

Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party: A Walt Disney World Special Event Review

by Cheryl Pendry, *PassPorter Featured Columnist*

'Tis the season to be jolly.

That also means it's the season for Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party. I know this is something that divides people, with some, like us, feeling it's a great night's entertainment, and others believing it doesn't represent good value for money.

What do I think of Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party? I've been to the Christmas Party every time I've been to Disney for the holiday season. And even though my visit was exceptionally early this year, my husband and I decided to keep the tradition going. The first thing I need to say is that we didn't get our full money's worth from the party, as we didn't even enter the park until about 7:45 pm, due to a meal at Chef Mickey's, the time of which I couldn't change, no matter how much I tried. Having said that, I still enjoyed the time we had in the Magic Kingdom.

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□ We hadn't been in the park since the Christmas decorations had gone up. So as we walked into Town Square and Main Street USA, the decorations were the first thing that my eyes fell on. And immediately it felt like Christmas, even though it was still mid-November. Something I did notice at once though was the level of Christmas decorations. It was the same in all the parks we visited. It felt as if Disney had started them, but not finished them. One prime example was the lack of the main Christmas tree in the Magic Kingdom, which really surprised me. Sure, there were some lovely poinsettia trees around the hub, but that was it. I knew that the decorations wouldn't all be up until Thanksgiving, but as all the other parks already had their Christmas trees up, that was a bit of a surprise to me.

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□ When we arrived, we also noticed the lines for the few Photopass photographers that were still operating, as those along Main Street had taken a break, with the first parade of the night not far off. It's an old tip, but still a good one, if you want to get some of those prime photos done, for example in Town Square with the toy soldiers in shot, do it early, because the lines will build as the party goes on. And as for the line for Santa, who was out next to City Hall, I don't even want to think how long you'd have stood in that for! I think you'd have missed half the party if you'd lined up at the time we arrived.

The first thing we wanted to do during Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party was see if the Seven Dwarves were out, and they were, but not where they'd been in previous years. While some of our party headed off to Frontierland, I found them exactly where they'd been a couple of weeks earlier at the Halloween Party in front of Enchanted Tales with Belle, and I thought it was a much better setting, as Fantasyland is, to me, where the dwarves naturally live, especially with their coaster being built nearby. The wait was long, maybe 30 minutes, but it could have been so much worse, as during the Halloween Party, we'd been told it was two hours!

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□I have to say I loved seeing the new Fantasyland all lit up during the party, with some neat blue lighting adding a magical touch to this area. However, the original castle was still the best by far, complete with its icicle effect. This is one lovely holiday tradition that I hope they never stop doing, as it really brings Cinderella Castle to life after dark.

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□Our next priority was Holiday Wishes, although our plans didn't quite work out, and we ended up watching it from Liberty Square. It certainly gave the show a unique perspective, although some of the effects on the castle, particularly the Christmas tree section, obviously weren't visible from there. However, occasionally, it is fun to see it from somewhere else other than in front of the castle, as it gives you more of an idea of just how far away they set those massive fireworks off from!

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□One of the reasons we weren't in prime position when Holiday Wishes started was that we had been stocking up on our free holiday goodies. After all, it's not often you get something free at Disney! Having only recently eaten, much as I'd have loved to, I couldn't face the free cookies, but the hot chocolate was lovely, and just what I needed at that point to keep me going for another couple of hours.

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□The next thing we wanted to see was the parade, and we always opt for the later one, as lots of people leave the park after seeing the earlier parade and the fireworks, making it easier to stake out a front row spot. On the night we were there, there were still front row positions going about 10 minutes before the parade started. Once again, it was filled with all the holiday treasures you expect, including my favourites the toy soldiers, the reindeers, and the delightful ponies leading Cinderella's carriage. I also love the scents they pump out during this parade, with some of the gingerbread smells in particular leaving me wishing that I had indulged on those cookies earlier on. I don't know whether it was me, but I thought it was packed with a lot more characters than I remembered from last year, but maybe it's just my poor memory…

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□Traditionally, when we come to the Christmas Party, we always come

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for the fireworks, the parade, and if they're out, the seven dwarves, so we had done everything on our list, and more, but this year, there was an additional attraction we wanted to see. For those who don't know, the traditional Jungle Cruise has been turned into the Jingle Cruise just for the holiday season. Not having read any reviews, I was curious to see what it was like. I have to say I really enjoyed it, but then, I love going on attractions after dark that you're used to seeing in the day. The queue area is all decked out in Christmas decorations, and the boats have been given new holiday names, like Poinsettia Sal.

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□I've heard some negative reviews of this transformation, but I really enjoyed it. Sure, once you set off, there's not much to it, apart from a series of holiday themed jokes thrown in along the way, but I wasn't expecting much more from that. It's a bit of a departure from the norm, and it fits in perfectly to the Christmas Party theme, so if you're going this year, do be sure to try it.

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□We amazed ourselves this year, and managed to last until the park actually closed at midnight, so I guess you could say we really enjoyed the party. It just goes to show, even if you're old timers, you can still party with the best of them!

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□Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party is on selected nights at the Magic Kingdom from now until Friday 20 December. Ticket prices are \$62/adults, and \$57/children in advance or \$67/adults and \$62 on the day. On some dates advance pricing is not available, but Annual Passholder and Disney Vacation Club discounts may be available in advance, so do be sure to ask when you book.

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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