

Enjoying Walt Disney World Without Thrill Rides: Walt Disney World Attraction Review

by Cheryl Pendry, *PassPorter Featured Columnist*

Warning: For the thrill seekers amongst you, or for those with teenagers, what you are about to read may be sacrilege.

One of the things I've always loved about visiting a Disney theme park is that you can enjoy it without going near a single thrill ride.

Certainly, here in the UK, theme parks are very much based around the biggest and baddest thrills, with brand new rides unveiled at the start of each season. You only have to look at the number of coasters that have made their way into places like Universal Orlando, SeaWorld Orlando, and Busch Gardens Tampa in recent years to see that's very much a worldwide trend. While those rides obviously draw huge crowds (you only have to look at the average lines for them to see that), what about those of us who don't like them or can't do them, because of some medical impairment? Walk around a Disney theme park, and there are plenty of alternatives.

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□The one thing that always seems to be unique to Disney are what I call the "story" rides. They're the ones where you see a story unfold in front of you, such as Peter Pan's Flight, the Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh, or moving away from the traditional Disney tales, rides like Spaceship Earth or the Great Movie Ride. They're indoors, sometimes dark, but always fun, and usually suitable for the whole family. A lot of the ride vehicles are relatively slow moving, meaning everyone can enjoy them, although obviously the bouncing with Tigger on the Winnie the Pooh ride may be an exception to that.

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□Then there are the slightly darker story rides, in which I include Pirates of the Caribbean, Maelstrom, and the Haunted Mansion. They have a slightly higher scare factor for young members of the family, perhaps because of drops, in the case of Pirates or Maelstrom, or the theming, in the case of the Haunted Mansion. Despite that, they're still incredibly tame, and most people will still enjoy them. They also still have the same wonderful level of Disney detail in the story that's being told.

The next category is the family-friendly rides, suitable for everyone, such as Dumbo the Flying Elephant, the Magic Carpets of Aladdin, the Tomorrowland Transit Authority Peoplemover, and TriceraTop Spin.

Even the Great Goofini, a mini rollercoaster, aimed at youngsters, is something that everyone, even those who traditionally don't do coasters, should enjoy, although I have to confess, I found it faster than I thought it would be!

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□If you really aren't keen on rides, the beauty of Disney is that there's something for you, with afternoon parades available to watch in three of its Florida theme parks, featuring something for all ages.

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□They're complimented by a regular night-time parade in the Magic Kingdom, Fantasmic! at Disney's Hollywood Studios, IllumiNations at Epcot, and Wishes back at the Magic Kingdom. Admittedly, if you have a child who's not keen on loud noises and/or fireworks, the latter three won't necessarily be suitable for you, but for everyone else, they're something for everyone to enjoy. What I love particularly about Wishes is the fact that you don't need to stake out a front row spot. Find somewhere in Main Street where you can see the castle, and you'll be able to see the show unfold in front of you, meaning you can play in the park until almost the last minute.

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□Alongside this entertainment, there are plenty of shows to enjoy in the parks, particularly at Disney's Hollywood Studios and Animal Kingdom. The Festival of the Lion King, and Finding Nemo at the latter are what I'd describe as shortened versions of a Broadway-quality show, and Beauty and the Beast at the Studios also fits into that category. Alongside that are more unusual shows, the like of which you won't find on any Broadway stage, such as Lights, Motors, Action, the Indiana Jones Epic Stunt Spectacular or the American Idol Experience in the Studios, or Flights of Wonder at Animal Kingdom.

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□Then there are the walkthrough attractions, most notably the Pangani Forest Exploration Trail and the Maharajah Jungle Trek at the Animal Kingdom, both of which we regularly spend considerable amounts of time in during each trip. Sometimes it's all too easy to pass some of these attractions by, but trust me, you can happily wander around some of the countries of the World Showcase, for example. Despite the fact that we've been to Walt Disney World many times now, we still find new nooks and crannies to explore in these pavilions, so it's worth taking the time to just stop, smell the roses, and have a look around, as if you do, the chances are you'll be rewarded by new discoveries.

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□When you think about everything that Walt Disney World has to offer, coasters and thrill rides really do make up a tiny proportion of what's available to visitors. Sure, some people won't be able to resist the lure of Space Mountain, Test Track, Mission Space, Rock'n'Roller Coaster, Tower of Terror or Expedition Everest on their visit, and it's great that

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there is so much for thrill seekers. But for those of us who are a bit more timid with their rides (and don't get me wrong, of those listed, I've been on all of them at least once except for Rock'n'Roller Coaster -- I don't go upside down for anyone!), there's still lots to enjoy.

☐ And that's the beauty of Disney. They know how to come up with theme parks that appeal to everyone in the family, which is after all, what Walt wanted to create all those years ago when the gates first opened to Disneyland. It's good to know his ethos is being kept alive all these years on.

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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