

The Garden Grill at Epcot: A Walt Disney World Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

□Once upon a time -- now there's a start that most of you will be familiar with -- a couple used to go to Walt Disney World, and they always used to visit the Garden Grill, regularly enjoying breakfast or lunch there. Then, unfortunately, things changed. Both meals were removed from this restaurant located in the Land in Epcot. With dinner the only remaining option, it proved almost impossible to squeeze the Garden Grill into our plans, given there are so many other wonderful Disney restaurants to head to for dinner. Thankfully, this fairy tale has a happy ending, and we were able to return to the Garden Grill on our most recent Disney visit.

□The Garden Grill is home to a character dinner that features Farmer Mickey with his pals, Pluto and Chip and Dale. Something that not everyone knows before they dine at the Garden Grill is that the restaurant rotates, allowing you to see scenes from the Living With The Land attraction. Having dined there before, we were aware of this, but it was lovely to see the surprise on the face of one of those we were dining with when she realized that we were in fact gently moving! For anyone who has a fear of motion sickness with this, it's something that is barely noticeable, so hopefully it's something that won't affect you.

□So what's on offer here? Well, apart from the delights of greeting four popular Disney characters, literally plate loads of good food! That was something that really stood out to us on our visit, just how much came out, and kept coming out too… We started off with a basket of warm bread, along with orange blossom honey butter, and I have to say it was a beautiful start to the meal, although we had to control ourselves, as we were served eight pieces of bread for just the four of us. See what I mean about getting a lot of food?!

□Then you move on to something a bit healthier, a harvest inspired farmer's salad, including such delights of egg, tomato, and cucumber. Everything is served family style here, so if you do want more (and if you do, I want to meet you to congratulate you!) you can simply ask for it.

□For entree, there was a selection of items. The meat eaters were able to enjoy either chargrilled beef with a red wine demi-glace, or the

roasted all-natural turkey breast with stuffing and a house-made gravy. However, there was still plenty for me, including the sustainable fish of the day, which on the day we visited was tilapia. Now have you ever been on Living With The Land and heard how the food they grow in here is served up at Walt Disney World restaurants? Well, guess where the tilapia came from? I think you've worked it out.

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□For anyone who doesn't eat fish or meat, there was also a vegetarian option, which I did sample, although sadly I couldn't tell you what it was, as it didn't appear on the menu. The chef did tell me what it was (he came to speak to me about my allergies), but he reeled it off so quickly, unfortunately I didn't catch it. It was pleasant, although a little spicy for my taste, and perhaps the only minor disappointment of the whole meal.

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□The side items were a little bit limited if you don't eat meat, as the buttermilk mashed potatoes came with a bacon and leek dressing, but at least I was able to enjoy the garden fresh vegetables, and it was hardly as if I needed lots of side dishes to fill up on, given how much had already appeared on our table by that point in the meal.

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□Now here I must say a word about our server, Fiorella, who also insisted on bringing us items from the children's menu to try. I passed on the mac and cheese, as it doesn't do much for me, and I really have to be in the mood to have it, but the sweet potato fries were wonderful, and I thought it was a pleasant change to see something so unusual on a children's menu.

□We were also lucky enough to be able to sample the children's dessert, a cupcake with chocolate on top, and quite frankly, it was way too good for the youngest members of the family. It was wonderfully light, and I'd say better than the adult option, which was a seasonal skillet dessert.

The night we were there it was a berry cobbler, and it was a lovely surprise to be able to sample such a dessert, given that many such cobblers often contain fruits that I'm allergic to.

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□I have to say that I didn't particularly go into our dinner at the Garden Grill expecting a lot. Sure, I had some wonderful memories of meals there, but we were going back a number of years, and we all know how quickly restaurants can go downhill. Thankfully, that wasn't the case with the Garden Grill, but I still think, given the high quality (and quantity!) of the food here, that it's a crying shame that Disney doesn't open it back up for either breakfast or lunch, or preferably both.

(Editor's Note: Beginning November 8, 2015, the Garden Grill will begin serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner!) However, there is hope, as it's been confirmed that the Garden Grill will once again be participating in the Candlelight Processional dining packages during the forthcoming holiday season, and as part of that, lunch will be available, as well as

dinner. Let's hope this becomes a permanent fixture for 2016…

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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