

Disney Admission Options for Military Families: Military Family Series

by Sarah Mudd, PassPorter Message Board Guide (Moderator)

When it comes to travel, military members have a handful of options for purchasing their attraction and theme park tickets. I am constantly amazed that there are so many military families that don't know that these options exist or just what they can get from using this benefit. So, my military friends (and friends of military friends) I am here to shed a little light on your options when it comes to saving money on tickets!

One constant benefit that military members have is their local base Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) office. They offer discounted tickets for attractions local to your particular base's area as well as some hotels and seasonal events, plays, ice skating and ballet performances. Most MWR ticket offices offer Walt Disney World tickets and only some (mostly west coast bases, but some in other areas of the country) offer Disneyland tickets at fairly great discounts. If your local office does not stock the particular ticket that you need, do ask about it because oftentimes they can order them for you!

One ticket that all MWR offices are offering is Disney's Military Salute tickets for 2010 and 2011! These tickets are available for purchase through September 28, 2011 and must be completely used by October 1, 2011.

At Walt Disney World, you can get a 4-day ticket with either Park Hopper option or Water Parks Fun and More option added for \$138 each or you can add both options for a total of \$165 per ticket. The resort hotels are also offering a discount under the military salute. 40% off of deluxe, 35% off of moderate and 30% off of value resort rooms. The resort rooms are limited in number so if you are planning on using this discount, call Disney, your local MWR folks or your travel agent to book now and lock in your discount!

Disneyland is offering a 3-day Park Hopper ticket for just \$99, which is an amazing deal! The same ticket with the same perks purchased at the gate costs \$186, so the savings thanks to the Military Salute is great!

As part of the offer, each member/sponsor (or spouse) may only purchase six total tickets. They all must be purchased at the same time so if you need three tickets for one trip and two tickets for a trip a couple of months later, they all must be purchased at the same time! If you purchase the tickets at your MWR office or at Shades of Green Resort at Walt Disney World, you will not have to pay any sales tax on

your purchase. However, sales tax will apply if you choose to purchase the tickets at a Walt Disney World or Disneyland ticket window.

There are blackout dates on the tickets that will apply. At Walt Disney World, all four main theme parks will be blacked out on December 27-31, 2010 and April 17-23, 2011. July 4, 2011 will be blacked out at the Magic Kingdom only. At Disneyland, the blackout dates are this Christmas Eve through New Year's Day, February 18-21, April 17-23 and July 1-4, 2011.

If you aren't able to make it to a MWR ticket office before your trip to the Orlando area, you can stop in to Shades of Green Resort to purchase discounted tickets. They offer tickets to all of the major Florida theme parks as well as local dinner shows and attractions such as Gatorland, Bogy Creek Air Boat tours, and the Richard Petty Experience.

To compare prices, Shades of Green offers the Richard Petty Rookie Experience for \$361 (no tax is charged). If you were to book that through Disney, it was cost you \$449 plus tax, so taking advantage of the Shades of Green ticket sales benefit can lead to significant savings!

Likewise, comparing Walt Disney World tickets, purchasing a 4-day Magic Your Way base ticket at the park gates will run you \$247.08. If you purchase that same ticket at Shades of Green, it will cost only \$228. If you use your MWR benefit on base, it could be the same if not cheaper for you! For example, here at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, where we are stationed, the 4-day base ticket costs \$227.75. Naval Air Station Jacksonville offers the same ticket for \$219 and in the San Diego area, the 4-day ticket with Park Hopper option added would only cost \$2 more than the gate price of a base ticket!

Vacationing can be expensive. Thankfully, our military takes good care of us families and provides us with ticket options that every military member of every rank can afford. Do your homework, crunch and compare numbers to find the best deal! As I mentioned earlier on, if your MWR office doesn't have a particular ticket that you need, it can't hurt to ask about them ordering it for you. Do be sure to go in with plenty of time to spare before your trip to allow for shipping (to either your house or the MWR office). As always, keep an eye out for news on military deals and promotions at DisneyWorld.com/military, at MouseSavers.com and, of course, on the [PassPorter message boards](#)!

About The Author: Sarah is a stay-at-home mom, PassPorter Message Board Guide and Navy wife currently stationed in Washington State. She has made many trips to both Walt Disney World and Disneyland. Her family is currently planning their 2-year-old son's first Disneyland trip in summer

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