickly. Yet when it comes to creating a magical and memorable Disney World vacation for your family, there are a wide variety of fun options that are **absolutely free!**

This Insider's Guide to Walt Disney World Resort is your source for big savings and big fun in and around Walt Disney World Resort!

Make the most of your Disney World vacation by making the most of the following 10 free activities.

Hunt for Hidden Mickeys

Disney World offers a massive playground for playing "I Spy."



ALL PHOTOS BY
JAIME RUFFNER

Disney's Imagineers have created a long-running tradition of incorporating hidden Mickey Mouse head silhouettes into their designs and construction throughout Disney's theme parks, resorts and other areas.

The Hidden Mickey concept originally started as an inside joke among the Imagineers. Whenever they designed or constructed an attraction, they would subtly hide a

Mickey Mouse silhouette in plain sight. The concept quickly became a tradition and today Disney fans endlessly search for hidden Mickeys in theme parks, hotels and even in Disney movies.

Disney's Wilderness Lodge offers a free self-guided Hidden Mickey hunt.

Simple visit the front desk of the resort and ask for a paper that outlines the hunt and offers clues. You can spend a couple hours of fun exploring the beautiful hotel while searching for the elusive hidden mouse silhouettes. If you're searching in the vicinity of Bay Lake, near one of the swimming pools, you might also see an eruption of the Fire Rock Geyser. Eruptions occur every hour on the hour.



Stroll the Disney BoardWalk

Step back in time and stroll The BoardWalk.

Located near Epcot, the BoardWalk entertainment complex offers a peaceful mile-long walk around a small lake. Along the way, you'll encounter a variety of restaurants, nightclubs and Disney resort hotels.

Reminiscent of other turn-of-the-century boardwalks such as Coney Island or Atlantic City, the Disney BoardWalk offers beautiful replicas of old-time buildings. You might also encounter a variety of street performers while strolling along the water's edge, particularly if you visit in the evening. Acts may range from jugglers, comedians and fire eaters to jazz ensembles and even a pianist on a bicycle.

Restaurants around the lake include the ESPN Club, Flying Fish Café, Big River Grille and Brewing Works, Kouzzina by Cat Cora and more.

Another free benefit of the Disney BoardWalk is its location adjacent to Epcot. As a result, the BoardWalk offers an opportunity to view the nightly Epcot fireworks display.



Ride the Iconic Monorail

In continuous operation since 1971

For many, the magic of Disney World begins with their first ride aboard the iconic monorail system. In continuous operation since 1971, the famed elevated train system glides along a double beam track that circles the Seven Seas Lagoon in front of the Magic Kingdom. The loop also includes stops at the Contemporary and Polynesian Resorts, as well as the Grand Floridian Resort and Epcot.

Guests may hop aboard the monorail at any stop and ride for free. You can also feel free to disembark at any location. So the monorail is a great way to spend some fun time visiting the beautiful resort properties.

The Polynesian Resort offers a tropical getaway where you'll encounter scenic waterfalls, seasonal foliage and luaus. The monorail drives right through the middle of the Contemporary Resort! True to its name, the Contemporary offers a unique shape and is highlighted by a giant mosaic mural that reaches several stories high. Meanwhile, the Grand Floridian is a stylish Victorian style resort. All three resorts provide plenty to see while strolling along the exquisitely landscaped properties.

Another highlight of the monorail is its bird's eye view of the Magic Kingdom and Cinderella's Castle. An evening ride might also feature a view of fireworks and the stunning electrical water pageant.



DISNEY'S ELECTRICAL WATER PAGEANT

Originally developed for the dedication of the Polynesian Luau on Oct. 26, 1971, the Electrical Water Pageant is a free show that occurs nightly around the main resort areas.

Today the event remains virtually unchanged from its original design and format.

When nightfall engulfs Bay Lake and the Seven Seas Lagoon, more than 50,000 bright and colorful lights come to life. The pageant, consisting of two strings of seven brightly lit barges, offers a stunning display on the water. Each barge carries a 25-foot tall screen of lights, featuring leaping dolphins, King Triton and other creatures from under the sea such as turtles, sea horses, whales and even a sea monster. There is also a flag display. The aquatic parade is all set to Disney music

such as “Under the Sea” and concludes with an inspirational salute to America, complete with a musical medley including God Bless America, Yankee Doodle, and You’re a Grand Old Flag.

