

A Magical Wedding Day: Getting Married at Walt Disney World

by Mandi Titus, PassPorter Guest Contributor

I never went to Walt Disney World as a kid, so when my girlfriend proposed going for a weekend, I wasn't very excited. But when she mentioned we'd be there during the Epcot International Food & Wine Festival, I figured, why not? And I got hooked! In May of 2008, we got engaged at the Magic Kingdom during the Wishes fireworks show. Since we'd had many special moments at Walt Disney World, we decided to have our wedding there too. Of course, we weighed the options and priced other venues and services, but we were already set on having a magical wedding day!

Our wedding planning adventure began when we were assigned a Disney's Fairy Tale Weddings sales consultant. We had picked June 15 as our date but needed to narrow down our ceremony and reception locations. We met her at Franck's Bridal Studio, where she showed us photos from ceremonies at our top three sites: Epcot's France, Germany, and Italy pavilions. To help us choose our reception location, our consultant took us into Epcot through the backstage entrance to see the Living Seas Salon, a private event space in The Seas With Nemo & Friends Pavilion. The room was fantastic, with five large windows into the pavilion's 5.7 million-gallon aquarium. We also went up to the Napa Room, a private space at California Grill with a great view of the Magic Kingdom. Both venues were nice in different ways. But because the catering menus at California Grill cannot be customized, we decided to follow our ceremony in Italy with a reception at Living Seas Salon.

Once we'd chosen our location and signed our contract, we were assigned a Disney's Fairy Tale Weddings event planner. We met her at Franck's to talk about everything from the wedding colors to the type of chairs. We also met with a representative of the Walt Disney World Florist to choose flowers and table settings. The best part of the planning session was getting to taste our menu and cake. Our event planner took us into the kitchens at Epcot, where there was a table set for us, and a Disney chef prepared the menu we had selected right there! She gave us variations on our menu and took note of our food preferences. Because we were having a morning ceremony, there were brunch items like parfaits and pastries, an omelet station, breakfast meats, and Mickey waffles, along with filet with mushroom spaetzle, a favorite of ours from the Food & Wine Festival. Afterward, our event planner presented us with a tray of several flavors of cake and filling. We tried them all in different combinations and picked our three

favorites, one for each tier of the cake. We chose the Mad Hatter cake style and gave the chefs colors to work with, but we left the rest up to them!

After the planning session, there wasn't much left to do. We were only responsible for getting ourselves to Walt Disney World and selecting wedding favors and our attire. We also made welcome folders for our guests who were staying at Disney resorts. We arrived two days before the wedding to spend time with family and friends who were flying in for the event. The day before the wedding, our event planner coordinated a rehearsal in a room at Disney's Yacht & Beach Club Convention Center. We were totally at ease because she did an excellent job of explaining how everything was going to happen. Afterward, we had a rehearsal lunch at Raglan Road at Downtown Disney.

The big day started with an early-morning wake-up call, since we had to be in Epcot by 7:30 am to meet the photographer. The florist knocked on the hotel room door at 6:15 am to deliver the beautiful white rose bridesmaid's bouquets, and the limo picked us up at 7:15 am. Our photographer was waiting when we arrived backstage at Epcot and were ushered through the entrance near Italy. We chose to take photos before and after the ceremony to make the most of our opportunity to be in Epcot alone. We were able to get shots in several different countries before we started to melt in the June heat.

Everything about the ceremony was perfect to us. However, there were two problems at the ceremony that our event planner took care of in an instant without us noticing. Our music for the ceremony was not working, so she and the sound crew found a way to fix it without our knowledge. Also, two guests missed the charter bus to the ceremony and had to be driven over from the front of the park by golf cart. When the ceremony was over, we took some group photos, and then all the guests were sent to the reception. My wife and I remained in the park for more photos and then rode to the reception in the limo. Once we got to the reception, we spent some time alone together in a lobby area and enjoyed the water, sweet tea, parfaits, and pastries everyone else was having at the pre-reception. Our event planner said to us, "Enjoy the next 10 minutes --it'll be the only time you have together alone until after the reception." She was right!

The food at the reception ended up being better than I had imagined, although I must say that with all of the excitement, it was hard to just sit and enjoy the meal. We opted out of an open bar because it was morning, but we had a Champagne toast, complete with special Mickey toasting flutes we'd purchased.

By far the most exciting part of the reception was the arrival of our special guest. One of the advantages of having a Disney wedding is that you can hire characters to attend the reception. When Minnie came skipping in, all of the kids and "kids at heart" went nuts! We posed for photos, danced, and even cut the cake with Minnie. This is one of the things that made our wedding day not just memorable but also magical.

Looking back, we feel our decision to have a wedding at Walt Disney World was the best we could have made. Many people are intimidated by the prices, but when you do some research, you find they are comparable to those at many other venues. We got to pick exactly what we wanted to spend our money on and had very little stress related to the planning. We were also given annual passes when we signed the contract, and at the reception we were presented with a special gift from Disney's Fairy Tale Weddings. These little touches make a huge difference. Our wedding day at Disney was truly magical!

For complete details on planning a wedding at Walt Disney World, check out [PassPorter's Disney Weddings & Honeymoons](#) guidebook!

About The Author: Mandi is a Disney enthusiast and the author of the blog [@Vermont](#). She has just registered for the Goofy Challenge 2011.

Article last updated: 07-15-2010

View the latest version online at:

<http://www.passporter.com/articles/magical-disney-wedding-day.html>

Copyright by Mandi Titus. All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. No part of this publication may be stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act. Resale of this guide is strictly prohibited without the copyright holder's permission. If you purchased this publication from someone other than PassPorter Travel Press, please call 877-929-3273.

View more PassPorter Articles online at <http://www.passporter.com/articles/>

.....