

WALT DISNEY WORLD® RESORT WOW EXPERIENCES!

So many things at Walt Disney World seem special, but a handful of experiences really take the cake. Plan on at least one or two of the following excursions to make your stay extra-unique, a memory to last a lifetime.

Swim with the Sharks

Take the ultimate dive in Epcot's 5.7-million-gallon aquarium at The Seas with Nemo & Friends with more than 65 species of marine life, including sharks, turtles, eagle rays, and diverse tropical fish. With DiveQuest you become part of the show and enjoy guaranteed calm seas, no current, and unlimited visibility. Even more fun, your family and friends can view your dive through the aquarium's giant acrylic windows. Guests must be at least 10 years of age and provide proof of SCUBA certification to participate. \$175. Call 407/WDW-TOUR for information.

Catch a Wave

If the ocean is a bit too intimidating, learn to "Hang 10" from the experts in a safe and controlled environment at Typhoon Lagoon with waves up to six feet and up to four rounds of surfing. Lessons begin before park opening hours so guests must furnish their own transportation to the park since buses are not up and running quite so early in the morning. Offered Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday for \$150. Participants must be at least eight years old and strong swimmers. Maximum of thirteen people per class with surfboards provided. Call (407) WDW-PLAY or (407) 939-7529 for reservations.

Celebrate Your Special Day

Step aboard a pontoon boat for an especially memorable birthday cruise around Disney's waterways complete with driver, bag snacks, and beverages. Offered at any of the Walt Disney World marinas or around Disney's waterways. Boats carry a maximum of eight for \$275 or ten for \$325 with balloons, ice cream, cake, and a banner offered for an additional charge. Call (407) WDW-BDAY or (407) 939-2329 for reservations.

Get the Royal Treatment

Talk about luxury for kids! Little princesses and princes dressed in all their finery enjoy tea in the Garden View Lounge at the Grand Floridian with Princess Aurora along with sing-alongs, storytelling, and a parade, all for the princely sum of \$250 (price for one child and one adult). Each little princess receives a tiara and a My Disney Girl Princess Aurora doll; little princes get a princely crown and a

bear. Children must be accompanied by an adult who receives only tea. Reservations can be made 180 days prior by calling (407) WDW-DINE or (407) 939-3463.

Adults can participate in their own high tea here *sans* tiara and all the hoopla from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. with a wide assortment of teas, scones, tarts, trifle, pound cake, pâté, tea sandwiches and, of course, champagne. Come after 3:00 p.m. when tea is accompanied by live entertainment in the Grand Lobby.

Hit the Water

For true action head to the Contemporary Resort where waterskiing, kneeboarding, wakeboarding, and tubing are on offer for \$165 per hour including boat, driver, and instruction (boats carry up to five guests). Morning guided Personal Watercraft excursions on Bay Lake and the Seven Seas Lagoon or afternoon free-styling Personal Watercraft fun in a roped-off area the size of three football fields are \$135 per hour per watercraft holding up to three people with a combined weight under 400 pounds (only four personal watercraft are allowed on the water at any one time). Regular parasailing packages begin at \$95 per flight for a single and \$170 for a tandem, including eight to ten minutes in the air and 450 feet of line. Premium packages begin at \$130 for a single and \$195 for a tandem, including ten to twelve minutes in the air and 600 feet of line. Participants must weigh at least a total of 130 pounds and no more than 330 pounds total weight. For reservations call (407) 939-0754.

Hunt for Treasure

Children ages four through ten board their own pint-sized ship, don their mouse-ear pirate caps, and depart the Grand Floridian's marina to sail the Seven Seas Lagoon. At each "port of call" a.k.a. the surrounding Magic Kingdom resorts, a new treasure hunt awaits with all booty divided between the adventurers. A similar Albatross Treasure Cruise can be found at the Yacht and Beach Club. \$36 per child, grub included. Call (407) WDW-DINE or (407) 939-3463, for reservations.

