

The Best of Walt Disney World & Orlando

In the beginning, Orlando may have been a sleepy little southern town filled with farmland as far as the eye could see, orange groves galore, and only two attractions to its name (a water-ski show and some great big gators). Then came the Mouse. More specifically, a mouse named Mickey and his creator, a man of fantastic imagination and vision named Walt Disney. Life in Orlando would never be the same. Since the opening of Walt Disney World back in 1971, Orlando has grown to become one of the world's top vacation destinations. Almost 48 million people from all parts of the world make their way to this city each year to sample its unending array of exciting, unique, and diverse activities. Those of us who continue to return year after year can count on each new visit to provide a host of new experiences and magical memories.

When Disney World first opened its gates to the public, I doubt if anyone but Walt Disney, the original Imagineer, could have predicted what lay ahead. Disney, searching for an East Coast location for his second theme park, decided Orlando was just the place he was looking for. In 1964, in a covert operation that would have made James Bond proud, Walt Disney began quietly purchasing large quantities of land in and around the Orlando area, and within months he had acquired property nearly twice the size of Manhattan. In 1965, Walt announced to the public his plans to bring to Orlando the world's most spectacular theme park. Fashioned after Disneyland in California, construction soon began on Disney's Magic Kingdom. Unfortunately, Walt Disney was never able to see his dream come to life, as he passed away in 1966, just 5 years shy of the opening of what, to this day, is still the world's most spectacular theme park—Walt Disney World.

Disney's legacy, while commercialized over the years, has practically become a right of passage, not to mention a national shrine to which visitors flock by the millions. And if you have kids, a visit here is almost a requirement. The opening of Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom started a tourist boom in Central Florida the likes of which has never been seen elsewhere. Today, The Kingdom That Walt Built entices visitors with four theme parks, a dozen smaller attractions, two nightclub districts, tens of thousands of hotel rooms, a vacation club (otherwise known as timeshares), scores of restaurants, and even two cruise ships. Universal Orlando adds to the dizzying array with two theme parks, three luxury resorts, and an entertainment complex that's home to several unique restaurants, clubs, shops, and entertainment venues. Sea-World tosses in two (soon to be three) theme parks and an entertainment, dining, and shopping district of its own. And those are just the major players. All in all, there are over 95 attractions, both large and small, that will keep you coming back for more. There are also plenty of restaurants, ranging from fine dining to on-the-fly fast food;

Fun Fact By the Numbers

Orlando's theme parks are beginning to reap the benefits of a stronger economy as they see increasing attendance levels—accompanied by predictions that these levels will continue to rise steadily over the next few years. Parks are also enticing visitors to return and to stay longer by offering special deals, and adding wild and wonderfully new attractions. Here are the 2005 attendance estimates (and their national rankings) for all of the major Orlando parks according to *Amusement Business* magazine:

- No. 1: Magic Kingdom, 16.1 million
- No. 3: Epcot, 9.9 million
- No. 4: Disney–MGM Studios, 8.6 million
- No. 5: Disney's Animal Kingdom, 8.2 million
- No. 6: Universal Studios Florida, 6.1 million
- No. 8: Islands of Adventure, 5.8 million
- No. 9: Sea World Orlando, 5.6 million

many of the more casual restaurants are as themed as the parks themselves. And the city doesn't lack for hotels and resorts either, with more than 114,000 rooms, villas, and suites to go around (and even more on the way). If you can believe it, the landscape is still changing, evolving, growing, and expanding to ensure your experiences will do the same each and every time you stay and play in Orlando.

Beyond the fast-paced excitement, glitz, and glitter of Orlando's theme parks you'll find Central Florida's more natural side, with hidden treasures just waiting to be discovered. Over 300 lakes, springs, and rivers are waiting to be explored and enjoyed. There are numerous parks and gardens, many with trails for walking and hiking, and the area's wildlife sanctuaries and zoos showcase Florida's animal inhabitants. The number of recreational opportunities—picnics in parks, boating along waterways, fishing, biking, and hiking, to name a few—is almost limitless. And Orlando's rich history and culture come to life through its many museums, galleries, and theaters.

