

Biergarten: A Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

If there's one thing we love at Disney, it's sampling the wonderful variety of table-service restaurants. It would be fair to say that we've now visited the vast majority of those at Walt Disney World. That's especially true of Epcot, our favorite park, where we love nothing more than to dine around the World Showcase.

One of the few places in the park that we had never made it to was Biergarten, the table-service restaurant in Germany. The reason I'd put off visiting it for so long was simply because I wasn't convinced that, as a non-meat eater, there'd be enough on the menu for me to eat. Unexpectedly though, our plans changed on Christmas Eve and we were left with a full day to enjoy the Disney parks, which we hadn't anticipated.

We decided to head into Epcot and needed to find ourselves lunch for the day, so I decided to be brave and ask at Guest Services and find out what was on the menu that could be a possibility for me. I was pleasantly surprised by the answers. There seemed to be a lot of salad items, some fish dishes, and best of all, a wonderful selection of desserts. By the time I heard the words "Black Forest gateau" and "apple strudel," I was sold, as these are amongst my favorite desserts. We were booked for lunch and would finally get to experience the place.

Before you arrive, it's worth knowing something about the theming of this restaurant, as it may not be entirely what you expect. Whereas many of the restaurants around World Showcase are brightly lit, with some offering superb views of the park, Biergarten is quite dark inside, not unlike Le Cellier and San Angel Inn.

It's quite a shock to the system when you go there for lunch in the middle of the day, but the idea is that you're heading into a town square in Bavaria, Germany to enjoy their annual Oktoberfest celebrations. Oktoberfest is a 16-day festival that takes place in Munich from late September to early October, and stems from the celebration in 1810 of the marriage of the then Crown Prince Ludwig and his bride Princess Therese of Saxe-Hildburghausen.

Now, when I say celebrations, I mean just that. The celebrations held daily at Biergarten include a band, dressed in traditional lederhosen, who come out to regularly entertain the crowds, encouraging people to get up on the small dance floor in front of the stage. The dancing didn't meet with much enthusiasm from adults while we were there, although

a lot of kids appeared to find it great fun and a good chance to burn off some energy!

Something else worth knowing before you get in there is it's highly likely you'll be seated with other diners, unless you're part of a large group. Just like Teppan Edo in Japan, all tables seat eight people and the cast members fill them. We found ourselves dining with a family of six, spanning three generations, from California. Unfortunately, they weren't as talkative as we'd have liked, although that improved as the meal went on -- and the beer flowed!

Speaking of which, if you're a beer fan, you'll enjoy what's on offer here and, equally if you enjoy good wine, there are a lot of great German choices available here. In short, it's a great place to consume a pleasant adult beverage.

But what about the food? Well, first of all, there was plenty for me as a non-meat eater, which had been my greatest fear. Amongst the items I was able to enjoy were the multitude of salad items, the vast majority of which were meat free, cream of potato and leek soup, and hot items, including salmon fillet, red cabbage salad, glazed carrots, and a pleasant vegetarian main dish: cheese Spaetzle with onions.

For those who do eat meat, the choice included items such as rotisserie chicken, veal loaf, a pork roast, sausage platter, breaded pork Schnitzel, and Munich's famous white veal sausages, served with mustard and pretzel rolls.

But never mind all those salad items and the hot savory choices, what I had come here for was a little further away in the dessert section. Most of the names of the dishes were familiar to me and many were amongst my favorites when it comes to sweets, so I was in my element. The Black Forest gateau lived up to expectations, as did the apple strudel with its wonderful vanilla sauce, but the real find was the Rote Gruetze, something I'd never come across before. It's essentially a summer fruit pudding made from strawberries, cherries, and raspberries and it was wonderful. In fact, it was so good that I had to go back for a second serving, just to check it was really as good as I'd thought the first time -- and it was!

All in all, we really enjoyed our lunch at Biergarten and came away wondering why on earth we'd put off going there for so long. One thing's for sure -- we'll be returning there again before too long. Biergarten is an all-you-can-eat buffet, open for lunch from midday until 3:45 pm and for dinner from 4:00 pm until park closing daily. Lunch is \$19.99/adult and \$10.99/child ages 3-9, while dinner is

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\$26.99/adult and \$12.99/child.

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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