

The Plaza Restaurant: A Disney Dining Review

by Jennifer Shorey Arnold, PassPorter Guest Contributor

Nearly every visit to the Magic Kingdom for me and my husband includes a meal at The Plaza Restaurant.

I see this little restaurant as a hidden gem! It projects a turn of the century Victorian charm inside and out and is a great place to relax and eat.

It seems as though perhaps a lot of people miss this restaurant as they scurry towards Cinderella Castle or make their way to the bridge to Tomorrowland. It can be hard to spot if you're distracted or don't know its location. If you're walking towards the Castle, the Plaza Restaurant is located on the right hand side of the street at the end of the last row of buildings on Main Street USA. It is on a walkway just around the corner from the Plaza Ice Cream Parlor.

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□When you arrive, you will need to check-in at the greeter's stand, which is located directly out in front of the restaurant since there is no indoor lobby. If you peer inside while waiting to be seated, you will think the dining room looks small and you're right. During our first visit, I was a bit surprised that it seemed even smaller on the inside than it appeared from the outside. As you enter the front doors, you immediately step into the main dining room, which is lined with gold tinted mirrors on one wall and large windows on the other. This combination of windows and mirrors gives the restaurant a very open feel and the space always seems bright. Just through the main dining room is an even smaller second dining room. This room reminds me of a little sunroom with its round shape, abundance of windows, and high ceiling. Both sections are decorated in an Art Nouveau style with cast iron furniture, fixtures, and art work. I prefer the main dining room because it is more open and often quieter than the second dining room. In the second room, the seating is much tighter and it seems as though sound bounces off of every section of that room, making just a little bit of noise seem overwhelming.

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□During our last visit, our reservation was at 11:30 am and we found the restaurant to be very quiet and peaceful. The service was quick and friendly. By the time we left at around 12:30, the tables were just starting to fill up. Although I did have an Advance Dining Reservation, we saw quite a few walk-ups who were told reservations were still available for that day. This was in October, so I imagine that during the

busier times of year walk-ups may be more difficult. This restaurant has a nice view of the Castle. Even though our table was in a corner of the main dining room, thanks to the large windows, we were still able to see bits and pieces of a parade as it passed by as well as the Castle. Occasionally, residents of Main Street USA will come in to visit diners at The Plaza. While enjoying our meal, we had an appearance by the Mayor. He introduced himself and welcomed everyone to Main Street USA. He then presented certificates to two young boys eating in the restaurant, declaring them official Mayors of the Day, and they all posed for pictures.

The restaurant has an all-day menu, served at lunch and dinner. The prices are reasonable, with entree items ranging from \$10.99 - \$14.99. If you are on the Disney Dining Plan, consider paying out-of-pocket for your meal and using your meal credits at a more expensive restaurant some other time in your trip. The entrees are quite substantial and delicious. Due to the large portions, we usually visit for lunch on a day that we have either skipped breakfast or just had a small snack for breakfast. Their entrees range from deli sandwiches, salads, and burgers to vegetarian options. I especially love the Chicken Strawberry Salad, which consists of greens, chicken breast, cucumbers, fresh strawberries, gorgonzola, and a white Zinfandel vinaigrette dressing. My husband really enjoys their grilled chicken sandwich topped with shaved ham and swiss cheese on a Kaiser roll with homemade chips. If you're not in the mood for chips, they also offer french fries or a broccoli slaw.

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□ Make sure when you're here that you leave room for dessert, because you can't pass that up at The Plaza! The desserts are huge and simply amazing! During our recent visit, my husband had a creamy hand-dipped butter pecan milkshake, which is listed as having no sugar added. Milkshakes are also available in chocolate, vanilla, strawberry, mint chocolate chip, cookies and cream, no-sugar-added raspberry sorbet, and nonfat chocolate-vanilla swirl. The milkshakes can be ordered as a dessert if you're on the dining plan. I always get the same thing, the Original Banana Split. It is massive and delicious! It includes a scoop each of vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry ice cream, topped with hot fudge, strawberry sauce, and crushed pineapple. Then it is smothered in whipped cream and topped off with nuts and a cherry. I can never finish it, but I always try my best!

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□ On your next visit to Magic Kingdom, make a point to stop in and try The Plaza Restaurant but make sure you're hungry. Whether you are coming for lunch or dinner or maybe an afternoon dessert, we always find that this is a great place for a meal.

About The Author: Jennifer is a Disney enthusiast and loves to visit Walt Disney World and Disneyland with her husband as often as possible. When not at the parks, she enjoys sharing her knowledge of Disney with family and friends to help them plan their own Disney trips.

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