

Taking the Grandkids: Tips for Disney Trips

by Jane Price, PassPorter Guest Contributor

Nowadays, more and more grandparents are taking their grandchildren to the Disney theme parks. While some are going with their children who are the parents of these grandchildren, many are now just taking the grandkids. Having done this both ways, I can definitely recommend just taking the grandkids only!

I have taken my granddaughters to both U.S. resorts, Disneyland and Walt Disney World (and on the Disney Cruise Line as well) without their parents. It is so much fun, even better than taking your kids. Usually, grandparents and grandchildren are more simpatico than parents and children. Grandchildren think you are cool and want to be with you!

Let's face it, it is the sworn duty of all grandparents to spoil their grandchildren. What better place to fulfill these duties than at the Disney parks? It is a win-win for both "grands" and parents as well. While the grands are vacationing, the parents get a well deserved rest at home. So, how can a grandparent do his/her duty and spoil the grandkiddies at Disney?

Schedule lots of character meals, for starters. These work out better for the grands because you are more willing to sit back, relax and take lots of pictures. Neither of you are in a hurry to get to the parks. It is a great time for grandparents to get a breather and the grandkids to do one of their favorite things at Disney, spend time with characters.

Another wonderful place to spoil them is either the Bibbidi Bobbidi Boutique or Pirate's League. Once again, a great break for you, and the kids love getting makeovers into their favorite characters. Get the biggest, baddest package (or costume)! As grandparents, we usually have more disposable income than parents, and this is one of the best places to dispose of some income. You will also get some terrific photos of the grandkids, making for lots of bragging rights when you get home.

If your grandchildren are young, the nice thing is you are often both on the same rest vs. active cycle. Both tend to get up early with lots of energy, both tend to nap in the afternoon and go to bed early by Disney standards. If you are also a grandparent who is not that into coasters and other wild rides, when the grandkids are young, you always want to do the same rides together.

As one of my granddaughters has now gotten older, it has been so fun

to take her on a "new" ride she has grown into. When we rode Indiana Jones Adventure in Disneyland last summer, I was as excited as she was about her first time. It felt like my first time, too. Now, "Indy" is one of her favorites, as it is mine. I look forward to two more "first time(s)" with the two younger granddaughters as they grow into it.

One of the other favorite things for the "grands" to do is hang out by the pool. As I have gotten older, just relaxing by the pool has climbed higher on my "must do" list while at Disney parks. I try to book a hotel with a great pool, like The Beach Club. As before, it's a good breather for the grandparents and a fun, favorite activity for the grandkids.

If there is an evening you want some adult time, there are child care options at most of the Deluxe hotels, and in room babysitting by outside agencies, licensed and bonded is available at any hotel. We used one of the in room sitters and had a good experience. Our granddaughter got to go to the playground at our hotel and play fun games with the sitter while we dined at Citrico's. Just be aware some more income will be disposed of to do this.

When the grandchildren are young, be sure to call their parents nearly every day, so all parties can be assured all is well. The grandkids also love to tell their parents about their exciting days.

At present, we have four trips planned to take our granddaughters to either Walt Disney World or Disneyland within one year. Taking the grand kids on vacation? I live for it!

About The Author: Jane lives in southeast Arizona with her husband, three granddaughters, and the family parrots. She is an Annual Passholder for Disneyland as well as a Disney Vacation Club member.

Article last updated: 04/08/2010

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