Where to go, what to do, when to do it . . . with so many decisions to make you may very well find your head spinning. Because of the vast quantity of offerings, a vacation to Orlando requires a reasonable amount of planning, not to mention budgeting. The sheer number of attractions and available activities requires that you narrow down your choices to fit both your schedule and budget properly. Entrance fees can be daunting (a 1-day ticket to one of the major parks averages around \$63 for adults and \$52 for kids 3–9), and when you add in the costs of dining, accommodations, and souvenirs, sticker shock at the high price tag is not out of the question. A typical family of four could easily end up spending several hundred dollars a day! Some parks have begun offering deals to bring down the average daily price of your ticket if you buy multiday passes, but don't give them too much credit—the parks are wagering they'll generate additional revenues with all of the money you'll spend on extra hotel nights and meals. But even if you do have deep pockets, there is so much to experience in Orlando that to take it all in properly would require far more time than the average vacation would allow. I doubt if even two or three vacations could do the trick.

That's exactly why this book was written: to make available to you the most up-to-date and detailed information on what Orlando has to offer. A mix of options that take into account every budget and taste are included in each chapter so you can make the most informed decisions possible. With this book, you'll have the tools to plan ahead and ensure that your family has the best vacation possible. I have traveled to Central Florida more times than I can count over the past 18 years. Single, married, with kids, and without, I've stood in all the lines, ridden the rides, and dined in the restaurants—even during the height of summer and spring break. In other words, I've done all of the hard work, so you don't have to, and I give realistic and practical travel tips throughout this book in order to help you enjoy a more magical vacation. At the same time, I also give you options to help make your vacation more affordable and to keep expenses to a minimum while still having the maximum amount of fun. The Orlando tourism gurus will ensure your family has a steady stream of new things to see and do. (If you have any doubts about that, check out the "What's New in Walt Disney World & Orlando" chapter for a look at all the debuts made this past year alone.)

1 The Best Orlando Experiences

- **Explore Disney's Animal Kingdom.**

Explore Disney's most spectacular and wildest Imagineering to date. Trek through the jungles of Africa along the Pangani Forest Exploration Trail or set out on Safari across the savanna with Kilimanjaro Safaris. Journey through the exotic lands of Asia and embark on an expedition to the peaks of Expedition Everest, then explore the mysteries of Anandapur wandering the Maharajah Jungle Trek. Be sure not to miss The Festival of the Lion King, absolutely the best show in all of WDW. See p. 240.

- **Go globe-trotting at Epcot.**

You can travel around the world in only an afternoon at the World Showcase pavilions, rocket through space on a thrilling mission to Mars at Mission: Space, travel back in time to the age of the dinosaurs at the Universe of Energy, and dive deep below the sea to explore the ocean's inhabitants at The Living Seas. And there's no better way to cap your day off than watching Epcot's IllumiNations, a spectacular fireworks, laser lights, and fountain show! See p. 212.

- **Take Center Stage at Disney-MGM Studios.**

Though it is more grown-up

than the Magic Kingdom, it has plenty of great shows to entertain the kids and attractions to thrill movie buffs. Don't miss the Tower of Terror, Rock 'n' Roller Coaster, and Fantasmic!—the innovative, after-dark mix of live action, waterworks, fireworks, and laser lights that rivals IllumiNations. See p. 229.

