

# Finally Enjoying the Finished Fantasyland at the Magic Kingdom: A Walt Disney World Park Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

The expansion of New Fantasyland in the Magic Kingdom was a massive undertaking, and for those of us who travelled to visit Walt Disney World during its construction, we certainly knew all about it!

Our most recent trip was the first chance we'd had to see everything completed, as on the previous two visits, we'd only been able to sample parts of the expansion, with others remaining under construction.

The big new addition to Fantasyland this trip was the Seven Dwarfs Mine Train, which we'd spent the last two visits admiring through the occasional viewing areas in the walls surrounding it. It certainly looked as if it would be a superb addition, and in terms of theming, it is. The ride dominates this part of the park, as you'd expect, and we had a lot of fun watching the trains circle round, with lots of screams and shouts of delights and smiles on the faces of the riders. As we were there in the early spring, it's hard to know what it's like during the hot and sweltering summer months, but I must admit looking at all those alpine trees around the rail tracks certainly gave me a chill!

□ As for the ride itself, I'd heard a lot about it, and I was keen to try it, but I was also apprehensive, given that neither of us are coaster fans. However, this was Fantasyland, so heck, how bad could it be? Well, it turned out that it was absolutely fine, and we both really enjoyed it, although let's just say it's probably just as well it's popular, as I don't think it's something we could ride again and again without a break! What I really liked about this was the different perspective it gives you of the new part of Fantasyland, as you get to see it from above, and you can see the Beast's Castle towering above you. I also loved the interior parts with the dwarves, and seeing them in the cottage at the end was a real treat.

□ The other major new addition in the finished Fantasyland expansion was the Princess Fairytale Hall, where of course the big attractions are those amazingly popular Frozen princesses Anna and Elsa. I had completely written off seeing them during our trip, given the horror stories I'd heard about literally hours and hours of waits, and I wasn't lucky enough to snag a Fastpass+ for them, so imagine my amazement when we arrived in Fantasyland early one morning to be told by the Cast Member that the wait was just 20 minutes. Well of course we weren't

---

going to pass that up! I loved the magnificent entrance, designed to look inside as the name suggested, like a fairytale hall, with high ceilings, chandeliers, and beautiful portraits of various Disney princesses. I can imagine young princesses entering here, and immediately feeling they had walked into a real castle!

Although those were the final two elements of the expansion, during previous visits, we had been lucky enough to see the other parts, and it's just as well, as during our most recent trip, one of them, Under the Sea-Journey of the Little Mermaid was closed for refurbishment. I have to confess I was disappointed that this debuted as part of the expansion, given that it already exists in Disneyland. I much prefer it when attractions are kept as unique to one particular park. I can't say we've ever had any desire to visit Ariel's Grotto next door either before or after the expansion, but that flame haired mermaid certainly seems to sustain her popularity over the years.

□

□One thing I do love about this area is how much it reminds me of Tokyo DisneySea. There's just something about the design of the castle that immediately makes me think of that. Just like the Seven Dwarfs Mine Train, it has some wonderful theming, and despite my initial fears when this was being constructed, once completed, it does all fit together.

□

□However, the one part of the new Fantasyland that I can't say I'm overly enamoured with is what I call the circus section. Encompassing Dumbo the Flying Elephant, which now has double the ride capacity, and the Barnstormer, the only addition attractions here are the Casey Jr. Splash and Soak station, aimed very firmly at the youngest members of the family, and the opportunity to meet some of your favourite Disney characters in Pete's Silly Side Show. We're all very different, but for me, this area is just too garish, although I fully appreciate it's aimed at those much younger than me, who probably absolutely love it.

□

□The final section of the new Fantasyland takes you into Belle's world, firstly through the Enchanted Tales with Belle, which was a lot more fun than I would have ever imagined. I had no idea why waits were so long for it, but having been through it, I could understand. It's a wonderfully immersive experience, the sort of thing I can only really imagine a Disney park doing this well.

□

□Nearby is the dominating sight of the Beast's Castle, home to Be Our Guest, and here I do think it's a great shame that, for many visitors to the park, they'll never get a chance to see inside it. At least with the advent of breakfast there, now it's open for all meals throughout the day, but even so, I would imagine the average visitor, who doesn't know about making advanced dining reservations up to 180 days in advance

may be in for a shock when they try to dine there.

□

□While I understand why Disney doesn't do this, as it's probably down to logistics, I still think it would be nice to allow guests without reservations in to tour the castle, perhaps in between the changeover of meals. I remember how disappointed I was on our December 2012 when we couldn't get a reservation for Be Our Guest, as I knew that meant I wouldn't be able to see the beautiful interior of this castle. I can imagine there are still a lot of other visitors who feel that way to this day.

□

□It's wonderful to finally see the Fantasyland expansion completed, as it has added a huge amount in terms of wonderful theming, new and reimagined attractions, dining, and shopping. It's taken a long time to get there, but now it's done, it's a great addition, and I'm quite sure it's helped to bring Fantasyland back to where it should be -- the first place a lot of visitors to the Magic Kingdom will head for.

*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: 11-12-2015

View the latest version online at:

<http://www.passporter.com/articles/finished-fantasyland-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/>