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Tips For Disney World First-Timers

by Cara Goldsbury, Author of *The Luxury Guide to Walt Disney World: How to Get the Most Out of the Best Disney Has to Offer*

So you've finally decided to head to Walt Disney World. With so much to see and do, it's important to come prepared. Here are some excellent tips to make your trip one that will be remembered for a lifetime.

- ❖ **Slow down and enjoy the magic.** Resist the urge to see everything at breakneck speed. You can't possibly cover it all, so think of this as your first trip to Disney, not your last. There will be time to pick up all the things you missed on the next go-round.
- ❖ **Plan ahead.** Decide ahead of time what your priorities are and make a plan of action.
- ❖ **Get to the parks early!** It's amazing, particularly in busy season, how many of the popular rides you can knock off before half the "World" gets out of bed.
- ❖ **Take time for a rest in the middle of the day.** Stay at one of the Magic Kingdom or Epcot resorts, allowing a return in the middle of the day for a nap or dip in the pool.
- ❖ **Call exactly 180 days prior at 7 AM Orlando time for priority seating if breakfast at Cinderella's Royal Table in the Magic Kingdom is tops on your child's list.** The only way you might get away with sleeping in and booking a bit later for this highly coveted character breakfast is if you are traveling in extremely slow season.
- ❖ **Come prepared for an afternoon shower during the rainy summer months even if the sky looks perfectly clear in the morning.** Rent a locker to store your raingear and circle back if skies start to look threatening. However, if you're caught unprepared, just about every store in the parks sells inexpensive rain ponchos.
- ❖ **Use Fastpass, Disney's free, nifty timesaving device.** It's offered at all four theme parks and is a great way to save hours of waiting in line. Just insert your park pass in one of the machines located at each individual Fastpass attraction and receive a ticket printed with a designated one-hour window in which you may return and enter a special line with little or no waiting.
- ❖ **Pre-arrange Advance Dining Reservations by calling 407-WDW-DINE.** On arrival you'll receive the next table available for your party size, thus saving hours of frustration and waiting.
- ❖ **Allow plenty of time to reach the theme parks each morning.** It's easy to miss your breakfast priority seating if you don't allocate enough time.
- ❖ **Be spontaneous.** If something catches your eye, even if it's not on your daily list of things to do, stop and explore. If not, you could miss something wonderful.
- ❖ **Realize the limitations of your children.** If they're tired, take a break. If their feet hurt, get them a stroller (forget that they outgrew one years ago). If a ride scares them don't force the issue. Such precautions will make your day and the day of other park visitors a lot less stressful.
- ❖ **Bring pagers, 2-way radios, or cell phones to keep in touch if your party plans on splitting up.**
- ❖ **Wear broken-in, comfortable footwear.** Better yet, bring two pairs and rotate them. Nothing is worse than blisters on your first day and then nursing them for the remainder of your vacation.

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Cara Goldsbury is the author of *The Luxury Guide to Walt Disney World: How to Get the Most Out of the Best Disney Has to Offer*. Visit her at www.wdwluxuryguide.com.