

Biergarten: Epcot Dining Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

I love many things about Epcot.

But one of the things I love most about Epcot is the fact that you can take a trip around the world, just by taking a stroll all around World Showcase Lagoon.

It gives you a chance to sample cuisine from all the countries represented there, and with many of them, we eagerly tried them, knowing roughly what would be on offer at places like Italy, France, Japan, and China. In other places, such as Norway, and Canada, the menu appealed, drawing us in to give their restaurants a go.

□ However, with Biergarten in Germany, it was a different matter. For starters, not being a meat eater, I wasn't sure whether there would be enough for me to eat at Biergarten, and although I love cooking from around the world, cuisine from Germany is something I'm not overly familiar with. I'll confess here and now that I had visions of bratwurst and strudel, and not much else. Somehow that didn't inspire much confidence. As a result, we put off dining at Biergarten for many years, only finally trying it when we needed an additional booking during the Christmas period and it was all we could get.

□ With some trepidation, we headed inside Biergarten, and that was the first thing that absolutely blew me away. We were there for lunch, on a fairly warm, and sunny day, yet the second we entered, we were transported to an evening scene in Bavaria, complete with darkness, and the moon above us. It was very impressive as far as setting the scene went.

That's part of the attraction of Biergarten, the whole ambience of the place, and also the entertainment that's on offer. It's certainly a sterilized version of Germany, but then again, everything in World Showcase is, to some extent or another. Trust me, you won't see many pubs like the Rose and Crown in the real United Kingdom any more. As we always cynically say, most pubs over here now have billboards outside to entice hungry locals and visitors inside.

□ So, when the Biergarten performers came on in their lederhosen, I couldn't help but suppress a smile. Men in traditional leather shorts is not exactly the sort of thing we've seen on our slightly limited travels around Germany, but then again, it's fun for a tourist market, and that's what Disney is here to do. Despite their appearance, these guys are

excellent, with a wonderful repertoire of different instruments. My personal favorite, and I'm sure it's got something to do with the fact I love cows, was the guy who played the cow bells. As well as being a superb sound, the speed at which he had to move from one to the next was absolutely enthralling to watch. This certainly would be a much poorer place without the entertainment.

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□Your party will be seated together with others at Biergarten, unless you happen to be a large enough group to fill the tables on your own. Usually the tables seat eight people, and part of the enjoyment of a meal at Biergarten is those that you're seated with. The only downside with this place is that it can get quite loud, making conversation from one end of the table to the other quite tough at times.

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□So what about the most important aspect of any restaurant, the food? Well, despite my initial nervousness about finding enough non-meat items, there's still plenty on offer. As well as Biergarten's hot buffet items, there's also a selection of cold items, and I found lots to enjoy on this section. For example, I could have cucumber-dill salad, tomato salad with fresh basil, warm German potato salad, macaroni salad, and Bavarian cabbage salad. For those who do eat meat, you can add in the Bavarian sausage salad, and staying with the sausage theme, the sausage selection with sliced ham bologna, Lanjager, which is semi-dried, and ring bologna.

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□Soups change with the season, but when we visited, there were two on offer, one for meat eaters, and one for vegetarians at Biergarten. Moving on to the hot buffet, this was dominated much more by meat offerings, but with one fish, and one vegetarian option, which was plenty to keep me happy. Some of the meat items available include rotisserie chicken flavored with rosemary and thyme, sausage platter, pork shank gratin with fried onions, breaded pork schnitzel Vienna-style, and Munich's famous white veal sausages with sweet mustard and pretzel rolls. Dinner adds on a few more options, including marinated pot roast, and braised beef roulades.

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□But for me, the real attraction here at Biergarten is the desserts. I was very pleasantly surprised to find that I could enjoy so much of it, given I have an allergy to tree fruit, such as apples, peaches, and pears. I did think that many of the German desserts would involve these ingredients, but although there was freshly baked apple strudel with vanilla sauce as you'd expect, there were lots of other options. Items regularly on the menu include Bavarian cheesecake, vanilla pudding with chocolate chips, and Black Forest cake.

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□There is another attraction here as well. We deliberately invited a

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friend along, as we knew how much he appreciates his beer. He was able to enjoy the German beer flight, and, individual beers are available in half liters, and liters. For my part, the Biergarten wine list was impressive, and very expansive, including a wonderful Riesling Spatlese, which is very hard to find at home.

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□ Like many of the buffets these days at Walt Disney World, prices can go up in peak seasons, but budget around \$32 for lunch and \$45 for a Biergarten dinner per adult, including taxes and gratuity, and you're good to go. For that, you can expect a wonderful meal, accompanied by some good, old-fashioned entertainment. What more could you want for your lunch or dinner?

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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