

Wine Country Trattoria: Disney California Adventure Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

To me, one of the pleasures of going to any Disney park is experiencing the wonderful dining opportunities, and regardless of which park it is, that never changes.

On our most recent visit to Disneyland, I was keen to sample one of the restaurants that we'd never gotten around to on our previous visits.

Located in Disney California Adventure theme park, the Wine Country Trattoria has seen many changes around it, as the park has undergone a major transformation, but despite that, the restaurant remains as it was. It's in a great location in the Golden State area of the park, with views over Pacific Wharf and the newly-opened Cars Land.

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□When we visited, we lingered, taking in the views of the park from the upper level of the restaurant--a very different perspective from the ground below. You can be seated either upstairs or downstairs, but we found the upstairs perfect for us. On the day we visited, a fairly busy Saturday afternoon, we were almost alone, which was a wonderful experience.

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□The upper level of the restaurant resembles a deep, shaded porch, open to the air on the sides. You're out of the sun, and with the fans they have here, the weather didn't bother us, even though it was baking hot outside, which was a pleasant surprise. I was concerned that insects could have been a problem as we ate, but we were only troubled once by flies during the meal.

As the name suggests, the cuisine here is Italian. Though you can order a la carte, one of the main draws is the World of Color Prix Fixe Menu, which includes a reserved viewing area for World of Color, the park's nightly spectacular. That special package is what drew us there as well.

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□You can get either lunch or dinner. The lunch package, with seating times from 11:30 am until 3:30 pm, costs \$29.99/adults, and \$18.99/children aged 3-9. There's also a dinner option from 4:00 pm to 8:30 pm, which will set you back \$39.99/adults, and \$20.99/children, and I can honestly say that it's money well spent. Not only does that get you a prime spot for the show later on in the night, but you also get a wonderful meal.

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□ The only issue with a prix fixe menu is that there's not much choice, particularly when it comes to appetizer and dessert. To start your meal, you can pick from the chef's soup selection or a salad of arugula, fennel, red onion, spiced walnuts, and goat's cheese, with a fig-balsamic dressing. As it was a hot day, we all went for the salad, and none of our party was disappointed with what was produced. As with any meal at Disney, they can also accommodate special requests, and my salad came without the bits I'd asked them to leave off.

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□ The choices expand somewhat when you get to the entree. My husband opted for the braised lamb shank served with polenta, Pinot Noir reduction, and gremolata. While the lamb was perfect for him, he did comment that the polenta was an odd choice to go with the meat.

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□ I opted for the seafood pasta, which consisted of spaghetti tossed with sauteed jumbo shrimp, scallops, garlic, and herbs, in a light pomodoro sauce. The flavors in mine were absolutely perfect, but sadly as with every time I have a pasta dish, there was far too much for me to finish.

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□ Other options on the menu are the herb-roasted chicken breast served with broccolini, caramelized onions, red peppers, and tagliatelle pasta, with a white wine garlic sauce; and the filet mignon served with herb-roasted potatoes, sauteed green beans, and a bleu cheese butter. If you don't eat meat or fish, there's also the broccolini aglio olio, made up of campanelle pasta lightly tossed with spinach, arugula, tomatoes, garlic, chilli flakes, and olive oil. Had the seafood pasta not been on the menu, this would definitely have been my choice.

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□ Now, while there's plenty of choice for entree, there isn't when you get to dessert. At first glance, the menu is deceptive. I looked at it, and thought the options were Trattoria tiramisu (which would have been my choice as a huge tiramisu fan), European macaroons, vanilla bean panna cotta with fresh fruit, and chocolate caramel espresso tart. However, what the menu is actually telling you is that you'll get a selection of each of these, albeit just a small amount. I can understand why they do that, as it certainly makes serving it up a lot easier, but personally I'd have preferred that choice. Having said that, all of the desserts were beautiful, except for the chocolate espresso tart, which had a salty taste to it. As a traditionalist where desserts are concerned, I can't stand the thought of them not being sweet, so that didn't appeal to me at all.

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□ All in all, the late lunch we enjoyed here was excellent, with some superb food, a beautiful setting, and the prospect of ringside seats for World of Color later on that night. In fact, it was so good that as soon as I knew we would be returning to Disneyland, I knew we'd have to go

back. Hopefully it will be just as good the second time around.

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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