The Electrical Water Pageant is usually performed at nightfall and is best viewed by taking the free monorail to one of three resorts – the Polynesian, the Contemporary or the Grand Floridian. You can also view the show from near the boat docks outside Magic Kingdom. Typical starting times are 9 pm at the Polynesian, 9:15 pm at the Grand Floridian, 10 pm at the Contemporary and 10:25 pm at Magic Kingdom.

Campfire, Sing-Along & Movie with Chip 'n' Dale

This Disney freebie is actually several events in one, and an activity that is sure to create memories.



Head over to Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort where you'll find an entire evening of free entertainment. Depending on the season, it all starts around 7:30 pm at the Fort Wilderness Campground near the Meadow Trading Post. The program begins with two large campfires protected by surrounding safety rings. Children and adults

alike can roast hot dogs or marshmallows around the fire. Bring your own or they can be purchased at the Trading Post.

While enjoying a marshmallow, kick back and be entertained by a fun-filled sing-along led by a Disney cast member. The 40-minute musical fun also includes a visit from Disney

Characters "Chip 'n' Dale" who will happily visit and sign autographs.

Following the sing-along, a popular Disney movie will be shown on a large outdoor movie screen. There is plenty of seating along bleachers and benches, or you can lay out a blanket or set up your own chairs.

Go on a Wild Animal Safari

Animal lovers rejoice.



Every day at the Animal Kingdom Lodge, you can find a free 45-minute walking tour of the hotel and African safari area. Tours meet in front of the Africa medallion in the hotel lobby.

From the lobby, you'll head to the Arusha savanna where your guide, a cultural representative from Africa, will answer questions while you view kudu, zebra, giraffe, ankole cattle and a variety of other exotic animals on display.



You don't have to join the tour to take advantage of the animal viewing at Animal Kingdom Lodge. Feel free to view the animals at any time from a variety of viewing areas throughout the hotel. Or walk outside and view them up closer. You might want to check out the animals in the early morning or dusk hours when they are most active.

Explore Downtown Disney

No trip to Disney World is complete without visiting Disney's expansive shopping and entertainment venue – Downtown Disney. Just minutes from the Disney theme parks and water parks, Downtown Disney Marketplace offers a wealth of stores featuring everything from small souvenir items to high-end home items and exquisite artwork.

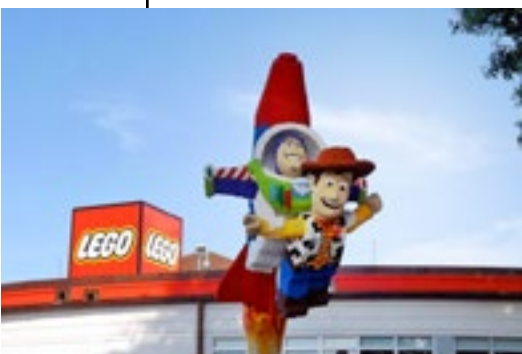
HUNGRY? You'll also find a litany of restaurant options from quick service to full service. Grab a tasty snack from the Ghirardelli Ice Cream & Chocolate Shop or a pretzel from Wetzel's Pretzels. Experience a meal like no other at fun family restaurants like Planet Hollywood, Rainforest Café or T-Rex. Create a memorable lunch at the Earl of Sandwich. Or enjoy a delightful dining experience at the iconic Fulton's Crab House, where you'll find the very best in steaks and seafood.

LOOKING FOR FUN. Downtown Disney offers interactive fountains where kids of all ages can dodge the spraying waters or jump right in and get wet. Love LEGOs? The LEGO Imagination Center offers a free 3,000-square-foot outdoor play area loaded with LEGO blocks of all shapes, sizes and colors. Build your own LEGO creation or take pictures in front of the various LEGO sculptures.

Downtown Disney Marketplace also offers a variety of free entertainment and a fun-filled ambiance that is perfect for a family outing.

