

## Character Breakfasts at Disneyland: Starting the Morning Right

by Rebecca Oberg, PassPorter Guest Contributor

On our last trip to the Disneyland Resort, we were lucky enough to enjoy three character breakfasts during our stay. Here's my take on Minnie and Friends Breakfast in the Park at the Plaza Inn, Goofy's Kitchen, and Chip 'n' Dale's Critter Breakfast at Storyteller's Cafe.

We started our first day at Disneyland Park's Plaza Inn with Minnie and her friends. I hadn't been to this breakfast since 2005, and I was in for a pleasant surprise. The food seemed much the same. Breakfast is breakfast, after all. Many of my fellow diners enjoyed the made-to-order eggs and omelets. I was enchanted by the miniature bottles of Nestle Nesquik chocolate milk! This kid at heart also enjoyed the Mickey waffles, caramelized French toast, and delicious fresh fruit. There were plenty of choices at this buffet and everyone could easily find something to their liking. Many second (and third) trips were made to the various food counters. The main reason we hadn't returned to this character meal in some time was the fact that previously we hadn't seen many characters (including Minnie herself). This is where my pleasant surprise came in. This time we saw such a variety of characters that my head was simply spinning, and they didn't just stop by for a quick photo and an autograph. They joked with us, they remembered our names (yes, they visited more than once during our meal!), they danced with us, and played some tricks on our fellow diners and each other. The whole experience was so festive and entertaining. I particularly remember our interactions with Fairy Godmother and Captain Hook. Captain Hook was very naughty and not nice to Tigger, who only wanted to bounce with us!

Our second day began with a breakfast at Goofy's Kitchen at the Disneyland Hotel. We were shown our seats, had our drink orders taken, and then turned loose at the buffet. Perhaps the best thing about this breakfast was the variety of food available. There was everything from the signature peanut butter and jelly pizza to chicken empanadas. Even at 7:00 am (an early morning for us!) there were many brunch/lunch type items available, including salads and fancy cheeses. The dessert selection was to die for. Ice cream and cheesecake for breakfast, oh my! I may have put on ten pounds simply walking in the place. Alas, almost anything would have paled compared to the previous day's character interaction. We were treated to visits by a few furry friends (and a few not so furry), but they simply posed and signed. Goofy and Chip 'n' Dale were in their chef outfits, but the singing, dancing party atmosphere I remembered from past visits simply didn't

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exist. Frankly, I was a bit disappointed in the entertainment, but the buffet was delicious and a welcome change from traditional breakfast fare.

We arrived at the Storyteller's Cafe in the Grand Californian Hotel on our last morning with heavy hearts. No one likes leaving day. We were soon cheered up by Chip 'n' Dale, Meeko, Terk, and their antics. Characters here made the rounds as usual and periodically stopped for a parade with the children in the restaurant. A friendly "park ranger" kept everyone in line and led the singing of many campfire favorites. Meeko was particularly delightful, with his interest in shiny objects. He collected everything from silverware to bracelets as he made his way from table to table. The real treat here was the hearty breakfast selection. Guests can choose from the all you care to eat buffet or order a la carte from the menu. Our party chose the buffet (as do most of the guests). Besides a wonderful assortment of breakfast classics ranging from eggs Benedict (my personal favorite) to applewood smoked bacon, made to order omelets and platters of Mickey waffles (whisked to your table fresh from the waffle iron), pancakes were also available. The decor and service in this eatery proved to be head and shoulders above the other character meals we experienced on this trip. Our attentive waiter kept the orange juice and coffee flowing, and the details in the theming of this eatery really captured our attention. The atmosphere was warm and inviting, comfortable and homey.

While all three of our character breakfasts were enjoyable and the food delicious at each one, Chip 'n' Dale's Critter Breakfast at Storyteller's Cafe proved to be our favorite overall. This particular experience seemed to have the best balance of delicious food and character interaction to please everyone in our group. Minnie's Breakfast in the Park outshone the other two mealtimes with its outstanding and just plain fun character interaction, but the food was not as unique and delicious as the other venues. Goofy's Kitchen certainly had the "most bang for the buck" food-wise, but the character interaction was nothing to write home about. To wrap it all up, Disneyland Dining has something for everyone. From over the top silliness to exceptionally tasty dining selections, these character breakfasts are a hit with our whole family.

*About The Author: Rebecca has been an avid Disneyland fan as long as she can remember. She's recently added Disney Cruise Line and Walt Disney World to her list of favorite places on the planet. When not traveling, planning to travel, or visiting Disney, she is mother of three, wife of one, and teacher of 23 third graders.*

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