

## **TIPS FOR WALT DISNEY WORLD® RESORT FIRST-TIMERS**

- Slow down and enjoy the magic. Resist the urge to see everything at breakneck speed, and take time to enjoy the many amenities offered at your resort. You can't possibly see everything, so think of this as your first trip to Disney not your last. There will be time to pick up what you missed on the next go-round.
- Think ahead. Decide your priorities before your vacation begins and plan out each day beforehand.
- 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.
- Plan for a rest in the middle of the day particularly if you have children in tow or the parks are open late. Stay at one of the Magic Kingdom or Epcot resorts, allowing an easy return to your resort in the middle of the day for a nap or a plunge in the pool.
- Call or go online exactly 180 days prior at 7:00 a.m. Orlando time (Eastern time) for dining reservations if a meal at Cinderella's Royal Table or Be Our Guest in the Magic Kingdom is tops on your list. You might get away with sleeping in and booking a bit later but only when traveling during extremely slow seasons.
- 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 rain gear, circling back if skies start to look threatening. If you're caught unprepared just about every store in the parks sells inexpensive rain ponchos.
- Arrive at the water parks at opening time if a lounge chair is a priority, or, better yet, pre-reserve one of the private cabanas or premium beach chair space. And remember that in the busy summer months, water parks are sometimes filled to capacity by midmorning with new guests kept from entering until late afternoon.

- Use *Disney's FastPass+®* option which allows up to three FastPass+ attractions per day to be pre-reserved 60 days prior to arrival.
- Make Advance Dining Reservations, especially in the busier times of year (see the Dining In Style at Walt Disney World Resort chapter for a more detailed explanation), to save hours of waiting and frustration.
- Allow plenty of time to reach the theme parks each morning. It's easy to miss your breakfast reservations when enough time has not been allocated.
- Be selectively spontaneous. If something catches your eye, even if it's not on your daily list of things to do, be ready to stop and explore or you may miss something wonderful.
- Be attuned to 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 seems scary to them don't force the issue. It will make your day and the day of other park visitors much less stressful.
- Wear broken-in, comfortable footwear. Better yet, bring several pairs and rotate them. Nothing is worse than getting blisters on your first day and then having to nurse them for the remainder of your vacation.

Cara Goldsbury is the author of *The Luxury Guide to Disney Vacations* and *The Luxury Guide to Walt Disney World Resort*. She is Chief Executive Concierge at [Glass Slipper Concierge®](#) and has appeared as a leading Disney expert on two Travel Channel specials, *Disney Splurge!* and *Disney Royalty*. She has also been cited numerous times in national news articles, in such notable publications as *Forbes Traveler*, as an expert on the *Walt Disney World®* Resort. Visit Cara at [wdwLuxuryGuide.com](http://wdwLuxuryGuide.com).