

Agent P's World Showcase Adventure: A Walt Disney World Attraction Review

by Jessica Barnett, PassPorter Guest Contributor

My family had the opportunity to try out the new and improved Agent P's World Showcase Adventure at Epcot on our recent trip to Walt Disney World.

This popular activity takes participants on a Phineas and Ferb-themed quest around the World Showcase Lagoon, with a communications handset in hand, and the handsets were part of the activity's update. We experienced the previous version, which used "flip-style" phones (see why it needed an update?) on our last trip to Walt Disney World in 2012. Actually, we also used the "flip-style" phone during our first day in Epcot during this trip.

On our next day in Epcot, my 9-, 6-, and 4-year-olds were very disappointed to be told that the Agent P's World Showcase Adventure was not available, because they were upgrading the system. That was supposed to be our last day in Epcot. Fortunately, we had one day at the end of our trip that was purposely left open, in order to revisit any favorite attractions. My kids wanted to spend that day at Epcot, specifically to try out the new Agent P phones. All that my son needed to hear was "upgrade" and "smart phone technology." He was sold.

For those who have not done this before, it is very entertaining! Agent P is the alter-ego of Perry the Platypus, who is Phineas and Ferb's pet in the animated Disney TV show. Agent P battles to defeat his nemesis, the evil Dr. Doofenshmidt (who is really more silly than evil). The participants function as secret agents to help Agent P complete missions in specific countries throughout the World Showcase.

Missions are offered in the Mexico, Norway, China, Germany, Japan, France, and United Kingdom pavilions. When you sign up, the Disney cast member will give you a phone to borrow. It is actually a piece of "Field Operative Notification Equipment (F.O.N.E.)." During the course of the roughly 30-minute mission, you will travel to different spots in that country, identifying specific landmarks and answering questions on the F.O.N.E.. At certain times during the mission, the F.O.N.E. will activate special effects that you and passers-by can see! You can replay most of the effects and can repeat instructions if necessary.

□ We experienced the upgraded Agent P's World Showcase Adventure on June 29th, and the system had only been active for 3 days. The activity is currently offered from 11:00 am to 8:15 pm, and "recruiting" takes place near the Odyssey Bridge, and in Norway, Italy, and the

International Gateway. That's where they receive their F.O.N.E.s. The new phones are Nokia smart phones with a touch screen interface. We completed the missions in Norway, China, and Japan. We did both Norway and Japan twice, since the phone reset itself when we were in Norway, and my kids started the Japan adventure just before we sat down for lunch, so the mission "timed out."

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□ Overall, the experience was positive. The sound and picture are tremendously better than with the "flip-style" F.O.N.E.s. The picture is much bigger and clearer. We did have issues with the kids accidentally pressing a button on the sides of the F.O.N.E., since there are so many buttons that it is actually difficult to hold them without doing so. This caused many problems, from temporarily opening another app, to restarting the entire mission. This was frustrating for our kids, and for us. We finally solved this problem by having the parents hold the F.O.N.E., and the kids pressed the buttons when necessary. The other concern is that these are expensive smart phones, without any protective covers. The cast members do caution the kids not to drop them, but obviously that is going to be an issue. I'm sure that Disney will work out the glitches with the system, as they always do.

We would recommend having an adult hold the F.O.N.E., as we did. If you encounter any technical problems with the F.O.N.E., just visit the closest Recruiting Center for help (in Norway, Italy, near the International Gateway, and near the Odyssey Bridge). They are identified by a wagon with cast members dressed in green, and a stuffed animal Agent P. Also, Disney has a maximum number of F.O.N.E.s that may be active in any one country at a time. If this number is reached, you will be unable to start a mission in that country until someone else completes their mission.

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□ I asked my kids if they had anything to add to this article. They were really excited to try out the upgraded phones. They liked the fact that Disney randomizes the different parts of the mission, much the same way that they randomize the ride experience on Star Tours and Tower of Terror. Because of this, you can have a different experience when repeating the same mission in the same country. They are hoping that Disney changes the missions in the future, and are hoping for new special effects to be triggered in each country.

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□ Overall, we enjoyed the new system and certainly enjoyed the better graphics. There are many scenes involving Agent P's "cover family" which were quite amusing! My kids are already big fans of Phineas and Ferb, and had a great time with the whole experience. We will definitely do this again on our next trip.

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About The Author: Jessica is a busy part-time physician assistant and a full-time mom of three. She loves Walt Disney World, and is anticipating her next trip in 2016.

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