

Top 6 Snacks for Guests with Food Allergies: A Walt Disney World Dining Review

by Sarah Hart, PassPorter Guest Contributor

When traveling with a severe food allergy I have found that the most difficult thing to find are snacks.

Meals are challenging, sure, but with reliable chains around the country I am usually able to find places to eat, especially in Walt Disney World. Walt Disney World is without a doubt the best place to eat if you have a food allergy as they take allergies very seriously. They want their guests to have a wonderful experience.

When thinking about the top snacks for food allergies I thought about the eight common allergens that cause anaphylaxis - soy, gluten/wheat, milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish. There are snacks that could be okay for my allergy but may not be okay for all of the eight common allergens so I tried to think of snacks that would be okay for all allergens on the list.

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1) Surf Side Sweets Fruity Gummy Bears Where it can be found- Sunshine Seasons, Epcot; Landscapes of Flavor, Art of Animation Resort; Everything Pop, Pop Century Resort; Gasparilla Island Grill, Grand Floridian Resort; Animal Kingdom Park

□ Surf Side Sweets produces candy that is free of the eight common allergens. They are also free of corn syrup. This candy is great for when you want something sweet; especially for kids who are traveling with a food allergy. This snack is not particularly filling but make a great "dessert" after a meal that wont make you feel too full.

2) Udi's Gluten Free Blueberry Muffin Where it can be found- Most locations throughout Walt Disney World that serve breakfast including Resort food courts and most buffets that serve breakfast.

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□ Udi's is known for its gluten free products but it also labels its products for other allergens such as milk, eggs, soy, and nuts. The muffin is on the small size but has an airy texture. There is a little bit of a fake blueberry flavor. This is a perfect go-to for a quick breakfast. I will go to my resort's food court at night order a blueberry muffin and an orange juice. I put it in my room's refrigerator and have a breakfast that I can quickly eat in the morning before going to the theme parks. I also order an extra blueberry muffin when I eat at a buffet and save it for the next morning or my flight home because airports don't typically have a lot of

safe options for me.

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□3) Erin McKenna's Bakery Where it can be found- Disney Springs; several other locations throughout Walt Disney World Resort also carry various products from the bakery.

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□I know that this is a dining location and not a specific snack but there are so many options for people with food allergies here that I think it is worth a trip to Disney Springs just to visit Erin McKenna's. The first time I walked into this bakery I was speechless! Every product they make is gluten free and vegan. They carry bagels, tea cakes, brownies, biscuits, doughnuts, cupcakes, cookies, cinnamon buns, and much more. I typically visit Erin McKenna's on my first day of my trip. I purchase several snacks and treats to have in my room for the remainder of the trip. I use them for a quick breakfast, or snacks to have throughout the day. These treats do taste best on the first day they are purchased but as long as I keep them in the fridge they stay fresh.

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□4) Enjoy Life Chocolate Chip Cookies Where can it be found- most Quick Service Locations throughout Walt Disney World Resort

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□Enjoy Life makes all of its products free of the eight Common Allergens. There are a few versions served throughout Walt Disney World double chocolate chip and chocolate chip. I prefer the chocolate chip. The cookies come in a sealed package with two in a package. So I can choose to eat with my meal or take it with me and save it for later. I could compare these cookies to a Chips Ahoy chocolate chip cookies. They are crunchy, have a very good flavor, and lots of mini chocolate chips. I will sometimes save the cookies, bring them back to my resort, order a dish of ice cream and make myself a mini cookie sandwich.

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□5) Dole Whip/Dole Whip Float Where can it be found- Aloha Isle, Magic Kingdom Park; Pineapple Lanai, Polynesian Village Resort; Tamu Tamu Refreshments, Animal Kingdom Park

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□Finally, an iconic Disney snack that can be enjoyed without any alterations! I love, love, love Dole Whip! The strong pineapple flavor, and the creamy texture of the ice cream make this snack perfect. I make a goal every trip to have at least one Dole Whip a day throughout the length of my trip. I think I like the Dole Whip Float almost as much as the Dole Whip itself. Served with pineapple juice and pineapple soft serve it is so refreshing! This is a great use of a snack credit on the Disney Dining Plan as it costs almost \$6.

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□6) Allergy Friendly Beignets Where can it be found- Sassagoula

Floatworks and Food Factory, Port Orleans French Quarter Resort

□ These delicious pillows of fried dough covered with powdered sugar can only be found at Sassagoula Floatworks and Food Factory. Even if you are not staying at this resort, it is worth taking the time to go there. Last spring when I stayed at Port Orleans French Quarter, I had at least one order of Beignets every day. This is something that I simply cannot get at home. Fried food is one of the most difficult allergy friendly foods to prepare. These happen to be perfect in my opinion. The texture is light but chewy. There is a perfect amount of sweetness from the powdered sugar. The order of three is a snack credit on the Disney Dining Plan. They do take extra time to prepare so know that when you go to order but they are worth every minute. This snack is what makes a vacation a vacation.

□ Depending on your specific food allergies there could be more snacks that you could personally enjoy. One of the reasons I love traveling to Walt Disney World so much is the freedom to eat so many delicious things. I can feel free from the burden of my severe food allergies and truly enjoy food again.

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.

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