

# Disney's Grand Californian Resort: A Disneyland Hotel Review

by Randi Briggs, PassPorter Guest Contributor

□ Recently, my husband and I decided to celebrate our 45th Wedding Anniversary with a trip to Disneyland. We decided this called for pulling out all the stops. We bought Annual Passes in anticipation and then decided the only place to stay would be Disneyland's Grand Californian, plus we decided to go for the Premium view room. Visions of fireworks and views of the parks danced in our heads.

□ We arrived about 3:00 PM and were told our room was ready. Much of the hotel was undergoing renovation, but we decided we were prepared to be patient. As our cast member handed us our key, she said we would have a view of the pool for our premium view. The pool? Ok, so we weren't yet thrilled, but decided to check out our room to see what a newly renovated room looked like. We walked in and as you might expect, it was beautifully appointed and everything was new. We liked how they had replaced the flooring in the sink area with hard wood looking laminate. The room was clean and the craftsman detailing in the room was beautiful. The Disney presence was very understated but still there. Chip and Dale decor. Very nice! Then we looked into the tub area and saw it was a shower only.

□  
□ Wait, what?

□ Some people just love showering, but some of us expect a tub when we are paying this much a night for a premium room. As we decided what we should do, we stepped over to the Lanai, we saw our premium pool view. If we looked straight ahead, we could catch a glimpse of the pool below our fourth floor room. Not impressed. My husband knew I would be miserable having to make do with a shower all week, so we went back down to registration, got back in line to wait for the next available cast member. We were lucky enough to get the same person to help us. She was a wonderfully friendly person named Megyn. She said she wasn't sure if she could get us a room with a tub, but she went behind the scenes and apparently worked some Disney magic, because 20 minutes later, she had the requisite tub room for us. So we went back up to the new room which was on the second floor. This room was also lovely and newly done; the same decor as the first room. The little amenities were H2O+, very nice! They included something new -- softening mint foot rub. If you have never had your feet rubbed with this stuff at the end of

a long day in the parks, then you have never lived! I can tell you that the tile in the bathrooms is very nicely done and attractive. We looked a little closer to the wall paper in the tub area and if you pay attention to these things, you will see very discrete hidden mickeys within the pattern. We loved it. So, happy with the tub, we headed back out to the lanai to check out our premium view. If we really looked hard, we could actually catch a glimpse of the pool, but there were some very large trees that pretty much blocked any sort of view.

□ To be honest, although the room was beautiful, we were underwhelmed with the premium view. We felt understandably disappointed.

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□ We have stayed at Grand Californian several times. Once before we spent the extra money for a premium view in which if we were to stand up on the railing of the Lanai, and my husband had held on to me while I leaned out, I might have been able to see some of California Adventure.

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□ The lobby was almost completely blocked off as it was undergoing renovation as well. Acorn's Gifts and Goods was open, always has a little bit of everything in the way of snacks and toiletry items. It also has a great assortment of gifts and tees. Somehow I always manage to spend a bundle in this tempting little shop.

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□ We were expecting a view of one of the parks or Downtown Disney or maybe a room where we could see the fireworks. My advice to anyone planning to stay at Grand Californian is to just pay for a standard room. The times we have done that, we always ended up with a better view than we got with the premium view rooms. Also, if you have a preference for a tub room or shower room, you would do well to specify when making the reservation.

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□ Our time in the parks was great, and we did have a wonderful time. Our 45th Anniversary was a very memorable one. And even with the construction, we still love the beauty of the Grand Californian. Would we stay there again? Absolutely. We still love this property over the other Hotels. If you should decide to stay there, just keep in mind what you want, and make sure you ask for it when making reservations.

#### *About The Author:*

□ *Randi Briggs owns her own consulting business as a Printed Circuit Board Layout Specialist and she is a resident of Smartsville, California. When she is not working, she is trying to figure out how soon she can save enough for the next trip to Walt Disney World or Disneyland. And she can tell you, it's never soon enough!*

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