

Pirates and Pals Fireworks Voyage: A Walt Disney World Activity Review

by Beth Rashleigh, PassPorter Guest Contributor

We took our second trip to Disney World with our 5-year-old son this fall and discovered something special.

Our first Disney trip was with a group of 8 and although we really enjoyed our trip, we discovered that it was an exercise in democracy (not a typo!). There were several things on our list that we knew our pirate lover would enjoy but we just couldn't fit in. The Pirates and Pals Fireworks Cruise topped that list.

We were lucky enough to stay at the Contemporary Resort for our trip from October 17-25, 2014. Words can't even express how much we loved staying at this resort and how much joy it brought my husband and I each time our son saw the monorail float through our hotel. It was simply priceless.

□ Since the Pirates and Pals Cruise departs right from the Contemporary Resort, we headed down to level two at around 8:00 pm. Upon arrival, we checked in and received very cool bandanas that we were told to put on so that they could easily identify us as part of the voyage. We spent some time waiting around outside a ballroom for things to get started. Luckily that had coloring pages for the kids and a few pirate decorations out and about which helped to entertain our son during the wait.

□ At around 8:30 pm, the doors to the ballroom were opened and we were able to go in and enjoy a dessert and snack buffet. It included items like popcorn, cake, brownies, and mickey bars. We immediately lined up to meet Mr. Smee and Captain Hook. This was a great meet and greet where they spent several minutes with each group and you could get both individual pictures with each character and a group shot. A Photopass photographer was available to take pictures as well and we couldn't have been more pleased with how our photos turned out.

As a special surprise, our son also got dressed up like a pirate at Pirates League that afternoon so he fit right into the decor! If you've got Pirates League on your list this is a great combination of activities. My only advice would be to bring some eye makeup remover with you on your trip. It took us days to get the eye liner off his face.

□ After spending about 30 minutes in the ballroom we were then joined by our "Pirate Host Patch" for our cruise. The best way to describe him

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would be pirate comedians. Puns abounded but it was all in good fun. We headed out to the dock at the Contemporary for our cruise. Captain Hook and Mr. Smee walk out with the group and say goodbye at the dock.

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□We then headed out onto Bay Lake to head over to the Lagoon. We got there just in time to view the Electric Water Pageant, which somehow we had never seen before. It was actually very good and we enjoyed seeing this from close up. We then viewed the Hallowishes Fireworks from the Lagoon. If you've not had the chance to see the Halloween Party fireworks, you've got to make a trip to see them. They are truly remarkable and literally the best fireworks I have ever seen. They pipe the music for the fireworks into the sound system of the boat so you get all the benefits of the fireworks without the crowds! Perfection!

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□Throughout the cruise our Pirate Host told lots of jokes and interacted with all the guests. On the way back to the Contemporary the children were able to compete in a trivia contest to win pirate prizes. Our little guy won a pirate hook that he just loved.

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□As we pulled up to the dock, Peter Pan was there waiting for us. He walks everyone back up towards the Contemporary pool area for a meet and greet and photos. Our little pirate was thrilled!

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□Overall, we thoroughly enjoyed the experience and I would highly recommend it for anyone with pirate lovers in their family. This will be one of those memories for our family that I know we'll be talking about for years to come.

[Disney's Pirates & Pals Fireworks Voyage is currently \$59/adult and \$34/child ages 3-9. To reserve this 1.5-hour fireworks cruise, call 407-WDW-PLAY up to 180 days in advance.]

About The Author: Beth is a Talent Development Consultant for a healthcare company in Indianapolis, IN, the Mom to an awesome five year old, and wife to a wonderful husband. She started visiting Disney as a baby and has taken too many visits to count. Her goal in life as a parent is for her son to be able to say the same thing one day!

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