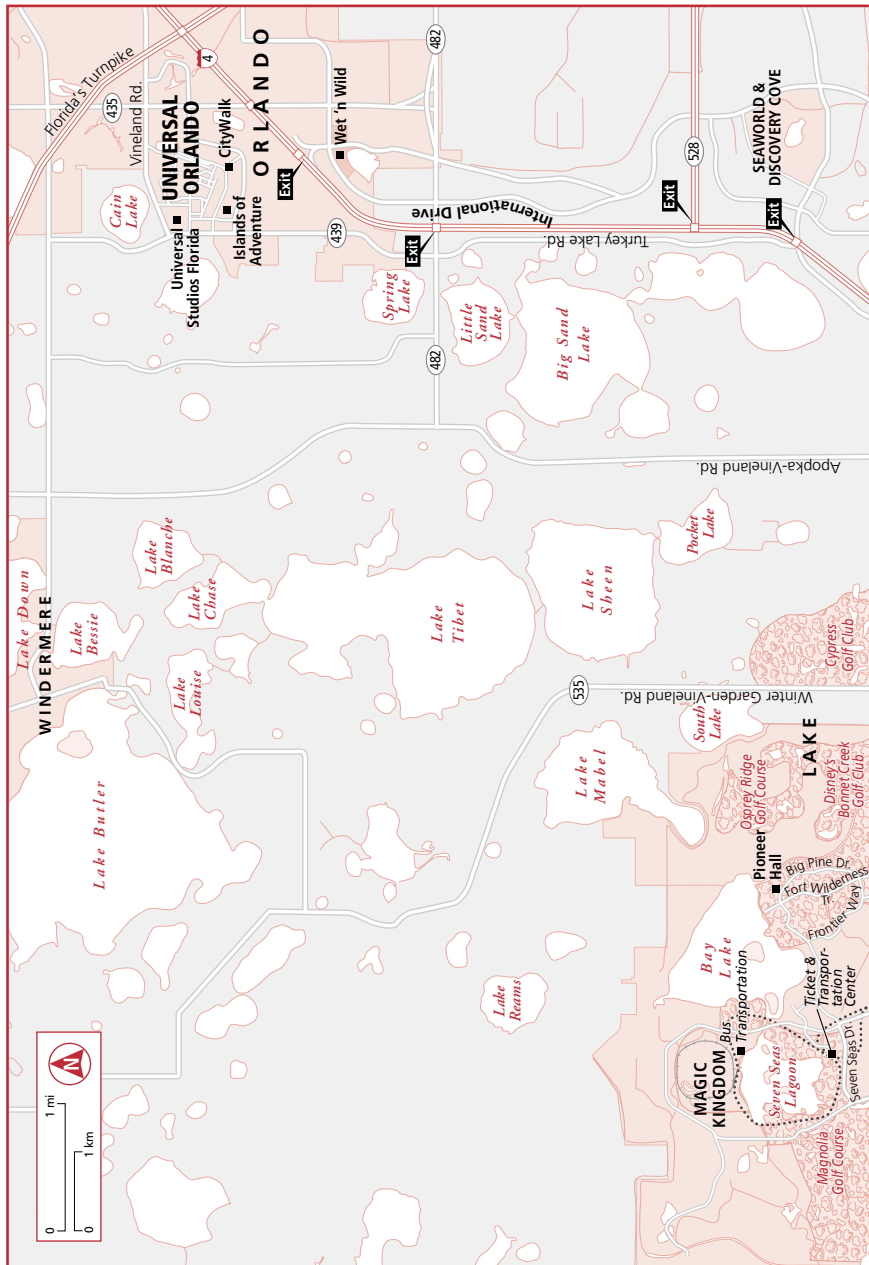
- **Escape to the Magic Kingdom,**

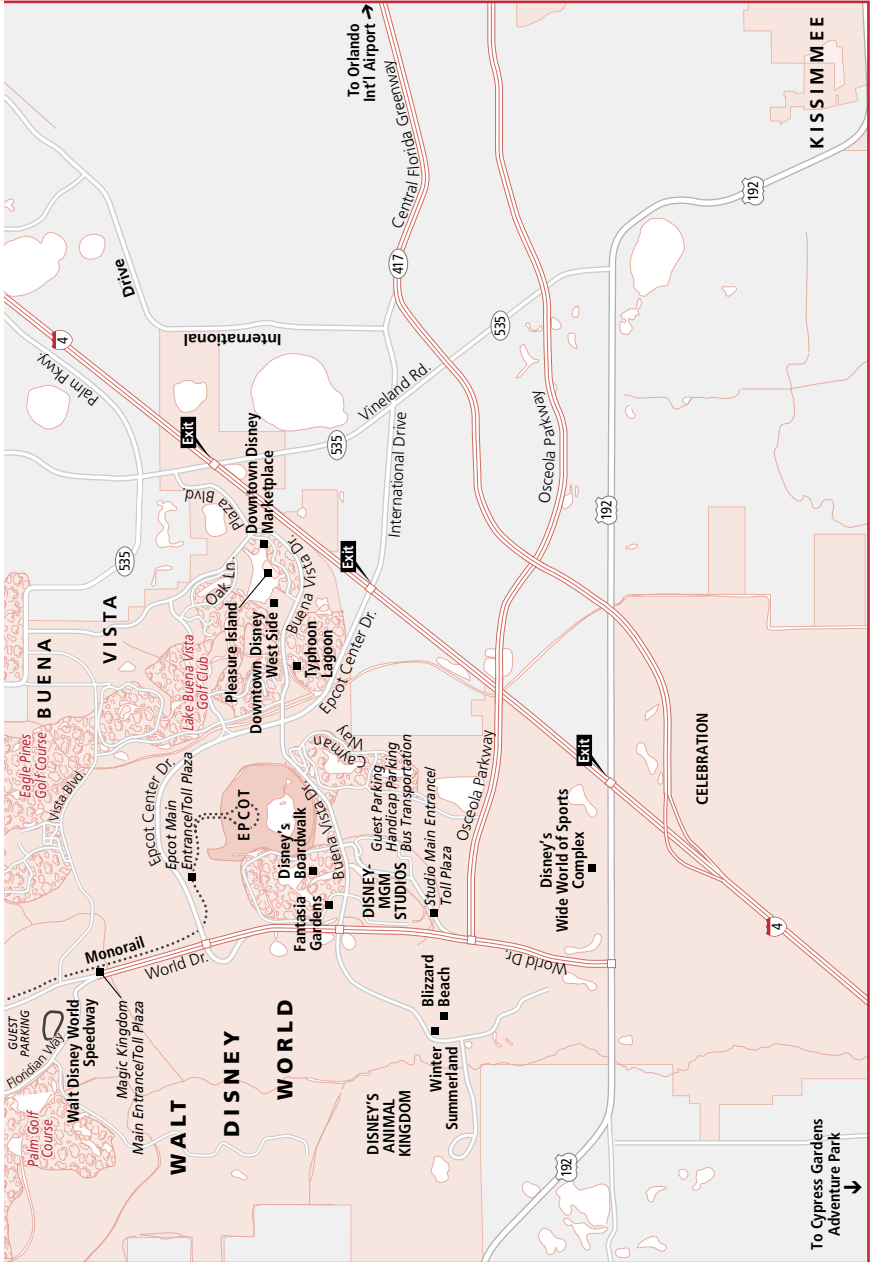
even if you've been here many times before. It may seem an obvious choice, but Disney's oldest is still the most magical of Orlando's theme parks. Speed through the universe on Space Mountain, watch Donald's antics at Mickey's PhilharMagic, or wave hello to the ghouls of the Haunted Mansion. Cap your day with the impressive Wishes fireworks display. There's plenty here to entertain all ages. See p. 191.

- **Experience Universal Orlando.**

Universal Studios Florida and its sister, Islands of Adventure, are both chock-full of thrilling rides and spectacular shows that combine cutting-edge technology, high-tech special effects, and incredible imagination and creativity. The attention to detail throughout the parks is amazing—check out the street

Orlando Theme Parks





sets at USF and the wildly unique landscapes of IOA and you'll see what I mean. For thrill seekers, not-to-be-missed attractions include *The Revenge of the Mummy*, *Back to the Future . . . The Ride*, *Men in Black Alien Attack*, *Dueling Dragons*, the *Incredible Hulk Coaster*, *The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man*, and *Dudley Do-Right's Ripsaw Falls*. See p. 257 and p. 271.

