

Lessons Learned Part 1: Walt Disney World Lessons

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

In this series of articles, I'll be taking a look at the lessons we learned on our most recent Disney trip.

There's always something new you can learn every time you visit, no matter how many times you've been to the Disney parks before.

Sadly, the first lesson we learned related to illness, as my husband wasn't well during this vacation, ending up spending a full day in bed. I guess at least he was comfortable, but it taught me that we need to think about putting both of us down as drivers for the rental car we had. For years, we've only listed my husband, as he always does the driving (he's not a good passenger), but that day, we could've really done with both of us being able to drive. As we were staying on Disney property, it wasn't the end of the world, as I was able to go out and grab a bus over to Epcot, but our plans to go to Busch Gardens Tampa the next day went out of the window, as he just wasn't up to an hour and a half's drive, quite understandably.

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□The next lesson we learned related to this, as we decided to go to SeaWorld Orlando instead that day, as we thought the tickets we'd bought would run out before our next visit to the States, and we figured that we may as well use them for at least one park. However, despite the date printed on them, when we put them through the ticket machines at the entrance, it turned out that they were valid for another year, and we could've kept them for our next trip. In the future, if we end up in a similar situation, I think we'll always do a double check, as of course, we still want to go to Busch Gardens Tampa, and we've ended up buying exactly the same tickets for our forthcoming visit.

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□My husband's illness also brought into sharp focus an issue with the Deluxe Dining Plan. While we always find it great value for money, as we tend to get our full bang for our buck, with signature meals and expensive one credit meals, for example at Via Napoli or character meals, if one of you really isn't that keen on eating, then it doesn't represent such great value. We ended up going out and having meals, just because they were already paid for, whereas I suspect had we been paying out of pocket, we'd have just cancelled and maybe had a snack instead.

Something else we learned this vacation, which I think has been at the back of our minds for some time, is that you can't always 100% rely on

Disney transportation to get you around, and here I'm thinking specifically of the monorail, which had some fairly major problems during our stay. On one day, it was down for about six or seven hours, which made the prospect of getting from Bay Lake Tower, where we were staying, to the Polynesian, and then to the Magic Kingdom, a very interesting journey, shall we say! It's a good reminder to always build in more time to your schedule than you think you're going to need.

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□Something I didn't expect to learn this trip, only because I've never thought about it, is the way that people everywhere, including Disney, treat those who are in scooters or ECVs. We met up with a friend, who uses a scooter, and she told us early on that people wouldn't see her as we moved around the park. That shocked me, and at first I didn't believe it, because surely people don't behave in that way, but sadly they do. The amount of times I watched people cut in front of her, making her stop without warning, really did make me think. It's something I instantly became more conscious of as a result, so it was a good lesson to learn.

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□The final thing we learned on this vacation actually relates again to friends we met during this vacation. Sometimes sadly the meets that we'd planned didn't work out, as Disney is a big place, and we missed some people, or either they or us weren't up to meeting after all. That's always an occupational hazard, but the flip side of it is that sometimes you meet up with friends and you have even more of a blast than you expected.

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□We had planned to meet up as a group for lunch, and see the early performance of the Candlelight Processional, but we then ended up spending the whole evening together, going to the Tutto Gusto wine bar, which we've never tried before, and what a great time we had there! It was totally unexpected, but sometimes the totally unexpected times are the best ones, as they're unplanned, and spontaneous. Ok, so we didn't make our original intended dinner at Tokyo Dining, but that will keep for next time, and in return, we had such a fun time, and got to experience a new dining experience at Disney. What more could you ask for?

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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