

# The Magic of Disney: Why I Believe in Magic

by PJ Pettigrew, PassPorter Guest Contributor

We are a Disney family who are continually asked, why we are going to Disney again?

The Walt Disney Company offers us not just a vacation destination but a sanctuary from the stresses of the real world. I truly believe in Disney Magic and that is not something that can be quantified, it is something that must be experienced!

We have never gone to any Disney destination expecting something magical -- maybe that's what makes it more special when Pixie Dust is sprinkled. We have experienced some truly special magic as a result of the genuine caring of Cast Members, who exemplify the Disney spirit and go above and beyond for their guests. Walt Disney would be proud to see that his visions of quality family time are being kept alive by a new generation.

□ Our most recent magical experience occurred just last week. We had no plans to visit Walt Disney World, but we were taking refuge due to the loss of power and tornado damage at home in Alabama. As Disney Vacation Club members, we were able to make reservations on short notice. At check-in at the Animal Kingdom Villas, we chatted with the Cast Member behind the desk. Little did we know, she would become our Fairy Godmother. We were thrilled when she found us a Savannah view room, since we had only planned to enjoy the resort for a few days and did not have park passes or plans to get any, not knowing what expenses awaited us when we returned home.

□ After we were settled in our room, we received a visit from a manager. Our Fairy Godmother had shared our story. He brought our daughter a lollipop and a stuffed baby giraffe as well as park passes for us all to enjoy some Disney magic during our stay. We were in awe! That evening, we ordered room service for dinner since there was a long wait at Sanaa. When our meal was delivered, we were surprised that it included an additional appetizer, compliments of the front desk. We felt overwhelmed by the kindness and care we were given during our time of uncertainty. These Cast Members went WAY above and beyond to take care of us when we felt blessed just to be safe and together!

On our last Disney Cruise, we found that Pixie Dust could also be sprinkled in the middle of the ocean. Our daughter has a beautiful, homemade Snow White dress that she had been saving to wear on this

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cruise to show Snow White. On a previous cruise, Snow White spent the most time of any of the Princesses visiting with our daughter and teaching her the proper Princess wave and curtsy. We saw Snow White the first night during The Golden Mickeys show and anxiously awaited the Princess Gathering the next morning. We were waiting in line down the hall next to Triton's so we could not see the Princesses when they arrived. We heard the announcement welcoming Cinderella, Tiana, and Belle and thought maybe we just missed Snow White's name, so hubby took a peek. He came back and whispered, "There's no Snow White." How can there be no Snow White? While we waited in line, hubby asked the crew member who was directing the line about Snow White's whereabouts and the response was that Ms. White had to tend to a strike at the mine but would be back next cruise. Next cruise? That did us absolutely no good! Hubby explained how our daughter had been waiting a long time to see Snow White in her special dress. The crew member asked for our daughter's name and our cabin number and said he'd see what he could do.

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□When we returned to our cabin that afternoon, there was an envelope waiting addressed to our daughter. She was invited to a special gathering that evening at 9:30. There were no details other than it was a special gathering. Since we had late dining, we skipped dessert so we could get our lil' Princess dressed and primed one last time. We arrived a bit early and were the only ones there. Soon, two more families arrived. Unfortunately, Snow White was still unavailable, but when Cinderella and Tiana came out followed by Mickey and Minnie, Peter Pan, and every character on board, we were all in shock! Our daughter was surrounded by nearly all of her favorite friends, and she was so at ease and comfortable. Belle said they should take our daughter with them, since she was the most beautiful Snow White on board. When it was time for everyone to leave and descend the lobby staircase for the 'Til We Meet Again celebration, we asked our daughter if she'd like to go down and see any of them one more time. Her response, "No, I'm good! I just had them all to myself but now they need to see the other kids."

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□During a trip last year to celebrate our daughter's 4th birthday, she was excited that she was finally tall enough to ride Soarin'. We rode Soarin' several times during the day but when it was almost 9 PM and we only had time for one more ride, she chose Soarin' again. We did not have fast passes and it had a 50 minute wait, but she said she was willing to wait (a first for her!). Finally, the line split and we were told to go to the left, where there was still a long line of guests waiting for their turn to board. When the line moved, we ended up being asked to wait for the next flight and the Cast Members started chatting with our daughter. Of course, she was wearing her birthday buttons (she had 3 in the shape of a Mickey). One of the Cast members called her over to

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take a special call from Goofy wishing her a happy birthday. Then the Cast Member got on the speaker phone and asked everyone in line to help her sing Happy Birthday to her new friend. After all this, it was time for the next flight to begin loading, but the Cast Members hadn't been lining the other guests up in the rows as usual. They announced that they hoped everyone wouldn't mind allowing the birthday girl a special ride. They proceeded to load just our family and a few of themselves in row B1 for a private birthday flight. After our flight, they put a Mickey glove hand on our daughter and asked her to help direct the next guests onto the ride. She was then presented with a Soarin' Pilot's certificate signed by all of them. It was AMAZING! Our daughter doesn't realize how special this experience was, but her parents sure do!

So, as you can tell, Disney has created some very magical memories for our family over the years. None of these were planned or expected, but that's what makes them more special. Are we going back to Disney again? You bet we are! Why? If you have to ask, you just wouldn't understand!

*About The Author: PJ Pettigrew is a rocket scientist, life-long Disney fan, and now Disney mom who is enjoying experiencing Disney through the eyes of her daughter as if it were all new again.*

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