- **Dive into the Eco-Edutainment of SeaWorld and Discovery Cove.** Cleverly disguised as a theme park, your kids may never realize just how much they're learning as they explore, watch, and touch their way through both parks' eco-exhibits and shows. With the addition of *Journey to Atlantis* and *Kraken*, **SeaWorld** (p. 284) added a bit of zip and zing to the lineup, ensuring those in need of an adrenalin rush aren't left out in the cold (or over at the other parks). But it's still the hands-on encounters such as touching silky rays as they glide by you in droves, and up-close views of the animals, ranging from polar bears and penguins to killer whales, that draw the crowds. **Discovery Cove** (p. 293) is more of an island retreat than theme park. Rest and relax on the beach, or swim right along with the fishes. The big draw here is the chance to take a dip with the dolphins.
- **Go Wild at Gatorland.** Located between Orlando and Kissimmee,

this throwback park is a great way to spend a half-day (an especially good choice for that extra time on your day of arrival), and costs less than a third of the price of some of the major theme parks. In addition to the animal exhibits, *Gator Jumparoo*, a signature show since the park opened in 1949, and *Gator Wrestlin* are worth a look. Other options include a train ride, children's water playground, and aviary. If you have some extra spending money, consider becoming a *Trainer for a Day* for a once-in-a-lifetime experience. See p. 295.