From Marketplace, you can walk through Hyperion Wharf (formerly known as Pleasure Island) where you'll discover a few more restaurants. At the other side is Downtown Disney West Side, home to more shops and restaurants as well as a cinema, Disney's Cirque du Soleil theatre and more.

Parking is also free at Downtown Disney!





Join the Kids' Discovery Club



At Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park, kids and families can experience unique educational animal encounters designed to bring the wild to life.

Designed for children age 5 to 8, the Kids' Discovery Club provides special activities to help youngsters better understand the natural world around them. You can start by picking up a free Kids' Discovery Club Passport at any one of six stations around the park. Each station offers a fun learning activity and an opportunity to get your passport stamped. Get all six stamps and the kids will also receive a special bonus.

Discovery Club stations include:

- **Discovery Island** – learn about insects and see the world through bug eyes.
- **Camp Minnie/Mickey** - Identify animal-related objects by touch.
- **Dinoland U.S.A.** - Dig for fossils and assemble a dinosaur.
- **Rafiki's Planet Watch** - Hunt for common backyard wildlife.
- **Asia** - Analyze animal calls.
- **Africa** - Become a wildlife detective and track an animal.



PHOTO BY SEAN MACENTEE

Watch an Epic Fireworks Display

You don't have to wait for the fourth of July to enjoy an incredible fireworks extravaganza. It happens nightly at Disney's Magic Kingdom! Best of all, you don't have to even enter the park to experience the fun.

The amazing pyrotechnics are yours to see in full view from the spacious comfort of the nearby Polynesian Resort. You can relax in a hammock or set out your own blanket and catch the fireworks from across the lake. You'll enjoy a full and completely clear view of the fireworks as they explode over the majestic Cinderella Castle at Magic Kingdom.



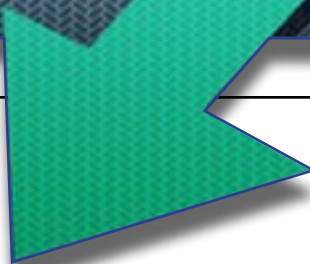
Get a Free Souvenir

While many rides at Disney's amazing theme parks empty out into a creatively themed souvenir shop, there are several ways to garner free, yet memorable, souvenirs.

The first, and easiest, is to simply stop by Guest Services at any of the Disney theme parks to receive a special, personalized lapel pin. In addition to your name, the pin will highlight what you are celebrating, be it a birthday, anniversary, first visit to Disney or simply celebrating Friday! Then don't be surprised to find Disney cast members wishing you a happy birthday or happy anniversary.



A visit to Disney is sure to bring out the artist in many kids as they experience the exceptional Disney animation around them. If so, you might want to visit "The Magic of Disney Animation" building at Disney's Hollywood Studios.



GET A FREE SOUVENIR



In addition to viewing an entertaining 9-minute film, you'll join Mushu from *Mulan* and a Disney animator for a presentation on the animation process. You'll go behind the scenes of animated Disney classics like *Aladdin*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Lion King* while uncovering the enchanted world of Disney animation.

You can also meet Disney Characters and try various animation activities through interactive displays. And, with the help of a real Disney Animation artist, you can sit on a stool and learn exactly how to draw your very own Disney Character sketch. Once finished, you can autograph, and keep, your drawing – making it a truly exceptional and memorable souvenir.

Another popular way to get a free Disney World souvenir is by bringing a young child to the Harmony Barbershop near the front gate of the Magic Kingdom. Yes, you'll pay an average price for the haircut from a professional stylist, but those stylists are also full of fun-filled tricks. In the end, your child will walk away with a stylish cut, plenty of Mickey Mouse stickers, and an iconic Mouse Ears hat that says "My 1st Haircut."



PHOTO BY SAM HOWZIT



Maybe the most popular free souvenir of all is simply a little notebook filled with Disney Character autographs! Whether you want to purchase a special Disney autograph book or just bring your own paper notebook, nothing beats the excitement of getting an autograph and having your picture taken with all of your favorite Disney Characters.

Thank You!

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