

Club 33 at Disneyland - Part 1: A Disneyland Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

On our most recent visit to Disneyland, we were privileged enough to visit Club 33.

For those of you who know about this place, you'll understand what a honour this is. For those who don't, here's a little bit of background...

Club 33 was developed by Walt himself, who wanted a special place in Disneyland where he could entertain visiting VIPs in a quiet atmosphere. The aim was to have superb food and distinctive decor. Given that Walt had so much input into Club 33, it's tragic to learn that it in fact opened five months after his death, so he never got to see the finished product he had worked so hard on.

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□To get into Club 33, you have to be invited by an existing member, and membership can take many years to acquire. It also doesn't come cheaply, with costs into five figures. Fortunately, we were able to visit, thanks to friends of friends, and it was an amazing experience, and one I'd thoroughly recommend to any Disney fan.

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□Club 33 is located in New Orleans Square in Disneyland, but honestly, if you didn't know it was there, you'd struggle to find it. Look up, and the chances are that the second floor balconies you're looking at are part of Club 33 somewhere along the way. It takes up a lot more space than I certainly ever realised. The name comes from its address, 33 Royal Street, and if you look really closely, near the Blue Bayou, you will find a door with "33" next to it. That used to be the entrance, but following a recent major refurbishment, we were summoned elsewhere. Don't ask me exactly where, as I can remember is it was around the corner. We'll put that down to my excitement!

You're greeted at the door and immediately you know you're somewhere that's both very special and very private. The exclusive feel starts the second you walk into the reception area. It's very ornate, with plush covered chairs, unusual lights, and wallpaper that evokes the Victorian era. From there, you're escorted into the open courtyard that is similar to many of the others in New Orleans Square, although whereas usually you glimpse them, and the staircases don't take you anywhere, the one here takes you up to the club above. Chairs and tables are scattered around, and statues and plants are everywhere you look.

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□Once upstairs, the restrooms are to your left, and I need to say a word

about these. If you are ever fortunate enough to go to Club 33, be sure to take a camera with you on your restroom visit, as they are an attraction in their own right. In the women's, a chaise lounge greets you, and then your eye is drawn to the two padded chairs at a table in front of a mirror. Personally, I felt as if I'd time travelled back to the Victorian period, and that theme continues with both the stalls and the sinks, very ornately decorated with lots of dark blue, and golden taps, door knobs and edging to the mirrors. It's perhaps the grandest set of restrooms I've ever been in. Oh and then there are the exclusive Club 33 monogrammed paper towels. One or two of those may just have found their way into my handbag…

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□From the staircase, you turn right to head into the Club 33 complex proper, and you immediately know where you are, with a 33 mosaic in front of the main door to greet you. Once again, the entrance room is very opulent, complete with piano and chandelier. It's very bright with light streaming in from the windows, and it's also quite open, with plenty of standing room.

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□As you enter, there's a cabinet to your right, selling Club 33 souvenirs. Sadly, they didn't have a fridge magnet to add to our collection, so we passed on what was on offer. From here, you can then either head into the restaurant, which we'll cover in the next instalment, or the lounge. As we were a bit early for our dinner appointment, we headed into the lounge first.

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□As we walked in, along a long corridor, our hosts pointed out the booths that line this, which are themed to the Haunted Mansion. Apparently, these are newly installed, as Club 33 underwent a major renovation recently. As part of this work, when certain pieces of music are played in the lounge, parts of it come to life, such as the musical instruments behind the bar, or even the piano, which was a bit eerie, given there was no-one sitting there playing it at the time. Although the bar area is dark, with lots of mahogany used in here, it's still remarkably light, thanks to all the various windows they have in here. It was a pleasant area to sit and enjoy a drink, and we were very surprised that there was only one other group in here when we visited. That certainly made it feel even more exclusive. I could imagine hanging out here for an evening.

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□One thing that first time visitors to Club 33 do need to know is that there is a dress code. Even our friends, who had been previously, weren't aware that men aren't allowed in for dinner unless they're wearing pants. That caused a problem, given my husband was in crops. Thankfully, the staff are prepared for every eventuality, or at least that's what it felt like, and they had a pair of pants that he could change

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into. He was pleasantly surprised by how well they fit. Once he was all kitted out, and we'd had time to adjust to our wonderfully exclusive surroundings, it was time to head into the dining room for our meal. Full details of that coming up in the next of this series of articles.

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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