

Visiting Walt Disney World While Pregnant: A Walt Disney World Planning Article

by Emily Carleton, PassPorter Guest Contributor

I know what you're thinking. Who wants to visit Walt Disney World pregnant? All that walking? No rides?!

Well, as a reformed commando-style visitor, I can tell you there's no better way to fully embrace the "do less, enjoy more" lifestyle than to visit the parks while pregnant. Here are seven important things to consider and do when visiting The World while expecting.

1. Talk First. If you do find yourself pregnant while planning a trip to Walt Disney World, the first thing you need to do is talk to your midwife or doctor. If you're as lucky as I am, your midwife will be an avid Disney fan and will be able to discuss ride and touring options with you, but if not, be prepared to bring specific questions to your healthcare provider. If you are flying and more than 20 weeks pregnant, I suggest getting a doctor's note that you are okay to fly. Some airlines will request this at check-in or boarding.

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2. Chill Out. If you have a choice in when you go, opt for a winter month; Disney World doesn't really have a slow season anymore but if you travel sometime in mid-January to early March--avoiding the holiday and race weekends--you will find the parks less crowded and the temperatures mild.

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3. Read Those Warnings. But what about the rides?! Obviously roller coasters are out, but other rides will be at your discretion. Disney does a great job of posting warnings and recommendations for who shouldn't ride at the entrances of all their attractions but ultimately it is up to you. As an example, I chose to ride the Kilimanjaro Safaris, which has a pregnancy warning due to the bumpy ride. Since I have ridden it several times before I was aware of the terrain and decided that I would be okay. However, I requested to sit in the front row closest to the driver because it's a smoother ride. I also recommend taking time to see the shows. You get to sit, they're usually air conditioned, and they're great! Finding Nemo: The Musical? Yes, please!

4, Get Support. No matter how you choose to spend your time at the parks, one thing you can count on is that you will be doing a lot of walking! I recommend investing in a maternity support belt. You can purchase this at a maternity store where the employees will show you

how to use it and ensure that it fits you properly. This is a life saver! One day we spent just the afternoon in World Showcase so I didn't bother to put it on and my back hurt within an hour of leaving the hotel room. With the support belt, I could tour all day with no pain. Also, as with any Disney World trip, bring comfortable, broken-in sneakers with good support.

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□5. **Drink up.** Everyone needs to stay hydrated in Disney but this is especially important when you're pregnant because dehydration can cause pre-term contractions. You should bring your own water bottle and refill it often. If you don't want to carry a bottle around, you can get ice water from any kiosk or counter service restaurant without making a purchase. You will become an expert on all the restroom locations and luckily they are plentiful!

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□6. **Do Less, Enjoy More.** Know your limits and take breaks when you need them, even if that means changing your plans. After waiting three hours to see Anna and Elsa with my 3-year old, I was ready to call it a day and rather than spending the rest of the day in Future World as scheduled, we retired to the pool. If you just need a short break, consider visiting the Baby Care Station. Each park has one and they offer a quiet, air conditioned place to sit. Each park also has First Aid Stations, usually located near the Baby Care Stations, in the event that you feel you've exceeded your limits and need to consult with a medical professional.

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□7. **Treat Yourself.** Take some time to pamper yourself! Consider splurging on a spa treatment. The Senses Spa offers 50 and 80 minute prenatal massages as long as you are past your first trimester. My 80 minute massage was amazing and, scheduled midweek, was the perfect way to relax and reenergize for the rest of the trip. If you can't spring for the massage or are still in your first trimester, something as simple as a facial or pedicure could provide you with some relaxing downtime. Be aware that if you choose to visit the spa you will not be able to utilize the steam room and Jacuzzi, but you do get unlimited delicious mini cupcakes and infused water!

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□While I never thought I'd find myself at Walt Disney World pregnant, I can honestly say it was one of my most enjoyable trips and I may never tour commando-style again… well at least not until my kids are older.

About The Author: Emily is a Disney crazy working mom of two. In her spare time (HA!) she enjoys crafting, reading, listening to Disney podcasts and planning her family's next Disney trip!

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