

# Lessons Learned at Walt Disney World: A Walt Disney World Resort Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

This is the latest in a [series of articles](#) looking at our recent Disney vacations, and what lessons we learnt from each of them. This time, it's the turn of Walt Disney World, and our most recent visit there was in late February/early March 2015.

We deliberately chose that time of year for cooler temperatures, as neither of us does well in the heat, and for the most part, it worked out Ok. Towards the end of our vacation, we were getting hotter days, but you could still manage to be outside for a reasonable amount of time before the heat began to sap your strength. I'd certainly consider travelling again at this time of the year to Florida, based on our experiences.

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□I'd also look at flying out to Orlando at the end of the school holidays. We flew on a Friday that was the last day of the week long half term February holiday in the UK, and our plane was almost completely deserted. We were in Premium Economy, and out of about 50 seats, there was only something like 14 of us. What a pleasant change that flight was! We're used to pretty much every seat being taken, and it had been a long time since we'd seen such a quiet flight.

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□When we booked the trip, I knew that we'd be at Disney during a runDisney event, in this case, the Princess half marathon, and after gathering up some excellent advice from the PassPorter message boards beforehand, we decided that we'd go and cheer on the runners from outside the Contemporary, given we were staying at Bay Lake Tower. I did learn some lessons from that. Naively, when someone told me they'd be dressed as Belle, I thought she'd be easy to spot. Oh my goodness, how wrong can you be! There were literally hundreds of Belles, and I didn't stand a chance. I had no concept of how many runners there would be, and how difficult it would be to spot individuals, so if we watch a race again, I'll definitely find out more about timings, and roughly when we can expect to see someone.

I was surprised at how little information there was from Disney about the race, especially given there were road closures, and those staying at the Contemporary would be affected. We managed fine, but I was very glad I'd found out details before our trip, as had we waited for the information from Disney, I think we'd have been disappointed, and perhaps a little shocked to find out how much impact the races have on getting around Disney property. That morning, for example, you simply

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could not walk from the Contemporary to the Magic Kingdom, and that wasn't very well advertised.

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□Something else I learnt this trip was that it didn't seem to matter how early I timed our dinner for, with the intention of seeing IllumiNations afterwards, it just didn't work out. We had three nights in a row, where our ADR times were between 6:15pm and 6:45pm, and we were seated on time at each restaurant, but the meals ended up taking a lot longer than we anticipated. It wasn't a bad thing, as we were with great friends, and the course were all well timed, but if I want to see IllumiNations after dinner on a future trip, I'll definitely be making our reservation times even earlier to ensure that happens.

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□Staying with dining, I don't know about you, but sometimes we find it takes many trips to return to a specific restaurant. It's not that we've had a bad experience there, rather it's there are just too many great places to eat at Walt Disney World that getting around them all takes forever! We made our way back to the Garden Grill and absolutely adored our dinner there, while our lunch at the Hollywood Brown Derby was superb. Admittedly, our dinner at Il Mulino at the Swan wasn't quite as good as we remembered from many years earlier, but I'm glad we finally got back there to find out.

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□Unfortunately, the final lesson from this vacation wasn't a very good one. As it came closer to heading home, I developed a chest infection, which really impacted on our last few days. Unable to sleep at night, because of the coughing, it was tough to keep going during the day, but that's exactly what I did. Was that the right thing to do? It's hard to know. I certainly made sure that, despite how awful I was feeling, we made the best of the remainder of our vacation, but doing that did impact on my health to the point where I was ill when I got back home. There's certainly a lesson there in not overdoing it, when your body is telling you to take care, but equally, it is Disney, and you always want to make the most of your time there. I can at least say I managed that&hellip;

*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: 01-05-2016

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