- **Pamper Yourself with a Spa Treatment.** Rest, relax, and rejuvenate—you may very well need to if you intend on surviving all of the fast-paced activities you've planned. After a few days at the parks it should almost be a requirement. **Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa** (☎ 407/934-7639 or 407/824-3000); the **Mandara Spa at Universal's Portofino Bay Hotel** (☎ 888/322-5541 or 407/503-1000), and at the **WDW Dolphin** (☎ 407/934-4000); the **Canyon Ranch SpaClub at the Gaylord Palms** (☎ 877/677-9352 or 407/586-2051); and the **Ritz-Carlton Spa at the Grande Lakes Resort** (☎ 407/206-2400) all offer an array of fabulous treatments, some with salon services to boot.

2 The Best Thrill Rides

Orlando lays claim to some of the biggest and baddest thrill rides and roller coasters anywhere—certainly one of the largest collections of them in any one locale. So if your idea of fun is to twist and turn at speeds only a jet should reach, dive uncontrollably from dizzying heights to below ground level and back, or see just how far up into your throat your stomach can go—this is the place for you. Here are the

city's top stomach churners and G-force generators.

- **Incredible Hulk Coaster** (Islands of Adventure): It's the smoothest ride in town, but you'll still blast from 0 to 40 mph in 2 seconds flat (on your way up to 60 mph), spin upside down more than 100 feet above the ground, dive straight back down only to spin your way through seven

Orlando's Best Online Sites

Considering that Orlando welcomes over 48 million visitors each year, it should come as no surprise that literally hundreds of websites are devoted to vacationing here. These include information on just about everything, from the history of Walt Disney World to getting around town.

There are several sites written by Disney fans, employees, and self-proclaimed experts. A favorite (www.hiddenmickeys.org) is all about **Hidden Mickeys**, a park tradition (see chapter 6, "Exploring Walt Disney World"). These subtle Disney images can be found scattered throughout the realm, though they sometimes are in the eye, or imagination, of the beholder. **Deb's Unofficial Walt Disney World Information Guide** (www.alleasnet.com) is the best around, loaded with great tips and information on everything Disney from the parks and resorts to the restaurants, nightlife, and much more.

Definitely take a look at Disney's official site, www.disneyworld.com, if you're planning a pilgrimage to the House of Mouse. It recently got a top-to-bottom overhaul, making it easier to navigate and much more informative. It's loaded with some excellent photos and 360-degree views of Disney's resorts, rooms, parks, and more. **Magical Gatherings**, available on the Disney site as well, is a free downloadable online tool allowing you to plan your group's Disney vacation, via computer, with other family (or friends), no matter where they live. You can plan itineraries, take group polls, list everyone's favorites, and even chat to come up with the perfect plan.

If you're looking to save a few dollars, try **Mousesavers** (www.mouse savers.com), which features information, insider Disney tips, and (the biggest perk) exclusive discounted deals for area hotels, resorts, and packages.

If a trip to one of Universal Orlando's theme parks or CityWalk is on your dance card, then stop at www.universalorlando.com. You can order tickets (including exclusive Internet-only deals), make resort reservations, and find out about special events, among other things on the site. Fish fans can get in the know about SeaWorld at www.seaworld.com and Discovery Cove at www.discoverycove.com.

If you're seeking general information about the city, accommodations, dining, nightlife, or special events, head over to the Orlando/Orange County Convention & Visitors Bureau site at www.orlandoinfo.com. *Orlando Weekly* (www.orlandoweekly.com) offers cutting-edge reviews and recommendations for arts, movies, music, restaurants, and much more. *The Orlando Sentinel* (www.orlandosentinel.com), along with all the local news and goings-on, features Go2Orlando, a section loaded with information on the area's dining, attractions, shopping, and more.

rollers, and then drop deep below ground on this big, green, mean machine. (You might glow as green as the coaster when you're done.) See p. 278.

