

Using YouTube for Disney Magic: Getting Your Disney Fix

by Melissa Solbach, PassPorter Guest Contributor

After our first trip to Disney World, like many of you, it was really hard to go back to normal life! We all found we were missing that extra special Disney magic we had come to expect in the parks, and we needed a way to remember all the amazing things we saw and did.

There are a lot of great tips and tricks out there to help keep the Disney magic alive when you aren't at Disney, but we happened to discover one by accident. YouTube has really made a difference for our family.

We had recently purchased an Apple TV unit, which has many wonderful features including a way to search YouTube and play videos on your home TV. One night as we were scrolling through some clips and videos, we stumbled upon a fireworks show for one of the Disney parks. According to our kids, that is one of the best things that has ever happened to them!

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□Our trip was planned for October, so we had bought tickets to go see Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party while we were there. We absolutely loved the parade and the fireworks show, in fact, I hate to say it, but I think the fireworks show may have been even better than Wishes! We made sure to take lots and lots of pictures and videos on our trip, to remember it all when we got back, but there are always going to be shots you missed or that didn't turn out. As it was, we saw the parade from a pretty good location, but didn't have the best seats along the route. All of this was fixed with YouTube!

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□We did a search for the Boo To You Parade with the year 2011, and were rewarded with a beautiful picture in a prime viewing spot. Now, we know this was not the exact parade we saw (it was recorded on a different night), but it still brings back the memories and feelings from the night we were there. We were so encouraged, we quickly searched for the Happy Hallowishes fireworks show, the Wishes fireworks show, the Main Street Electrical Light Parade, and Fantasmic! at Hollywood Studios, all things we saw on our trip.

□Once we had watched those clips a few times, we decided to branch out, and find views of things that we didn't have time for, like the afternoon parades at Magic Kingdom and Animal Kingdom. I know there are many people out there who will probably say they would rather experience these events live and in person, and I agree with that! But I also know it will be several years between our visits, and they are

constantly changing things up at Walt Disney World. I can also say that having been there in the middle of the action doesn't compare at all to sitting on your couch watching it. Once we already had the memories, we could watch the clips and recapture the magic. Without having been there, it's just a cool parade on TV. I think it would be just as special to see in person even if you knew what was coming, and I also know there are people that have been to Walt Disney World dozens if not hundreds of times and still watch these events each time like it's the first.

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□Something else that we really benefitted from was there are people out there with far more time and knowledge than we had. We were so busy trying to soak up every last minute that we really didn't want to spend a lot of time reserving a great viewing spot. And then when we did actually get to watch the parade, neither of us wanted to see it through the lens of a recorder! There are some really impressive-quality videos out there, shot in HD with great cameras from amazing locations. One website posting lots of Disney videos is <http://www.attractionsmagazine.com> - Orlando Attractions Magazine. They have a lot of really wonderful videos on all kinds of topics, including attractions and hotels.

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□Another great thing about this is that you can see things that may only occur once. For instance, we have two very big Star Wars geeks in our house, but we just can't make the trip to Star Wars Weekends every year, so our son got to watch the evening show with Darth Vader, Chewbacca, and all the gang dancing around to current popular songs. That show in particular changes every year, so even if we do get to go to one, I know that while the premise may be the same, we will not see the exact same show.

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□The last point I have about why I think this is so much fun is because of my daughter. She was almost 3 when we went, so I know most of what she remembers will be from pictures and videos, and not necessarily her own memory. It's no shock then, that she has been the one to request the videos over and over. I will be curious over the next few years to see what she does and doesn't remember about our trip and I hope watching the clips on YouTube will at least help.

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□So to summarize, we went to Disney, missed being at Disney, found a way to bring a little piece of the magic back into our living rooms. And did I mention that it was free ... ?!

About The Author: Melissa lives in the Midwest with her patient and easy-going husband and their two children. After hours of exhausting and thorough research for a trip to Walt Disney World last year, she is looking forward to the thrill of planning another trip sometime soon. Yes, her family

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thinks she is a little crazy, but enjoy the fruits of her hard work too much to complain!

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