

Disney's Top Tables

With so many choices, it's difficult to decide where to spend your dining dollars at Walt Disney World. Hopefully this list will narrow the field a bit for you.

Best For Families

Coral Reef Restaurant – Kid's feel like the Little Mermaid at this one-of-a-kind dining room where just a trident's throw away is Epcot's Living Seas' 6-million-gallon aquarium rife with coral reefs and sea life. And adults feel like Poseidon after just one bite of the restaurant's stellar seafood and the oh-so-delicious pepper jack cheese grits.

50's Prime Time Café – What kid doesn't want to experience life way back when. They'll get a fun dose of it at this Disney-MGM Studios' restaurant. Dine on savory renditions of good old American comfort food watching *Leave it to Beaver* and *Topper* on black and white TVs sitting on the counter between the toaster and the blender. "Mom" herself is your server, making sure everyone in the "family" observes good manners.

Whispering Canyon Café – Honest-to-goodness, rib-stickin' barbecued vittles served piping hot in an iron skillet is right up a wannabe cowboy's alley at this fun-loving restaurant at the Wilderness Lodge. Come prepared for plenty of hootin' and hollerin' and please, whatever you do, don't ask for the ketchup unless, that is, you like a lot of attention.

Best to Book Ahead For

California Grill - This sensational restaurant at the Contemporary Resort should be at the top of every visitors list. From exemplary sushi to the exceptional New American cuisine to sensational desserts and the outstanding California wine list each available by the glass, this place has it all. From its lofty heights diners can see the Magic Kingdom, the sparkling Seven Seas Lagoon, and, best of all, a picture-perfect view of the Wishes fireworks. Just try to time your meal around the fireworks and head outside to the super observation platform for a bird's-eye view of the extravaganza.

Cinderella's Royal Table – If there was ever a place to plan ahead for, this is it. Exactly 180 days prior to the anticipated day, countless parents rise at the crack of dawn to be one of the first to call for dining reservations. All just to insure that their darling little ones will be among the lucky few to be seated high atop Cinderella's Castle at the Magic Kingdom. If you don't snag a reservation your children will never forgive you.

Victoria and Albert's – Demand is high for this fantastic dining spot at the Grand Floridian Resort. Once you've secured your spot, just sit back and prepare to be wowed by tables set in Wedgwood china, Christofle silver, Frette linens, and Riedel crystal, and cuisine that will knock your socks off.

Best For Vegetarians

Victoria and Albert's— Here is one place that vegetarians won't feel short changed. A seven-course vegetarian menu, expertly overseen by the illustrious Chef de Cuisine Scott Hunnell, is offered nightly. It can't get much better than that.

Boma - The essence of Africa is potent beneath Boma's circular, thatched roof where hearty foods prepared with an African flair (and a dash of American cuisine for the picky eater) are the fare. An entire section (or pod) of meatless dishes with such items like vegetable lentil kofta, braised greens, vegetable skewers, and several kinds of exotic salads are par for the course.

Best Character Dining

Crystal Palace - Winnie the Pooh, and his friends, Eeyore, Piglet, and Tigger are your hosts in a sunlight-drenched, conservatory-style restaurant found at the castle end of Main Street in the Magic Kingdom. Here you'll find a surprisingly good and bountiful buffet, definitely one of the better spreads in the park.

1900 Park Fare – At this popular spot at the Grand Floridian Resort is Mary Poppins, Pooh, Tigger, Eeyore, Alice in Wonderland, and the Mad Hatter for breakfast; in the evening hours the characters from Cinderella are in attendance. And the food is perhaps Disney's best buffet.

Akershus Royal Banquet Hall - Those who love the idea of ethnic dining should try this atypical one housed at Epcot in a replica of Oslo's Akershus Castle. Disney Princesses are in attendance at all meals and may include Belle, Ariel, Cinderella, Jasmine, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, and Mary Poppins.

Best Wine List

Citricos – This Mediterranean influenced restaurant at the Grand Floridian Resort is rightly proud of its global wine list, a Wine Spectator Restaurant Award winner. On the menu you'll find a suggested wine to accompany each course.

Jiko – At the Animal Kingdom Lodge's signature dining room you can order from the most extensive list of South African wines this side of Johannesburg. Also a Wine Spectator Restaurant Award winner, more than 65 of South Africa's boutique wineries showcase their vintages here.

California Grill – As if the spectacular food and the mind-boggling view isn't enough, the outstanding California wine list is also exceptional with 100 wines offered by the glass.

Victoria and Albert's – Yet again this, Disney's most acclaimed restaurant, makes the cut, and has the distinction of being Disney's only restaurant to receive the coveted Wine Spectator "Best of Award of Excellence", with 700 selections on the menu and 4,200 bottles in its cellar.

Best Hip Scene

Todd English's Bluezoo - There's plenty of buzz surrounding this dreamy outpost at the Walt Disney World Dolphin where it's worth the cost of dinner just to check out the stunning, underwater-like fantasyland dining room adorned with air bubble light fixtures, shimmering silver-blue organza curtains, and carpeting mimicking an expanding drop of water. But if dinner isn't in your plans, the lounge here is just as cool where martinis and a raw bar are on order.

Raglan Road - It's easy to imagine you're in the heart of Dublin at Raglan Road, Downtown Disney's newest restaurant and pub. Come in for a drink, a snack, or for a meal... whatever, just don't miss this fantastic spot. Irish musicians provide authentic entertainment accompanied by delicious, contemporary Irish cuisine.

Cara Goldsbury is the author of The Luxury Guide to Walt Disney World Resort. For more information visit her online at www.wdwluxuryguide.com