

# Top 5 'Allergy Friendly' Quick Service Meals at Walt Disney World: A Walt Disney World Dining Review

by Sarah Hart, PassPorter Guest Contributor

I started traveling to Walt Disney World with a food allergy in 2012; just after I was diagnosed with a gluten intolerance.

I found that Walt Disney World restaurants, both quick service and table service, were excellent in accommodating and making food for me to eat. In 2015, I was diagnosed with a severe soy allergy. Soy is one of the eight common allergens that Walt Disney World can prepare foods without these allergens without prior notice.

Walt Disney World has recently introduced Allergen Friendly menus at quick service and table service restaurants that are owned and operated by Walt Disney World. These menus list the safe food options for each of the 8 common allergies. For example, Disney's Coronado Springs Pepper Market is not operated by Walt Disney World therefore they will not have the allergy friendly menu. Some of the restaurants in Epcot's World Showcase and at Disney Springs are not operated by Walt Disney World therefore they do not have allergy menus that list safe options for each of the eight common allergies - Soy, egg, gluten/wheat, milk, peanut, tree nut, fish, and shellfish

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□When I arrive at a Walt Disney World quick service restaurant I let the Cast Member know of my allergies and that I need to speak to a chef at the location. The chef will come out and ask my favorite question I have ever been asked, "What were you thinking of having?" This is a huge difference to restaurants at home that say the limited number of things that I will be able to eat. Walt Disney World takes the extra step to make the guest feel important; they want to be able to ask you what you were looking at on the menu AND make it safe for you. The chef then shows me the allergy friendly menu for that location. I then order something from the allergy menu that is safe for both of my allergies. The chef will also explain how it may be prepared differently or an accommodation that may have to be made to the menu item. The chef will have me wait at a special window where the food is brought when it is finished. In my experience, it is usually the chef who prepares my meal from start to finish after I order.

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□When ordering food with food allergies there are some considerations. Are there several options for each food allergy? What is the overall atmosphere of the restaurant? How willing is the restaurant to

accommodate for the allergy? Does the restaurant have a trademark allergy menu item? Is there allergy food that you cannot get at a different location?

Here are my Top 5 Quick Service Restaurants in Walt Disney World:

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#### □5) Liberty Inn, Epcot

□ There are some standard allergy friendly foods on the Walt Disney World allergy friendly menus. These include burgers, hot dogs, chicken tenders, and pizza. Liberty Inn has 3 of these choices but this location does a very good job making them. Every time I have been at this location it has not been too crowded, it is covered air-conditioned seating in Epcot's World Showcase. In the allergen filled World Showcase this is a safe alternative with solid options.

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#### □4) Sunshine Seasons, Epcot

□ A food court adjacent to Soarin' and Living with the Land, I find this food court to be a unique choice in Epcot. I love how there are several food stations available. More food stations mean more choices. This is a place that offers some choices that are not available at every quick service locations such as a chicken, beef, and a variety of salads. I particularly love the Grab n' Go section that has lots of safe options. One downside to this spot is that it becomes crowded during busy meal times making it difficult to find a table.

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#### □3) Be Our Guest (Lunch), Magic Kingdom

□ The thing I love the most about Be Our Guest Lunch is ordering online ahead of time. When you log in to order your meal you can click on the allergies you have; the menu automatically shows the menu items you are able to eat. When you get to the restaurant you receive a rose and pick a table. Your food is automatically brought to your table. When your food is brought out there is a allergy tooth pick in your meal. This was an assurance to me that my meal was safe. This location offers a change from the typical hamburger, chicken tenders, and pizza. On my last visit, I ordered roast pork, sweet potato mash, and a lemon cream puff. All were delicious.

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#### □2) Flame Tree Barbeque, Animal Kingdom

□ The barbequed meats that are served here are made right at the location therefore they know each and every ingredient that is used to create the food. It turns out that the spice rubs they use are very friendly for the eight common allergens. I was able to get  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; a chicken and ribs as well as the baked beans. The only piece of my meal that needed to be changed was the slaw, which they very easily substituted for watermelon. This location was very friendly and willing to make substitutions. They found a meal that I could enjoy and offered

allergy friendly cookies as dessert. This meal was delicious! My favorite part about this location is sitting down by the water with the view of Expedition Everest in the background. Even when all the tables are full it is surprisingly quiet, and peaceful.

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□1) Sassagoula Floatworks and Food Factory, Port Orleans French Quarter

□This is my favorite Quick Service location is all of Walt Disney World. They have multiple options for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I had Mickey Waffles, eggs, chicken tenders, pasta, sandwiches, and my favorite of all - Dessert! This location makes allergy friendly beignets. That's right, little pillows of fried dough with powdered sugar. On my last trip to Walt Disney World I think I ate these daily because there is nothing like this at home. They were also able to scoop ice cream from behind the counter. They carried allergy friendly cookies and I was able to make a cookie sandwich. This restaurant is all about options! On my five-day trip I ate as many meals as possible here. There were just that many choices. The chefs were very helpful, and even came to learn my name as well as my allergies so that they could accommodate me. It was such a joyful experience eating here. This is the best location for eating quick service food with a food allergy on Walt Disney World Property.

*About The Author: Sarah Hart is a primary grade teacher at an elementary school in Laconia, New Hampshire. She lives in Concord, New Hampshire with her boyfriend and cat Ace. She enjoys trips to Walt Disney World, hiking, skiing, and obstacle course racing.*

Article last updated: 03-02-2017

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