

DisneyQuest: Something New to Do!

by Michelle Clark, PassPorter Message Board Guide (Moderator)

As a returning visitor to the Walt Disney World Resort, have you ever felt that you've experienced all the theme park attractions Disney has to offer? Perhaps there is another park that you have overlooked -- DisneyQuest. DisneyQuest is located at Downtown Disney's West Side and is an interactive, indoor theme park. You can find a large variety of attractions here -- there is something for everyone, regardless of age and preferences.

This indoor theme park is comprised of five levels, accessible by stairs or elevators. The attractions at DisneyQuest are divided into four different "zones" -- Explore Zone, Score Zone, Create Zone, and Replay Zone. It is quite easy to get lost in DisneyQuest, so it's a good idea to keep young children close by.

We made our first visit to DisneyQuest on a rainy morning -- against the advice of our PassPorter guidebook! However, if you arrive when DisneyQuest opens, you should have time to complete several of the more popular attractions before the majority of crowds arrive. On the advice of a Cast Member, we headed first to "Pirates of the Caribbean: Battle for Buccaneer Gold." This is one of the best attractions at DisneyQuest and probably the most popular. Guests wear virtual reality goggles as they step into their own vessel to shoot cannons at approaching pirate ships. It takes the work of your entire party to defeat the pirates! This attraction has a 35 inch height restriction.

Right next to Pirates of the Caribbean is the Virtual Jungle Cruise. Riders sit on an inflatable raft in front of a big screen that simulates different water excursions. Each rider has a paddle they must use to steer them through the whitewater adventures. This is another popular attraction that should be done early in the day to avoid long waits.

Our next stop was one floor up at CyberSpace Mountain. Here we designed our own coaster at a computer station and then we got to ride our creation in a motion simulator! Two riders may enter the simulator at a time. Riders must be at least 51 inches tall to experience this attraction.

Besides creating roller coasters, you can also learn to create Disney art at Animation Academy. We attended a session where we learned how to draw Mickey Mouse. You can purchase your drawing for \$5, which is a really cute and reasonable souvenir. If the creative juices are still flowing, check out the Radio Disney SongMaker where you can enter a

sound booth and create your own CD. The Living Easels allow even young artists to color scenes of various Disney characters, which can also be printed and purchased. At Sid's Create-a-toy, kids can make their own bizarre toy creations via a computer screen. Another popular attraction on this level is Aladdin's Magic Carpet Ride. Here guests wear a virtual reality helmet while sitting on a seat with handlebars which maneuvers your carpet through Agrabah. Four guests sit and work together at three stations. Since only twelve people can experience this attraction at a time, lines tend to move slowly.

On the next level is Buzz Lightyear's Astroblasters, which are bumper cars with shooting cannons. Two persons can ride in each bumper car. Riders must be at least 51" tall to ride Buzz Lightyear's Astroblasters. The Mighty Ducks Pinball Slam is another simulated attraction where you are the ball in a giant pinball game. Again, this attraction has a height restriction of 48 inches.

Levels 4 and 5 both have a large variety of video game machines and arcade games. But don't panic, these games are free with admission. So play Asteroids or Ms. Pac Man to your heart's content!

By now you may be ready for some down time. DisneyQuest offers two choices for dining. Food Quest on Level 5 has the typical Disney food court offerings along with some tasty Panini sandwiches. Those guests on the Disney Dining Plan will be happy to know that Food Quest does accept counter service credits. Wonderland Cafe on Level 4 will give you a great variety of desserts and coffees. The atmosphere at the Wonderland Cafe is a little more peaceful with comfy chairs and dimmed lighting. Both eateries have the decadent cheesecakes from The Cheesecake Factory. Free internet access is available at the Wonderland Cafe.

Level 4 is the home of another 3D virtual reality experience, Ride the Comix. Guests wear 3D goggles to do battle with comic strip super villains with laser swords. Invasion! An ExtraTERRORestrial Alien Encounter is on the top level of DisneyQuest. This is another simulator that allows four guests to battle aliens and rescue fellow earthlings inside a space vehicle. The theming for this attraction was based on the former Alien Encounter at the Magic Kingdom (which is now known as Stitch's Great Escape).

You will probably need to plan on approximately one-half of a day to experience DisneyQuest. If you have any arcade junkies in your party, you might plan for some extra time there. It has been rumored on a few Internet websites that DisneyQuest may be closed in the future, although this has never been confirmed by Disney. So if you have been

thinking about visiting DisneyQuest, now is the time!

About The Author: Michelle Clark is a confessed theme park junkie and the mother of three teens who share in her thrill ride obsession. She is also a Co-Guide for the Library forum on the PassPorter Message Boards.

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