

Minnie & Friends - Breakfast in the Park: A Disneyland Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

If you're anything like me, you're pretty used to the character meals at Walt Disney World.

On my recent trip to California, we tried out the Minnie & Friends - Breakfast in the Park at the Plaza Inn in Disneyland offers and found it to be a very different experience!

Before our most recent trip, I hadn't even heard of the Minnie & Friends character breakfast, but thanks to a fellow Disney fan, I was talked into giving a go -- and I'm glad that I was. The Plaza Inn, just like its Walt Disney World counterpart, is located at the castle end of Main Street, and opens for the day with the character breakfast.

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□The first surprise came as we checked in, when the Cast Member asked how we were paying. Yes, over here, they sort out your check as you enter, which was quite a shock to the system, but when you think about it, it's a good idea.

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□Never one to miss an opportunity, the next thing Disney does is get your "family" photo, and as there were seven of us in our party, that was the only group shot that we got during the whole meal. We ended up being very glad that we'd had it done, and bought a copy.

Then you're off to enjoy your breakfast in a beautiful Victorian setting. It really does feel as if you've been transported back in time to the turn of the 20th century, just as the Imagineers intended, when they created the Plaza Inn restaurant.

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□Laid out in front of you is the buffet, with a wealth of different stations to investigate. We were taken to our tables, and left to our own investigations, which I think is sometimes a bit more fun! It took me a while to work out where everything was, but eventually I found everything I wanted. I'm not a huge breakfast fan, much preferring lunch and dinner offerings at buffets, but this had an amazing array of food. I was particularly impressed by the French toast, mainly because it's not something that's usually available at places of this sort. I was also told to sample the omelettes from the omelette station they had there, and they were excellent, some of the best I've ever had. Other options included a variety of pastries, waffles, fresh fruit, cereal, and of course a range of hot items.

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□ Here, you even collect your own drinks, with coffee, tea, and a range of juices on offer. It's an unusual way to do things, but I preferred it, as I didn't have to wait for a server to come round to top me up, I could just get up and do it myself.

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□ There's both indoor and outdoor seating here, and although there were only a few people seated outside, perhaps due to the boiling temperatures even that early in the morning, we noticed the characters made sure to circulate outside. I guess that might also be another reason for so few people being seated outside, as I can't imagine the heat was much fun for the characters to be out in.

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□ And, speaking of the characters, they are the real stars of the show of course! The name of this meal, Minnie & Friends -- Breakfast in the Park, gives you no idea of who to expect, except of course the main mouse's missus, Minnie. She's on hand, but she's certainly got a wide ranging, and very large, group of friends with her. They really were a bunch of misfits, with no logic to their appearance, unlike Walt Disney World. I'm used to meals with the princesses, the Winnie the Pooh characters, or the "famous five" of Mickey, Minnie, Goofy, Pluto and Donald. Here, there was no rhyme or reason to it.

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□ We first spotted my favorite of all the Disney characters, Eeyore. Pooh, and Tigger were also to be seen. So too were Chip and Dale, and another famous pair, Tweedledum and Tweedledee. However, from here, the list becomes more bizarre. Max was here, but no sign of his father Goofy, while Gideon was also in evidence from Pinocchio, along with Rafiki. Then there was the Fairy Godmother, with no princesses to be seen anywhere, and Captain Hook sans Smee.

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□ We had an absolute ball with all the characters. Given that there were so many, you'd be forgiven for thinking that you'd get less time with them than you do at Walt Disney World. After all, surely they'd all be coming to your table one after the other? Not a bit of it. Everything was very well timed, and there was only one time during our meal that we had a log jam, and in fairness, that was our fault, because we were having far too much with Captain Hook. Yes, you did read that right!

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□ With character meals we've had in Disneyland, we've always found the characters will make more of an effort to communicate with you than they do at Walt Disney World, and this meal was no exception. We had great fun with sign language, trying to work out what on earth Captain Hook was telling us, and eventually he gave up with us -- at least that's what we thought! He went to get a napkin, and a pen, so that he could write down what he was trying to tell us. Yes, that's right, characters write messages to you here, which is quite something.

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□ In fact, the whole Breakfast in the Park with Minnie and her wide, and varied friends, was quite something! Not having known about it beforehand, this struck me as one of Disneyland's best-kept secrets, but thank goodness I learnt this secret, because it's something I'll be coming back to again, and again, whenever our travels take us to the west coast of the States.

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□ Dining reservations can be made for Minnie & Friends -- Breakfast in the Park, and are recommended, by calling Disney Dining at 714 781-DINE up to 60 days in advance.

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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