

The Villas at Disney's Grand Floridian: A Disney Vacation Club Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

October 2013 saw the opening of an extension to an already familiar resort, with the arrival of the Villas at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort and Spa.

We were lucky enough to snag a night's stay there just a few days after they opened their doors, and thus were one of the first guests to experience the new Disney Vacation Club villas.

I'll start by saying that we are no fans of the original Grand Floridian, as we find it just too ostentatious. Sure, it's luxurious and glamorous, but we just feel it lacks a homely feel. Therefore, it was with a bit of trepidation that we arrived at the Villas for our one-night stay there, exhausted by our nine-and-a-half hour flight from the UK.

□

□ We needn't have worried. The second we stepped into the Grand Floridian Villas lobby, we felt as if we belonged here. It's nowhere near as imposing as the main building, although once you reach the area by the elevators, look up, as the view of the chandeliers overhead really does take your breath away. Instead, when you walk in, your attention immediately goes to the Mary Poppins-themed fountain towards the back of the lobby, complete with playful penguins with wonderful expressions on their faces. It's a nice, whimsical touch, and it also makes the whole place feel much more home-y.

□

□ We spent our night here in a one-bedroom lake view villa, and there's no other way to put it other than to say that we were completely blown away by the place. These are among the largest one-bedroom villas of the Disney Vacation Club offerings on Walt Disney World property, with only those at Old Key West coming in at a larger size. In truth though, nice as the size was, it wasn't that which caught our attention. It was the beautiful Victorian-style theming to the place. Although it comes with every mod con you can think of, including a TV in the bathroom mirror, a walk-in shower, ready-made ice compartment in the freezer, and a waste disposal unit in the kitchen sink, it really is the perfect blend of old and new.

A one-bedroom villa here at the Grand Floridian comes with a full kitchen, complete with a comfy seating area where you can eat any meals you prepare here, a living area with a good amount of seating, including a double sleeper sofa, and a sleeper bed underneath the TV.

□

□ The two-part bathroom is pretty spread out, with two sinks just as you enter, followed by the toilet, and then the massive walk-in shower. Through a door you'll find another sink, along with the Victorian-style freestanding bath tub. I was really excited to try this, as it's actually a Jacuzzi bath, but I was disappointed by it, compared to similar tubs at other Disney Vacation Club resorts. I found the jets to be quite harsh, and not located so that they can focus on tired areas of the body, such as your back and legs. We also had a slightly disturbing experience with the thing, where it came back on after we'd gone to bed! Not great when you're already jetlagged!

□ The master bedroom is a lovely size, with a wonderfully comfortable bed and its own walk-in closet, which was a lovely surprise to find. Inside the closet is a Grand Floridian dressing gown, another nice surprise.

□ We had a lovely view across Seven Seas Lagoon, and could see the rest of the Grand Floridian Villas, the neighboring Wedding Pavilion, and the Polynesian Resort. If we walked to one side of the balcony, we could even see the Contemporary far off to one side.

□ Beautiful as the room and the lobby are, there were some downsides to our admittedly short stay at the Villas at the Grand Floridian. The main issue was its location, and the lack of facilities there. When you're tired, it is quite a hike over to Gasparilla's Grill and Games to get some counter service food, which we certainly felt on the way back, loaded up with dinner.

□ While the shops aren't quite that far away, they're still located in the main building, and if it was a day of torrential rain, it would not be a fun walk over there. We were very surprised that, given the distance, there wasn't at least a small shop located in the Villas. While you can buy cold drinks at one of the vending machines, that's about it there. An outlet selling a small variety of breakfast items, for example, would be a welcome addition.

□ The parking lot is very convenient for the Grand Floridian Villas, just just across from the main entrance, behind the Senses Spa. On your way there, you'll pass the barbecue grill area, so don't expect a quiet time grilling there. The parking is a definite plus, and a big improvement on the parking arrangements for the main resort, where valet parking definitely rules.

□ Our overall verdict on the Grand Floridian Villas? We absolutely fell in love with them. The theming was just perfect for us, homely and yet still grand, and despite the lack of facilities at the Villas themselves, the

.....

superb rooms make up for this. I can imagine staying here, and (shock horror!) barely moving to go to the parks, as the resort is one I'd love to spend some time enjoying. Availability permitting, we will definitely be returning time and time again, as this is a superb addition to the Disney Vacation Club resorts at Walt Disney World.

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!](#)

Article last updated: 04-10-2014

View the latest version online at:

<http://www.passporter.com/articles/villas-grand-floridian-review.html>

Copyright by Cheryl Pendry. All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. No part of this publication may be stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act. Resale of this guide is strictly prohibited without the copyright holder's permission. If you purchased this publication from someone other than PassPorter Travel Press, please call 877-929-3273.

View more PassPorter Articles online at <http://www.passporter.com/articles/>