

## Take a Walk on The Wild Side at Busch Gardens Tampa (Part 2): An Orlando-Area Attraction Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

In this, the second part of this [series of articles](#) looking at Busch Gardens Tampa, we continue our exploration.

Having arrived, and headed through Morocco, we're now in Cheetah Hunt in the southeastern area of Busch Gardens, named after the headline coaster that starts and finishes here.

Right next door to Cheetah Hunt is a ride that hasn't changed at all in the 15 plus years I've been visiting Busch Gardens, the Skyride. In fact, you need to choose your line very carefully, as the entrance for Cheetah Hunt is literally right next door to the one for the Skyride, and if you pick the wrong line, it could be quite a shock!

□ As the name suggests, the Skyride is essentially a cable car ride, which takes you over to the Jungala/Stanleyville areas at the back of the park. It gives you some wonderful views of the savannah beneath, although there are other ways to see the animals, if you're not a fan of cable car rides, or don't like heights. If there's not much of a wait, it's a very pleasant way to cross from one part of the park to another, saving some considerable walking -- a real bonus on a hot and humid day!

□ You'll also be able to scope out some of the park's other thrill rides, and coasters, as they do make up quite a sight on the skyline. That is certainly one thing worth knowing before you come to Busch Gardens -- if you're used to Disney with its attention to detail and seamless theming everywhere you look, you won't get that here. That's not necessarily a criticism of the park, it's just something that Disney fans may not be used to, and it's a bit of a shock if you're not expecting it.

The Skyride deposits you at the entrance to Jungala, which is a new area of the park since our previous visit. On that trip, sadly Busch Gardens' famed white Bengal tigers hadn't been in residence because of the work being done on their new home, which was a real disappointment to me, as I love seeing them. So was their new habitat worth that disappointment? Absolutely! They now have a couple of different outdoor areas to roam in, although during our visit, one was undergoing maintenance, which certainly led to some interesting behaviour from the tigers, as we got the distinct impression from the way they acted that they could smell the humans working on the other side of doors in

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their usual enclosures.

☐ Once again, as with the cheetahs, there are viewing areas out in the open air, and from behind glass, and the nice touch with Tiger Lodge is that you can get drinks, including alcoholic beverages, and chips, and there are benches and tables set up for you to enjoy your beverage, and take in the beautiful view outside. Sadly, due I assume to the low crowd levels, it wasn't open on the day we visited, which was a great shame, as I could quite happily have sampled their wine flight, while watching the activity. However, younger members of the family aren't left out. They can sneak into a child sized viewing area in the gift shop here, and in the area that was out of action on the day we visited, you can even appear underneath them with glass above your head -- quite an experience I'd imagine!

☐ However, the best experience for us was when we entered Tiger Trail, a complex that takes you through, and past the tigers. We were fortunate enough to be there when the tiger decided that he was going to head through the tiger tunnel above our heads, and then lay down, as he couldn't get into the other part of his enclosure. We got some superb photos of him just relaxing there, and it was a wonderful memory. It was further evidence that, when visiting any attraction connected to animals, you need to take your time, as you just never know what they might do next. Had we rushed through, we would have missed this completely.

☐ There is a lot more to Jungala, including Jungle Flyers, a zip line experience for youngsters, and the Wild Surge, a launch ride, which was far too scary for us to consider! There are also orang-utans in residence here, although sadly we didn't get a chance to see them on our fleeting visit. If you're getting the impression that there's a lot to see and do here, and perhaps too much for one day, you wouldn't be far wrong, but then again, of course that's what all theme parks set out to achieve, as they want you to stay as long as possible.

☐ In fact, even though Congo is just next door to Jungala, and is at the northernmost point of the park, we managed to miss it completely during our day. To give you an idea, it's home to one of the park's three water rides, the Congo River Rapids, which is probably the tamest, but even so, that still wouldn't tempt me to try it! Kumba, a name inspired by the roar of a lion, is also located here, another of Busch Gardens' major coasters. It's certainly not one for the faint hearted, although if you want to experience weightlessness while looping the loop, this may be the ride for you! Personally, I can't think of anything worse, but I'm sure plenty of people would be keen to give it a go.

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□ In the next installment, it's time to take a trip into Africa, as we explore Nairobi, and the park's expansive Serengeti Plain -- perfect for animal spotting!

*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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