

Blizzard Beach Water Park: A Cool Place to Be On a Hot Summer Day

by *Bernie Edwards, PassPorter Featured Columnist*

In my last article, I wrote about Typhoon Lagoon, one of the two water parks at the Walt Disney World Resort.

This article will focus on Blizzard Beach, the newer of the two and probably the most popular water park for families with teenagers.

Blizzard Beach is a 66-acre water park themed around a "melting" ski resort. "Legend" has it that a freak snow storm hit the area, leading to the construction of Florida's first ski resort. As you can imagine, the snow didn't last long and started melting, leaving behind a collection of waterlogged ski jumps and a chair lift. The ski resort was going to be permanently closed, until an alligator was seen sliding down a flume and splashing into a pool of water. Today that alligator is a mascot named "Ice Gator" and the resort is now Disney's largest water park!

Similar to Typhoon Lagoon, Blizzard Beach contains slides, pools, a lazy river, and unique Disney touches. There are places to get food, picnic areas to eat in, shops to explore, dressing rooms, lockers, and showers. If you forget your towel, you can pick one up in a shop or rent one from the park. Just like when visiting Typhoon Lagoon, I recommend that you arrive at Blizzard Beach first thing in the morning and pick out a spot to lounge in later during breaks. I personally like the area to the left of Melt-Away Bay, the wave pool, as it is close to several things, including food and restrooms. Also be sure to get a locker to secure your valuables! You're at Walt Disney World but unfortunately crime still happens there. You can also rent a premium beach chair space or a larger private "Polar Patio," similar to Typhoon Lagoon's "Beachcomber Shack." Advanced reservations for both can be made at 407-WDW-PLAY.

Blizzard Beach is probably best known for Summit Plummet, which is a 120-foot, almost vertical, free-falling body slide that descends from the top of Mt. Gushmore, the park's icon. If you try it, you will be eye level with the Tower of Terror in Disney's Hollywood Studios and can go up to 60 miles per hour! Believe it or not, Summit Plummet is very popular and the line for it can get very long. Be sure to do it first thing in the morning if you dare! Also, it is recommended that ladies wear a one-piece bathing suit for this attraction, as Summit Plummet has been known to cause "wardrobe malfunction" from time to time! To get to the top of Mt. Gushmore you can walk up a lot of stairs or take the chair lift.

Try the chair lift in the morning before the line for it gets too long; also be aware that there is a single rider express line if the general line is too long.

Another intense attraction is Slush Gusher, another speed slide where you can go up to 50 miles per hour! There are two "moguls" on this slide and you have a good chance of catching some air on the second, which is why this is a very popular attraction! A slightly less thrilling attraction is Downhill Double Dipper, because on this ride, you will only travel at speeds up to 25 miles per hour, which sounds slow but remember you are just in a bathing suit sitting on a tube (which even has a hole in the bottom)! The unique aspect of Downhill Double Dipper is you will be "racing" against another person a few feet away.

My personal favorite attraction is Snow Stormers; I've been known to go on it several times in a row. You lay face down on a toboggan mat and go down one of three 350-foot long twisting and turning flumes. While other water parks have a ride with toboggan mats (Blizzard Beach has Toboggan Racers), I've never seen one with twists and turns before; all the rest that I've seen go straight downhill. Snow Stormers is unique and a lot of fun for guests of all ages!

However, my family's favorite attraction is Teamboat Springs. Teamboat Springs is an attraction that the whole family can enjoy together. It's a 1,200-foot whitewater raft ride and each raft holds between 4 and 6 guests. If you liked the family raft ride in Typhoon Lagoon, you are really going to enjoy Teamboat Springs. As the world's longest family whitewater raft ride, it's fabulous!

After hitting the thrill rides, it might be time to relax in Melt-Away Bay, the wave pool at Blizzard Beach. Unlike Typhoon Lagoon, the wave pool at Blizzard Beach is very gentle. This one-acre pool produces very small, very gentle waves. A limited number of tubes are even allowed in the wave pool, on a first come first serve basis. Another relaxing attraction is Cross Country Creek, which is Blizzard Beach's version of the "lazy river." Ride an inner tube on a relaxing trip around the park, but watch out for dripping ice water when you pass through the ice cave; it's super cold!

For younger guests, Blizzard Beach offers the Ski Patrol Training Camp for pre-teens and Tike's Peak for very young children. The Ski Patrol Training Camp contains several attractions, including two water slides, a main pool area with floating icebergs, and an iceberg walk that is crossed by holding onto nets above. Tike's Peak is a water playground containing snow castle water elements; guests must be less than four feet tall to play in Tike's Peak. When it is time for lunch, the Lottawatta

.....

Lodge is a great place to try. It offers chicken nuggets, hamburgers, pizza, hot dogs, sandwiches, and salads. Nearby is a mini-donut stand offering "world famous" mini-donuts. Be sure to try some before leaving Blizzard Beach! Just like at Typhoon Lagoon, you can pick up a refillable mug to use at several locations throughout the park, but you have to purchase a Blizzard Beach specific mug. Finally, you can bring in your own food, but no alcoholic beverages or glass containers are permitted. You can bring in coolers, but they must be smaller than 24 inches in length, 15 inches in width and 18 inches in height.

The sun can be brutal at Blizzard Beach. While I strongly recommend wearing sun screen when visiting either water park, you definitely will need something at Blizzard Beach. Compared to Typhoon Lagoon, Blizzard Beach has very little shade. For that reason, I also recommend wearing water shoes or flip flops for the hot pavement. While I can generally walk around barefoot at Typhoon Lagoon, I find that much harder to do at Blizzard Beach. There is also a lot more stairs to climb at Blizzard Beach, unless you take the chair lift every time you want to ride a ride.

As I said at the end of my last article, be sure to visit at least one of the water parks on your next visit to the Walt Disney World Resort. You can purchase the "Water Parks Fun & More" option for your Magic Your Way ticket, which provides you with a set number of admissions, based on the number of days on your Magic Your Way ticket, to the water parks, DisneyQuest, and the ESPN Wide World of Sports, or rounds of golf at the Oak Trail golf course. You can also just purchase a one-day admission and even an annual pass! Visiting a Disney water park is the best way to stay cool on a hot summer day, and is a lot of fun on any day of the year!

About The Author: Bernie Edwards lives in Maryland with his wife and two children. He is an engineer for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and a member of the Walt Disney World Moms Panel. He enjoys visiting both Walt Disney World and Disneyland, and sailing with the Disney Cruise Line.

Article last updated: 03-16-2011

View the latest version online at:

<http://www.passporter.com/articles/blizzard-beach-water-park-review.html>

Copyright by Bernie Edwards. 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/>

PassPorter Deluxe: Cut, punch holes, and insert in binder.
PassPorter Spiral: Cut, print at dotted line, and insert in PassPorter.

