

PART FIVE

SPECIAL TIPS *for* SPECIAL PEOPLE



WALT DISNEY WORLD *for* SINGLES

WALT DISNEY WORLD IS GREAT FOR SINGLES. It is safe, clean, and low-pressure. If you're looking for a place to relax without being hit on, Disney World is perfect. Bars, lounges, and nightclubs are the most laid-back and friendly you're likely to find anywhere. In many, you can hang out and not even be asked to buy a drink (or asked to let someone buy a drink for you). Parking lots are well lit and constantly patrolled. For women alone, safety and comfort are unsurpassed.

There's also no need to while away the evening hours alone in your hotel room. Between the BoardWalk and Downtown Disney, nightlife options abound. If you drink more than you should and are a Disney resort guest, Disney buses will return you safely to your hotel.

unofficial **TIP**
Virtually every type of entertainment performed fully clothed is available at an amazingly reasonable price at a Disney nightspot.



WALT DISNEY WORLD *for* COUPLES

WEDDINGS AND HONEYMOONS

DISNEY'S FAIRY TALE WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS department offers a range of wedding venues, services, and honeymoon packages (adaptations of the regular Walt Disney

Travel Company vacations). No special rooms or honeymoon suites are included unless you upgrade. In fact, the only honeymoon features are room service (in one package) and a photo session and keepsake album (in two others). Package rates range from \$1,800–\$4,200. Call the wedding coordinator at ☎ 407-939-4610 or 877-566-0969 or visit **www.disneywedding.com** for more information.

ROMANTIC GETAWAYS

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BUY A HONEYMOON package to enjoy a romantic interlude, but not all Disney hotels are equally romantic. Some are too family oriented; others swarm with convention-goers. We recommend these Disney lodgings for romantics:

- Animal Kingdom Lodge
- Polynesian Resort
- Wilderness Lodge and Villas
- Grand Floridian Beach Resort
- BoardWalk Inn and Villas
- Yacht and Beach Club resorts

All of these properties are expensive. There are also secluded rooms in the Alligator Bayou section of Port Orleans Riverside.

QUIET, ROMANTIC PLACES TO EAT

QUIET, ROMANTIC RESTAURANTS WITH good food are rare in the theme parks. Only the Coral Reef, the terrace at the Rose and Crown, and the San Angel Inn at Epcot satisfy both requirements. Waterfront dining is available at Portobello Yacht Club and Fulton's Crab House at Pleasure Island, and Narcoossee's at the Grand Floridian.

The California Grill atop the Contemporary Resort has the best view at Walt Disney World. If window tables aren't available, ask to be served in the adjoining lounge. Victoria & Albert's at the Grand Floridian is the World's showcase gourmet restaurant; expect to pay big bucks. Other good choices for couples include Shula's Steakhouse at the Dolphin, Jiko at the Animal Kingdom Lodge, and Spoodles and The Flying Fish Café at the BoardWalk.

Eating later in the evening and choosing among the restaurants we've mentioned will improve your chances for quiet, intimate dining, but children—well-behaved or otherwise—are everywhere at Walt Disney World, and you won't escape them.



WALT DISNEY WORLD

for SENIORS

MOST SENIORS WE INTERVIEW ENJOY Disney World much more when they tour with folks their own age. If, however, you're considering going to Disney World with your grandchildren, we recommend an orientation visit without them first. If you know first-hand what to expect, it's much easier to establish limits, maintain control, and set a comfortable pace when you visit with the youngsters.

If you're determined to take the grandkids, read carefully those sections of this book that discuss family touring. Because seniors are a varied and willing lot, there aren't any attractions we would suggest they avoid. For seniors, as with other Disney visitors, personal taste is more important than age. We hate to see mature visitors pass an exceptional attraction like Splash Mountain because younger visitors call it a "thrill ride." A full-blown adventure, Splash Mountain gets its appeal more from music and visual effects than from the thrill of the ride. Because you must choose among attractions that might interest you, we provide facts to help you make informed decisions.

GETTING AROUND

MANY SENIORS LIKE TO WALK, BUT A seven-hour visit to one of the theme parks normally includes four to eight miles on foot. If you aren't up for that much hiking, let a more athletic member of your party push you in a rented wheelchair. The theme parks also offer fun-to-drive electric carts (convenience vehicles). You can rent a chair at the Magic Kingdom in the morning, return it, go to Epcot, present your deposit slip, and get another chair at no additional charge.

LODGING

IF YOU CAN AFFORD IT, STAY IN Walt Disney World. If you're concerned about the quality of your accommodations or the availability of transportation, staying inside the Disney complex will ease your mind. The rooms are some of the nicest in the Orlando area and are always clean and well maintained. Plus, transportation is always available to any destination in Disney World at no additional cost.

Disney hotels reserve rooms closer to restaurants and transportation for guests of any age who can't tolerate much walking. They also provide golf carts to pick up from and

deliver guests to their rooms. Cart service can vary dramatically depending on the time of day and the number of guests requesting service. At check-in time (around 3 p.m.), for example, the wait for a ride can be as long as 40 minutes.

