

## Unusual Photo Opportunities: Getting Unique Photos at Disney

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

When you visit somewhere as regularly as we (and no doubt many of you) go to Walt Disney World, you may sometimes find yourself wondering if there's any point in bothering to take the camera. After all, as someone once said to us, "How many hundreds of photos do you now have of the castle?" It was a fair point and it got me thinking.

We all know that there's a myriad of things to discover at Walt Disney World. Even after all the time we've spent there, we still haven't seen or done everything, which means we can't have photographed everything, either. Fair enough, we have probably photographed the park icons, such as Spaceship Earth or Cinderella Castle from every conceivable angle, but there are probably lots of little nooks and crannies that we've never even seen, let alone taken pictures of. That's why, for the last couple of Disney trips, I've been on a mission to see and photograph new parts of each park.

This quest not only enriches our photo album, but it helps to keep our experiences in the park fresh, too. It's almost as if we're looking at things with a new pair of eyes, and perhaps we are. It certainly makes you hunt out new parts of Disney that you've never encountered before.

Let's take the countries around World Showcase. Epcot's my favorite park, so I've spent a considerable amount of time exploring these countries over the years. Despite that, we still discovered a lot of new things. When you start walking around each pavilion, you realize just how huge they are. We found entire areas that we'd never seen before, with almost secret passageways hidden away in Morocco, and an exit from the shop right at the back of the Japan pavilion that brings you out by the White Egret Castle, giving you a very different perspective of the place. Talking of World Showcase's shops, it's well worth looking at what's in there and getting some shots of the products on sale. Some of the displays are superb and are great reminders of each country.

Animal Kingdom's Tree of Life may be something you've photographed lots of times, but did you know there are trails around the base of the tree that you can wander around? We didn't, until we took the Wild by Design tour and, since then, we've explored a couple of those trails. They give you a very different perspective of the tree, showing off animals that we'd never seen on it before. It's a good challenge to spot new animals, and then we make a point of taking pictures of them so we can look back and remember the excitement of a new discovery.

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And, speaking of animals you've never seen before, it's worth taking your time and even stopping for breath in the Oasis, not long after you enter Animal Kingdom. All too often, all of us are dashing past to get to Expedition Everest or Kilimanjaro Safaris and we miss this area in the rush. It's a great shame if you do, as if you linger a while you'll find a lot of different animals right under your nose, which make for some great photos. Be warned that you might have to be patient, as some of these critters are pretty difficult to find and have a habit of hiding away from the camera lens. For me though, that only makes the moment sweeter when finally I get a good shot of them!

In the Magic Kingdom, it seems almost everything is well photographed, but even here, it's easy to find more unusual items to snap. Just stroll along Main Street and look up -- the windows have some superb in jokes on them. Turn down the alleyway halfway down on your right hand side and you'll find some buildings that I'll bet you've seen very few photos of.

Another great place to head to find unusual photo opportunities is Tom Sawyer's Island. The first time we visited it, I had great fun, snapping things I'd never seen before. It also gives you a new perspective of the rest of the park around you, as you can get some good views of both Frontierland and Liberty Square from there.

The hunt for unusual photos isn't just confined to the Disney parks, though. Visit any of the resorts on Disney property and you'll find they have one thing in common - they're all beautifully themed. There's nothing better than taking a break from the parks to head over to one of the resorts. You can explore their lobbies, the swimming pool areas, and the beautifully landscaped grounds. On my most recent visit, I finally made it over to Fort Wilderness during daylight hours, and I was pleasantly surprised to discover it had a beautiful white beach and lovely Spanish moss draped over the trees. Then there was Wilderness Lodge. Having been to the main building and the main swimming pool plenty of times, this time we headed for the Disney Vacation Club Villas and saw their quiet pool and the seating areas in the Villas building. As that shows, even after numerous visits to the Walt Disney World resort, if you've been to every resort, there are still new areas that you can find to enjoy and photograph.

It's also worth photographing some of the signs you come across, particularly if you're a scrapbooker like me. There's nothing better than having a photo of a resort or attraction sign and then doing a page on that subject. It certainly gives you an excellent starting point and saves you having to buy expensive embellishments.

Don't forget some of the basics as well. One vacation, we returned home

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to tell people about the amazing food we had experienced during our stay on Disney property, and people just looked at us blankly. It was much easier next time to show them photographs of the dishes, rather than trying to describe them -- and trust me, we had people salivating at some of those photos! Ever since then, we always photograph the food, as it helps us to remember just how it was.

Equally, photograph your room as a reminder of a great stay. It's always best to do this when you first get there, before you unpack and make a mess -- and don't forget to take photos of the view, particularly if you're overlooking something impressive, like the resort swimming pool, one of the lakes on property, or even the Magic Kingdom, if you're lucky enough to stay in one of the monorail resorts.

There are photo opportunities literally everywhere you go on Disney property, so the next time you're there, keep that camera out and shoot away, looking for the unusual views. I'll bet you can find plenty if you set your mind to it.

*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!](#)*

Article last updated: 6/18/2009

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