- **Rock 'n' Roller Coaster** (Disney-MGM Studios): You'll launch from 0 to 60 mph in 2.8 seconds, heading straight into the first of several inversions as 120 speakers in your "stretch

limo” blast Aerosmith at (yeeehow!) 32,000 watts right into your ears. To add to the thrill of this indoor coaster, the entire experience takes place in the dark. See p. 237.

- **Dueling Dragons** (Islands of Adventure): Whether you choose the dragon of fire or of ice, your legs will dangle below as you sharply twist and turn through five inversions at speeds of 55 to 60 mph. The two intertwined coasters come within only inches (12 to be exact) of each other, only just missing a collision, not two, but three times. See p. 281.
- **Summit Plummet** (Disney’s Blizzard Beach): This one starts slow, with a lift ride (even in Florida’s 100°F/38°C dog days) to the 120-foot summit. But it finishes with the (self-proclaimed) world’s fastest body slide, a test of your courage and swimsuit as it virtually goes straight down and has you moving sans vehicle at 60 mph by the end. See p. 253.
- **Twilight Zone Tower of Terror** (Disney–MGM Studios): The name says it all. The ride transports guests into the Twilight Zone as a haunted hotel’s service elevator slowly rises—only to plummet 13 stories, terrifying those inside. But the freefall fun doesn’t end there. The tower now

features a new twist—a computer program randomly alternates drop sequences to make sure you never experience the same ride twice. When you get off and your legs finally stop shaking, *some of you* will want to ride again. See p. 238.

- **The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man** (Islands of Adventure): Combining the best of all worlds—3-D movie effects, a moving simulator car, and live action—this is by far the best ride in Orlando. Your vehicle spins, twists, pitches, and dives through elaborate sets as Spiderman tries to save the world (and you) from total annihilation. The chase ends in a dramatic, simulated 400-foot drop that feels an awful lot like the real thing. It doesn’t offer the same type of thrills as a coaster, but it’s sure to get your Spidey senses tingling. See p. 277.
- **Kraken** (SeaWorld): Named for a mythological creature, this stomach-churning ride is a beast! This floorless, open-sided coaster reaches speeds of up to 65 mph as it combines steep climbs, deep drops, and seven tremendous loops reaching high above water before plunging below the ground, to make it one of the most aggressive and intense coasters anywhere. See p. 289.

3 The Best Water Rides

- **Splash Mountain** (Magic Kingdom): You’ll follow the adventure of Brer Rabbit and his friends, based on the 1946 movie *The Song of the South*, before taking a 52-foot vertical plunge straight down to the water below. See p. 200.
- **Dudley Do-Right’s Ripsaw Falls** (Islands of Adventure): Dudley Do-Right and Snidely Whiplash are once again at odds and you’re caught right in the middle. This flume sends you plummeting not once but twice, and

that second drop sends you 15 feet below the surface of the water before you make your escape. See p. 279.

- **Jurassic Park River Adventure** (Islands of Adventure): A seemingly calm tour through the age of the dinosaur suddenly takes a turn for the worse. Before you know it, your only escape route involves a dramatic 85-foot drop almost straight down, that’s touted as the “longest, steepest, fastest water descent ever built.” You will get drenched. See p. 281.

- **Journey to Atlantis** (SeaWorld): This flume ride sends you careening around the sharpest of curves as the forces of good and evil battle to claim Atlantis for their own. Before you

know it, you're being thrown into total darkness, emerging only to find yourself plummeting down several steep, watery drops. See p. 289.