The Contemporary Resort is a good choice for seniors who want to be on the monorail system. So are the Grand Floridian and Polynesian resorts, though both sprawl over many acres, necessitating a lot of walking. For a restful, rustic feeling, choose the Wilderness Lodge and Villas. If you want a kitchen and all the comforts of home, book Old Key West Resort, the Beach Club Villas, or BoardWalk Villas. If you enjoy watching birds and animals, try Animal Kingdom Lodge.

RVers will find pleasant surroundings at Disney's Fort Wilderness Campground. There are also several KOA campgrounds within 20 minutes of Disney World. None offer the wilderness setting or amenities that Disney does, but they cost less.

SENIOR DINING

EAT BREAKFAST AT YOUR HOTEL RESTAURANT or save money by having juice and rolls in your room. Although you aren't allowed to bring food into the parks, fruit, fruit juice, and soft drinks are sold throughout Disney World. Follow

with an early dinner and be out of the restaurants, rested and ready for evening touring and fireworks, long before the main crowd begins to think about dinner. We recommend seniors fit dining and rest times into the day. Plan lunch as your break in the day. Sit back, relax, and enjoy. Then return to your hotel for a nap.

unofficial **TIP**

Make your advance reservations for before noon to avoid the lunch crowds.

WALT DISNEY WORLD *for* **DISABLED GUESTS**

VALUABLE INFORMATION FOR TRIP PLANNING is available at the Web site **www.disneyworld.com**. At Walt Disney World, each of the major theme parks offers a free booklet describing disabled services and facilities at that park. The Disney people are somewhat resistant to mailing you the theme-park booklets in advance, but if you are polite and persistent, they can usually be persuaded. The same information can be found on the Web site. Type "Guest Disabilities FAQ" in the search tool and browse through the results.

For specific requests, including specialized accommodations at the resort hotels or on the Disney Transportation System, call ☎ 407-939-7807 (voice) or ☎ 407-939-7670 (TTY). When the recorded menu comes up, touch “1” on your Touch-Tone phone. Calls to this number should be strictly limited to questions and requests regarding disabled services and accommodations. Other questions should be addressed to ☎ 407-824-4321.

VISITORS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

WHOLLY OR PARTIALLY NONAMBULATORY Guests may easily rent wheelchairs. Most rides, shows, attractions, restrooms, and restaurants in the World accommodate the nonambulatory disabled. If you're in a theme park and need assistance, go to Guest Relations. A limited number of electric carts (motorized convenience vehicles) are available for rent. Easy and fun to drive, they give nonambulatory guests a tremendous degree of freedom and mobility.

Close-in parking is available for disabled visitors at all Disney lots. Request directions when you pay your parking fee. All monorails and most rides, shows, restrooms, and restaurants accommodate wheelchairs.

An information booklet for disabled guests is available at wheelchair rental locations in each park. Theme-park maps issued to each guest on admission are symbol-coded to show nonambulatory guests which attractions accommodate wheelchairs.

Even if an attraction doesn't accommodate wheelchairs, nonambulatory guests still may ride if they can transfer from their wheelchair to the ride's vehicle. Disney staff, however, aren't trained or permitted to assist in transfers. Guests must be able to board the ride unassisted or have a member of their party assist them. Either way, members of the nonambulatory guest's party will be permitted to go along on the ride.

Because waiting areas of most attractions won't accommodate wheelchairs, nonambulatory guests and their party should request boarding instructions from a Disney attendant as soon as they arrive at an attraction. Almost always, the entire group will be allowed to board without a lengthy wait.

VISITORS WITH DIETARY RESTRICTIONS can be assisted at Guest Relations in the theme parks. For Walt Disney World restaurants outside the theme parks, call the restaurant a day in advance for assistance.

SIGHT- AND/OR HEARING-IMPAIRED GUESTS Guest Relations at the theme parks provides complimentary tape cassettes and

portable tape players to assist sight-impaired guests (\$25 refundable deposit required). At the same locations, TDDs are available for hearing-impaired guests. In addition to TDDs, many pay phones in the major parks are equipped with amplifying headsets. See your Disney map for locations.

In addition, braille guide maps are available from Guest Relations at all theme parks. Closed captioning is provided on some rides, while many theater attractions provide reflective captioning. Walt Disney World will provide an interpreter for the live theater shows. To reserve an interpreter, call ☎ 407-824-4321 (voice) or 407-939-8255 (TTY).

NON-APPARENT DISABILITIES We receive many letters from readers whose traveling companion or child requires special assistance, but who, unlike a individual on crutches or in a wheelchair, is not visibly disabled. Some conditions, autism for example, make it very difficult or even impossible to wait in lines for more than a few minutes, or in queues surrounded by a large number of people.

One of the first things to do is obtain a letter from the disabled party's primary physician that explains the specific condition and any special needs the condition implies. The doctor's letter should be explicit enough to fully convey the nature of the condition to the Disney cast member reading the letter. Bring your doctor's note to the Guest Relations window at any Disney theme park and ask for a Guest Assistance Card. The Guest Assistance Card is a special pass designed to allow the disabled individual and his touring companions to wait in a separate, uncrowded holding area, apart from the regular queues at most attractions. One card is good for all four parks, so you do not need to obtain separate cards at each park. You should also pick up a copy of each park's *Guidebook for Guests with Disabilities* (also available online at www.disneyworld.com).