

Dining at Walt Disney World: An Introduction

by Justine Fellows, PassPorter Guest Contributor

If you think that you will be stuffing yourself with junk food at Walt Disney World, you're in for a very pleasant surprise!

Disney offers an incredible selection of snack, walk up, and sit down restaurant choices in both its parks and resorts. Before we get started on our dining journey let's learn the lingo.

Let's start with the type of dining -- there are a number of different dining options:

Snacks - Snack carts are located throughout the parks and offer anything from ice cream, popcorn, and cotton candy to fruit, smoothies, and even crepes. There are also stores within the parks and resorts that offer packaged snacks. And let's not forget the wonderful candy store on Main Street in the Magic Kingdom and the very famous giant, smoked turkey legs available in the parks. These suckers bring out the cannibal in anyone.

Disney refers to the next level of dining as counter or quick service. These are walk-up locations, also at both the resorts and parks, which usually offer seating nearby. They sell heartier meals ranging from traditional park fare such as hamburgers and hotdogs to more innovative items such as barbecue, ethnic cuisine, wraps, pizza, and more. Quick service locations often offer dessert selections, soups, salads and drink options.

Table service or sit down restaurants throughout Disney World have their own categories. Many have themes, entertainment, or something special that sets them apart from the restaurants that you can visit near home. Here's how I differentiate:

* Character restaurants - these sit-down establishments offer walk around visits by characters such as Winnie the Pooh, the Princesses, and of course, Mickey and Minnie. Hollywood Studios offers a Playhouse Disney-themed character meal, Epcot offers a rotating restaurant with Chip and Dale. There are many choices for character meals in both the parks and resorts.

* Other restaurants offer theming or entertainment such as belly dancers, science fiction films while eating in cars, and underwater views. There are many types of food to choose from, from African to

Mexican, German to Japanese.

* The last type is dinner shows such as a full Hawaiian Luau, Mickey's Backyard Barbecue and my family's personal, cheesy favorite, The Hoop Dee Doo Revue. Many of the sit down restaurants are buffet style where you serve yourself, or family style, where they bring the buffet to you. Disney is excellent at helping you with special dietary needs or picky eaters so don't be afraid to ask.

There are over 200 dining choices at Disney World. Choosing your dining can be an exciting, as well as an essential part of planning. Since the inception of the dining plan, restaurants book quickly. You can now make reservations for table service restaurants 90 days in advance by calling 407-WDW-DINE.

About The Author: Justine, the author of [PassPorter's Disney Speed Planner: The Easy Ten-Step Program](#), works in education in Connecticut. She is also the host of [Travel Girls\(TM\) Tips for Disney World](#) podcasts.

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