4 The Best Romantic Hideaways

- **Courtyard at Lake Lucerne** (Downtown; ☎ 407/648-5188): This charming little B&B is an eclectic mix of some of Orlando's oldest homes—each impeccably restored and meticulously furnished to period. Ask for the honeymoon suite for a really romantic getaway; just off the main room is a quaint little glass-enclosed porch—the perfect spot to watch the sunset or sip a glass of wine. See p. 123.
- **Disney's Wilderness Lodge** (Lake Buena Vista; ☎ 407/934-7639): This grand resort is reminiscent of the lodge found at Yellowstone National Park. The spewing geyser out back, the mammoth stone hearth in the lobby, the Artist's Point 360-degree view of Bay Lake, and the towering forest sheltering the resort from the rest of the world are just a few of the reasons to stay here. Some guest rooms have patios or balconies overlooking the lake, woodlands, or the meadow. See p. 96.
- **Portofino Bay Hotel** (Universal Orlando; ☎ 888/322-5541 or 407/503-1000): This enchanting resort recreates the romantic atmosphere and architecture of its namesake town in Italy. Lounge in the ultracomfy rooms, the state-of-the-art spa, or at one of the three heated pools. And it's only a stroll away from both of Universal Orlando's theme parks. See p. 116.
- **Villas of Grand Cypress** (Orlando; ☎ 800/835-7377 or 407/239-4700): This luxury villa-style resort offers lush grounds dotted with bougainvillea and hibiscus, lakes fat with largemouth bass and bream, and grounds speckled with trumpeter swans, wood ducks, and the occasional fox or bobcat. It shares a golf academy, racquet club, and equestrian center with the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress. Best of all, the woody grounds make you feel as if you're far, far from Disney, which is right next door. See p. 106.

5 The Best Luxury Resorts

- **Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa** (Orlando; ☎ 407/934-7639): This magnificent Victorian inn has an opulent five-story lobby complete with a Chinese Chippendale aviary. An orchestra plays big-band music every evening near Victoria & Albert's, the resort's five-star restaurant. See p. 92.
- **Gaylord Palms** (Lake Buena Vista; ☎ 877/677-9352 or 407/586-0000): This destination resort features impeccable service; themed guest rooms (the Emerald Bay rooms are the best) with

luxury amenities; a lush, 4½-acre glass-topped atrium; and (best of all) a branch of the renowned Canyon Ranch Spa. See p. 105.

- **Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress Resort** (Orlando; ☎ 800/233-1234 or 407/239-1234): This standout has some impressive treats, including a half-acre pool with a dozen waterfalls and three spas, 12 tennis courts, four Jack Nicklaus–designed golf courses, and a 45-acre nature walk. All that adds up to luxury. See p. 106.

- **Ritz-Carlton Orlando** (Grande Lakes; ☎ 800/241-3333 or 407/529-2255). Perks at this posh getaway include luxurious rooms with first-class

amenities, a 40,000-square-foot spa, a championship golf course, top-notch child-care facilities, and a lazy river pool. See p. 120.

6 The Best Moderately Priced Accommodations

- **Disney's Port Orleans Resort** (Lake Buena Vista; ☎ 407/934-7639 or 407/934-5000): Here's a good value by Disney standards. It has dual Southern charm in its French Quarter and Riverside areas, and the pool has a water slide curving from the mouth of a colorful dragon. See p. 98.
- **Hilton in the Walt Disney World Resort** (Lake Buena Vista; ☎ 407/827-4000): It's the only official resort on Hotel Plaza Boulevard to offer Disney's Extra Magic Hour option. Other pluses include a huge variety of services, two pools, and spacious junior

suites. And it has a great location next to Downtown Disney. See p. 104.

- **Staybridge Suites Lake Buena Vista** (Lake Buena Vista; ☎ 800/866-4549 or 407/238-0777): Close to the action of Downtown Disney and the theme parks, this resort's one- and two-bedroom suites have full kitchens and are larger and more comfortable than most of the competition. And to help you relax, the resort will do your grocery shopping for you, so you don't have to deal with the hassle. See p. 109.

7 The Best Theme Restaurants

Orlando has elevated themed dining to an art form. The food at these restaurants may not be the best in town (though it won't be terrible either), but you can't beat the atmosphere.

