

Mickey's Not-So-Scary Halloween Party: A Spooky Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

Halloween is a time for ghosts and ghouls, scary stories and trick or treat, so perhaps it's no wonder that it's also the subject of a special ticketed after hours party at the Magic Kingdom.

Held on selected nights in September and October and one night in November, Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party, often seen abbreviated down to MNSSHP, takes place from 7:00 pm until midnight. But what can you expect from the party and is it worth attending?

Those were just some of the questions I was asking a year ago, as we prepared for our first trip to the Walt Disney World resort over Halloween. When we were booking our flights, it was noticeably cheaper if we traveled in early November, as opposed to late October, which gave me a dilemma. I was keen to try out the Halloween Party, but was it worth the extra money that the flights would cost us?

If I'm honest, it wasn't something that I thought about for a long time. Part of the reason I love going back to Disney is that at certain times of the year, there are extra events that make your stay more magical, like the Flower and Garden Festival in the spring, all the holiday events between Thanksgiving and the New Year and the Food and Wine Festival and the Halloween Party in the fall. Of those, the only one we hadn't experienced was the Halloween Party and in my book, you should give all of them a try at least once.

That decision made, I read with interest various comments on the party and comparisons to the Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party, which we had been to a number of times. All I can say is I'm glad those debates took place after we'd ordered our tickets, as most people came out very strongly in favor of the Christmas Party. It did make me wonder whether we'd be disappointed and if we'd get our money's worth out of our tickets.

Well, on both counts, I'm pleased to report that we had nothing to worry about. We loved every moment of the Halloween Party and were immediately into the "spirit" of things when we got off the monorail and saw the displays of pumpkins outside the gates. What I wasn't expecting were the inflatables everywhere, obviously put up in time for the Party each night, with giant pumpkins and ghosts, a larger than life Timon and Pumbaa in Adventureland and a giant Stitch in Tomorrowland.

Lighting was also cleverly used to create some wonderful effects, with Main Street lit up in a series of bright colors, an eerie green to be seen in some parts of the park, and the Castle enjoying its own Halloween light show, including images of ghosts, ghouls and the Big Bad Wolf at points throughout the night.

As well as being able to enjoy all the attractions that you'd see during the day, there are plenty of other things going on all evening. Let's face it, Halloween wouldn't be the same without Trick or Treat and there are plenty of places throughout the park to add to your candy loot as the night goes on, without even having to threaten anyone with a trick first!

If you or your family are character fans and enjoy collecting autographs and photos of them, the Halloween Party will be an absolute gold mine for you. Not only are there lots of characters out and about, you'll see a new side to many of them. During the night we were there, we found Eeyore dressed as a mummy and Pooh Bear as a bee. It makes for plenty of unique photo opportunities. And speaking of unique, this has to be the only time we've ever come across Snow White and all seven of her dwarfs, so keep your eyes peeled for the character meeting areas. They're well worth exploring.

The real highlights of the Halloween Party, just like the Christmas one, are the parade and the fireworks. Taking them in order, the parade is something not to be missed, especially if you're a fan of the villains, as you'll see more of them in this parade than in any other. We loved some of the unusual additions, such as the gravediggers with their spectacular display of sparks from their shovels on the ground. Once again, you'll see your favorite characters all dressed in their Halloween finery and when else are you going to find a Headless Horseman clattering through the streets of the Magic Kingdom, leading the way for the parade to follow? That sight on its own is priceless. I'd heard that he moved quickly, but even I was surprised by how fast he flew past us.

In between the early and late parades is the nightly firework display, but this is no ordinary version of Wishes, this is Hallo-Wishes, again full of all the Disney villains you could ever think of and each with their own set of amazing fireworks and lighting displays on the castle. Whatever you do, don't miss Hallo-Wishes, it's worth the price of your admission on its own and is truly spectacular. In our book, it was far superior to the daily version of Wishes we're all used to.

One thing many people worry about is whether they should come in costume or not. The simple advice is it's best to do whatever you're comfortable with. We saw a lot of people, both adults and children,

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dressed up, but we saw just as many who weren't. You'll certainly get a lot more attention from the Cast Members if you do come in costume, so if you're shy and the extra attention doesn't appeal, you might be best coming in costume as ... yourself!

Another thing that concerns people is whether the party has the potential to frighten young children. Of course, there's always that chance, but Disney does a great job of sticking to the name of the Party -- after all it is Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party.

Would we go back to the Halloween Party again? Without question. It was far better than we'd ever expected it to be and if someone asked me (go on ask me!) which I prefer between the Halloween and Christmas Party, I'd be very hard pressed to choose, although I suspect the Halloween Party may just get the edge for its use of lighting to create atmosphere, villains, and characters you don't usually see. If you buy tickets for it, I doubt you'll come away disappointed.

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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