

Halloween at Disney Parks Around the Globe: Disney Parks at the Holidays

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

I'll confess here that Halloween has never been one of my favorite holidays.

It has something to do with some unpleasant experiences with trick or treating when I was growing up, and let's just say people took things a little too far. So, rather than enjoy Halloween, I used to dread it. That was until I discovered Halloween at the various Disney theme parks.

My first Disney Halloween experience was back in 2003 at Disneyland Paris. We'd booked a four-night break in late September, when we knew the parks would be quiet, and hopefully the weather would still be pretty good. Halloween didn't even factor into our calculations, as it was September, and anyway it's not as big a celebration over here as it is in America. We were amazed to see pumpkin men all along Main Street, complete with paint pots, causing chaos as they painted the town red, white, and every color under the sun. It was a huge amount of fun, and brought massive smiles to our faces.

□ That made us curious to see what the American parks did, and a few years later, we got the chance to find out. Of course, Florida has Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party on select nights in the Magic Kingdom, and the first time we attended it, we fell in love with it. This is the Halloween I love -- the fun side, the side that's not at all scary. The park was again very cleverly decorated, although interestingly we both felt that Disneyland Paris actually had more decoration, which we didn't expect. We loved the creative uses of blow-up Mickey ghost balloons, and touches like green and orange lighting around the park, giving familiar buildings an odd hue, perfect for the party, and of course a lot of these things could easily be removed for the next day in the park, so you'd never know they were there the night before.

□ One highlight for us is the parade, which is one of our favorites, although I had no idea how hard it would be to capture a photo of that headless horseman! My goodness, if the evening is dry, he can really move, so be ready! I wasn't, and had to wait two years until we were back for another party to get a shot of him. The grave diggers were some of my favorites in the parade, and we loved the way their spades actually created sparks on the ground. That must take some work!

HalloWishes is the other highlight for us, and just like the Christmas Party, which we'd been to on a number of occasions, it's a version of

Wishes fireworks just for Halloween and is plussed-up. We were blown away by what we saw, and for us, just those two things were worth the price of admission, but we were also able to find rarely-seen characters like the Seven Dwarfs, get some fun photos done, particularly near the Haunted Mansion (don't miss that opportunity), and ride whichever rides we wanted.

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□ However, there was something we felt was missing, and we knew we could find it in Disneyland in California, so the next time we were in the States in October, we visited both Disney theme parks on either side of the country, so that we could experience Haunted Mansion Holiday at Disneyland. For those who don't know, the popular attraction is dressed up for both the Halloween and Christmas seasons, with Jack Skellington and the Nightmare Before Christmas crowd taking a starring role. We were fascinated to see the changes, which essentially gives you a brand-new attraction that's almost completely unrecognizable from its normal version. Now this is what Walt Disney World, and Disneyland Paris for that matter, could do with! Bearing in mind how much it costs to get to California from the UK, I'm not likely to visit often, but this attraction (perhaps along with Cars Land) is almost worth the cost of a visit alone.

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□ Disneyland does also offer its own Halloween Party, which has undergone some major changes in recent years. When we went, it was a lot cheaper, reflecting that there was a lot less happening there than in Florida. Located back then in Disney California Adventure, today Mickey's Halloween Party is in the Disneyland Park, and is much more on a par with its Not So Scary cousin in Orlando in terms of ticket prices, and additional events, such as parades, fireworks, and dance parties. It's interesting to see how the influence of Florida has obviously rubbed off here, leading to a much more full event for the night, all of course at a higher price.

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□ All three resorts have something very special to offer visitors during the Halloween season, and in truth I can't pick between them. Give me a mixture of the decorations from Disneyland Paris, Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party from Walt Disney World, and the holiday makeover for the Haunted Mansion in Disneyland and that, to me, would be the ultimate Disney celebration for Halloween!

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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