- **World Showcase restaurants** (Epcot; ☎ 407/939-3463): Epcot's World Showcase is home to Orlando's best collection of theme restaurants in one setting. Dine in Italy, chow down in China, or watch a belly dancer do her thing as you eat couscous in Morocco. You'll have a blast no matter which dining spot you choose. See p. 132.
- **Sci-Fi Dine-In Theater Restaurant** (Disney-MGM Studios; ☎ 407/939-3463): Your table is set inside a 1950s-era convertible, your carhop (umm . . . waitress) serves you popcorn as an appetizer, and you can zone out on sci-fi flicks on a giant movie screen

while you eat. It's an out-of-this-world experience. See p. 146.

- **50's Prime Time Café** (Disney-MGM Studios; ☎ 407/939-3463): Ozzie and Harriet would feel right at home inside this replica of mom's kitchen (ca. 1950), where classic TV shows play on black-and-white screens. Servers may threaten to withhold dessert (choices include s'mores!) if you don't finish your meatloaf, so clean that plate! See p. 145.
- **Enchanted Oak Tavern** (Islands of Adventure; no phone): Merlin himself would feel right at home at this dimly lit dining hall, set inside a hollowed-out "tree." The evocative decor looks even better after you've imbibed 1 of the 45 different beers on tap at the restaurant's Alchemy Bar. See p. 284.

8 The Best Places for Adults

Let's face it: Orlando and the theme park zones usually crawl with kids. That's fine if you have your own in tow, but if you're looking for some quality adult time (or at least a place not necessarily swarming with children), you do have some options. Some people are incredulous when informed that Orlando is the Honeymoon Capital of the United States, but it happens to be true; so be assured that there are activities, hotels, and so on that are geared to adults here (though, admittedly, avoiding kids altogether is tough). Aside from the romantic hideaways discussed above, here are some good bets for adults:

- **Visit Epcot.** Of all the major theme parks in Orlando, this one, thanks to its scientific and cultural themes, is the most adult-oriented of the bunch. Shop, stroll, and dine your way through the nations of the World Showcase; take a behind-the-scenes tour of the park's horticulture or architecture; or explore the technological- and scientific-themed attractions of Future World. Just be sure to break in your walking shoes before you arrive! See p. 212.
- **Swim with Dolphins at Discovery Cove.** It's popular with families, but thanks to the park's limit on guest entry (a mere 1,000 people per day), adults won't get overwhelmed by kids at SeaWorld's sister park. There are plenty of places to catch rays in relative serenity, and the dolphin swim's a thrill at any age. See p. 293.
- **Have a meal in an upscale restaurant.** Though it's not a firm rule (especially inside the theme parks), generally speaking, the more you pay for dinner, the more likely it is that you won't encounter children at your meal. So if you're looking for a romantic meal, save up and splurge (and we mean splurge). Great options in town for a special dinner include **Victoria & Albert's** (p. 148), **Emeril's** (p. 160), **California Grill** (p. 150), and **Dux** (p. 164). For a great brunch, head to **Atlantis** (p. 162). For other options, check out chapter 5, "Where to Dine."
- **Explore Winter Park.** This upscale town north of Orlando oozes old-money Southern charm. And the pace here is decidedly slower than the mad rush of the theme parks (adults usually love it, kids get bored). Stroll Park Avenue's shops and restaurants, or take a boat tour along the lake. See p. 65.
- **Party the Night Away at Disney's Pleasure Island and Universal CityWalk.** Both nighttime entertainment districts offer adult atmospheres and have clubs where kids are *verboten*. **Pleasure Island** (p. 324) is a tad more family-friendly than **CityWalk** (p. 328), but its 21-and-over (and the staff is very serious about keeping out those who don't make the age grade) **Mannequins** is arguably the hottest dance club in town. At CityWalk, the best bets for grown-ups are Pat O'Brien's and CityJazz.
- **Head for the Circus.** Cirque du Soleil, that is. Forget about finding any animals, though. Cirque's stylish *La Nouba* combines theatrics, acrobatics, and the incredible style that the Montreal-based troupe is known for. It's an incredible (albeit pricey) way to spend an evening in Orlando. See p. 327.
- **Rev your Engines at the Richard Petty Driving Experience.** If you've ever watched the Daytona 500 race and imagined yourself at the wheel, this attraction is for you. Ride shotgun in a real NASCAR race car, or take a course and learn how to drive the thing yourself. It's an adrenaline-pumper you won't find in a theme park, and nobody under 18's allowed. See p. 370.