

Doing Disney Without Ever Riding a Ride!: Yes, You Can!

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

If you're planning a visit to Walt Disney World Resort, the chances are that you're planning on enjoying the many rides, shows, parades, and entertainment on offer at the four main theme parks. That's only natural, but once you become a regular visitor to the resort, do you actually need attractions to have a magical Disney vacation? It may sound like a strange thing to say, but not necessarily.

Attractions now play much less of a role than they used to when we go to Disney. There are just so many other wonderful things to see and do that we've found ourselves skipping rides for entire days at a time or perhaps only going on one or two. Rewind to our first few visits, and like many others, we would have an itinerary for each day we were in a theme park with a list of things that we wanted to ride, but now we have a chance to be a lot more laid back.

I'm sure by this point there are some almost screaming at their computer screens in disbelief. After all, what else is there to do at Disney World, apart from enjoy the various attractions in the parks? The simple answer is that there's a whole world of activities, more than enough to occupy you, however long your vacation is.

Firstly, just because you're not on a ride or at a show doesn't mean you can't be in a theme park. There's so much to appreciate in each of the four parks, outside of the attractions that people dash to, and sadly much of it is too easily missed. How about stopping to read the various inscriptions on the windows along Main Street USA? Or what about exploring the depths of each of the countries in World Showcase? I can guarantee there will be hidden nooks and crannies that even the most experienced of travelers will still manage to uncover.

Another wonderful thing to do sometimes is just to be able to sit down and take in the views. Nowhere is that more the case than at Animal Kingdom, where as well watching people rush through the parks, you can often watch the wildlife at its natural best. Grab a bench along Hollywood Boulevard and take in the atmosphere at the Studios and you may be lucky enough to encounter some of the wonderful "Streetmosphere" characters, as they're called. You can either watch them or choose to interact.

One of our favorite passtimes is getting as many photos of us together as we possibly can, as there's no better way to remember a vacation

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than through the magic of photography. You'd be surprised how many Photopass photographers you can find once you start looking for them and how many photos you can easily get, without going out of your way.

Outside of the parks, there's a multitude of resorts to explore, all of them open to the public and many of them easily accessible. The Grand Floridian, Polynesian, and Contemporary are just a monorail ride away from the Magic Kingdom, while a boat will take you effortlessly to both Wilderness Lodge and Fort Wilderness. Stroll out of Epcot via the International Gateway and the Yacht Club, Beach Club, BoardWalk Inn, the Swan, and Dolphin are all within easy walking distance or just a boat ride away. Talking of boat rides, you can also grab a boat from Downtown Disney to check out Old Key West, Saratoga Springs and/or Port Orleans (either the French Quarter or Riverside). We've spent many happy hours just wandering around the various resorts, enjoying the wonderful theming at each and happily taking photos of everything we see.

Both inside the parks and at the various resorts is another favorite of ours – Disney dining. It's hard to imagine, outside some of the world's biggest cities, such a concentration of high-quality restaurants, offering such a superb and diverse range of food. From Norwegian to South American, Japanese to African, or German to Greek cooking, you can find it somewhere on property. The food has become a bit more homogenised at the various restaurants in recent years, which is a shame, but you can still find some truly unique food at many places. If a burger and fries is your worst nightmare, never fear, there's plenty else to keep you going.

There's also a multitude of recreation activities available. If you want to hire a boat, you can. Want to take a Segway off road or just unwind with a massage? That's all possible, as is parasailing, a game of tennis, taking a backstage tour in any of the four parks, or just hanging out by a resort pool. If you think that maybe some of these activities may be a little too boring for the younger members of your party, rest assured, this is Disney and there's always plenty for them to enjoy, from childcare programs to taking a pirate cruise. With so many organised activities, there's nothing to stop you doing something different while your children are out having fun of their own!

But perhaps my favorite passtime of all is just to enjoy our time at Walt Disney World with either family or friends. There's nothing better than the chance to catch up with the people you care about while outside the pressures of daily life. Don't get me wrong, a ride on Test Track, the Kilimanjaro Safaris, the Great Movie Ride or Pirates of the Caribbean still fills me with utter delight to this day, but your vacation doesn't have

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to be about dashing from one ride to the next. There's so much to enjoy and explore at Walt Disney World. Next time you're down there, why not try out some of the non-attractions there?

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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