

Staying in a Cabin at Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground: Resort Review

by Jennifer Shorey Arnold, PassPorter Guest Contributor

When someone mentions Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground, do you think of roughing it with a tent? Maybe you're someone who loves nature but doesn't like the idea of camping? Or are you longing for a new Disney resort experience?

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□ Well, the Cabins at Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground may be the right fit for you.

We had our first stay in the Fort Wilderness Cabins this February. Although the mornings and late evenings were chilly at that time of the year, it was the perfect way to spend Valentine's week. The cabins are great for couples looking for a romantic getaway or for families of up to six people. A huge benefit is that each cabin comes with a kitchen including full-size stove, microwave, refrigerator, dishwasher, and an array of pots, pans, plates, and utensils. The cabins also have a nice size full bath with tub/shower, a bedroom with a double bed and bunk beds, and a living room/dining room combination complete with dining table for six, a television, DVD and VHS player, and Murphy bed for additional sleeping.

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□ Lovely deck with grill and a picnic table allow for even more cooking options, however, it good to note that you must bring your own grilling supplies including grilling utensils and charcoal. All cabins also have both heating and air conditioning. Plus, you get your very own parking space right out in front of the cabin.

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□ There are even conveniently located laundry facilities at the resort in air conditioned comfort stations. These are perfect if you need to clean something on your trip or want to get a jump start on the laundry before heading home. Just like with the other Disney resorts, Mousekeeping visits daily to clean the cabin and leave fresh towels. In addition, we were surprised to find that they even cleaned the dishes for us by loading and turning on the dishwasher. For a special treat, Mousekeeping may leave towel animals. By the end of our four night trip, we had been greeted with nearly a dozen towel animals found all over the cabin.

Before your trip, you can arrange to stock the kitchen with groceries by using an online grocery delivery service vendor, or if you are driving to

the resort, you can just stop by a grocery store in the local area before checking in. A selection of grocery items can be found at the resort's two Trading Posts but, as you may suspect, be prepared to pay a little more for the convenience of getting your supplies on property.

□ Having the full kitchen makes it perfect to get up each morning and have a nice breakfast before heading out to the park, or for a day of exploration in the campground. Not only is this a great way to spend some quiet time with the family, but you can also save a few dollars or save one of your Disney Dining Plan meal credits for a lunch or dinner, if you're on the dining plan. If you want to eat out, Fort Wilderness has a variety of food locations including the Trail's End Restaurant, Crockett's Tavern, Chuck Wagon Snack Bar, and Meadow Pool Snack Bar. If you're on the Disney Dining Plan, be sure to check your Dining Plan Locations brochure to learn which dining locations are included and if they are snack, quick-service, or table-service.

□ During our trip, in the early mornings and late evenings we would stroll through the campground watching for wildlife and enjoying nature. Our cabin was about a fifteen to twenty minute walk to the beach and boat launch, where boats were available to take us to the Magic Kingdom or Contemporary Resort. We could walk just five to ten minutes in the other direction and quickly be at the main bus depot to take Disney Transportation to the Parks or Downtown Disney. Also, readily available are buses that travel throughout the campground for those who do not want to walk or who may find the weather during their visit to be less than welcoming. Golf cart rentals are available but they can be a bit pricey with a daily rental fee of \$59 per day plus tax.

□ The campground offers numerous activities for the young and young at heart to enjoy. Many are free, while others require a rental fee. By day, the Bike Barn (open 8:00 am - 6:00 pm) rents bicycles, canoes, pedal boats, kayaks, fishing poles, and tennis equipment, enabling you to enjoy all parts of the resort. They even have shuffleboard equipment that you borrow for free with a resort ID. Additionally, they have an Archery Experience program.

□ If you enjoy horses, visit the Tri-Circle D Ranch for both horseback riding and pony rides. Still looking for something to do? The resort has pools, trails, wagon rides, carriage rides, playgrounds, two arcades, more water sports at the docks, and even a Wilderness Back Trail Adventures Segway tour.

□ There are two shopping locations, The Settlement Trading Post and The Meadow Trading Post, offering camping supplies, some groceries, souvenirs, and video rental (video at Meadow Trading Post only). At

night you can enjoy a Campfire Sing-Along with Chip & Dale, which includes a sing-along and autographs with the characters. Enjoy this free event by bringing your own marshmallows to roast on the fire or you can purchase some at the Chuck Wagon Snack Bar. After the sing-along you and the family can settle down for a Disney movie on a large outdoor screen.

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□ Want dinner and a show? Take the family to the Hoop-Dee-Do Musical Revue at Pioneer Hall or Mickey's Backyard BBQ (seasonal). If you would rather a quieter and more peaceful way to conclude your evening, take a stroll down to the beach area and find a cozy spot to experience the Electric Water Pageant as it glides by nightly at 9:45 pm.

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□ The Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground is a great way to have a more laid-back Disney resort experience. There is plenty to do for those who want tons of activities, or it can become a peaceful retreat for those who find pleasure in doing nothing at all. When booking your next trip, take the time to look into the Fort Wilderness Cabins. This resort may just become your next favorite Disney resort home!

About The Author: Jennifer is a Disney enthusiast and loves to visit Walt Disney World and Disneyland with her husband as often as possible. Since taking their first tour, The Magic Behind Our Steam Trains, in February 2011, the couple has been researching other Disney tours and are looking forward to planning their next Disney trip.

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