Indulge in Your Very Own Yacht

For the ultimate in luxury, charter Disney's 52-foot Sea Ray Sedan Bridge yacht, the *Grand I*, moored at the Grand Floridian's marina, perfect for pampered VIP guests. Available for a morning spin, a sunset cruise, or the ultimate viewing location for the Wishes fireworks show, *Grand I* includes your own captain and deckhand with room enough for up to eighteen people. Perhaps the perfect elegant evening would include a sunset gourmet dinner onboard complete with private butler service followed by champagne while viewing the fireworks extravaganza. If your party is a large one you'll have to be content with appetizers and drinks since a plated dinner is available only for three people or less.

Or consider an afternoon excursion exploring the nearby resorts on the Seven Seas Lagoon and Bay Lake with a bevy of snacks to keep the appetite at bay: sail past the beaches of the romantic Polynesian and the Grand Floridian's Wedding Pavilion, check out the geyser on the shore of Wilderness Lodge, and watch the parasailing action around the Contemporary Resort. Basic cost is \$520 per hour. Call (407) 824-2682 for reservations and information.

Experience a Culinary Feast

At Victoria & Albert's Chef's Table at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort chef Scott Hunnell prepares a feast just for you. Your table, seating from one to ten, is located in the restaurant's kitchen, but it's exclusively yours without the need to share once reserved. Up to thirteen courses are served over four hours, each tailored to your tastes. If you're smart you'll choose the wine pairings with each course coupled by a specially chosen vintage.

Spin Through the Wilderness

On Disney's Wilderness Back Trail Adventure enjoy Florida's natural beauty on a Segway X2, a treaded model with all-terrain tires, on a two-hour trip around Ft. Wilderness and Wilderness Lodge. Begin with a short training session, followed by a ride along numerous nature trails, a visit to the stables, and a quick trip around Wilderness Lodge with descriptions of foliage and wildlife along the way. The cost is \$90 per person; call 407-WDW-TOUR or (407) 939-8687 for reservations.

Take Tea with Alice

Children simply love the Wonderland Tea Party held at the Grand Floridian Resort hosted by Alice in Wonderland characters. The one-hour event includes games, storytelling, sandwiches, and apple juice "tea" along with their very own photo with their special hosts. Strictly for children ages four to twelve. Held Monday through Friday at 2:00 p.m. for \$43. Call (407) WDW-DINE, or (407) 939-3463, for reservations.

Sail Away on a Fireworks Cruise

Depart from the docks of the Yacht Club and Magic Kingdom Resorts for a private viewing of either the Wishes fireworks display at the Magic Kingdom or Illuminations at Epcot. Anchor at the perfect viewing spot facing the Magic Kingdom or under the International Gateway Bridge at Epcot just minutes before the nighttime spectacular begins and you'll be set. There's nothing quite as magical as the scene over the glistening water along with Disney's best fireworks presentations. A driver, beverages, and bag snacks are included, but wine, champagne, hors d'oeuvres, cheese and fruit platters, dessert, even chocolate covered strawberries can be ordered ahead from Private Dining, perfect for a special floating party. Boats

carry a maximum of eight for \$292 or ten for \$346. Call (407) WDW-PLAY or (407) 939-7529.

Those who love the story of Peter Pan should reserve space on the Pirates and Pals Fireworks Voyage departing from the marina at the Contemporary Resort. Upon arrival snacks and beverages are served with Captain Hook and Mr. Smee who join the fun for a meet-and-greet. Then march off to board your vessel with a mischievous pirate named Patch, your guide through the unpredictable waters of the Seven Seas Lagoon, who leads the sing-alongs and Disney trivia games. Back on land after viewing the Wishes fireworks show there's a surprise visit by none other than Peter Pan, ready to pose for photos and sign autographs. Non-private cruise offered Friday through Monday for \$54 per adult and \$34 per child ages 3-9. Call (407) WDW-PLAY or (407) 939-7529.

Wet a Line

Drop a line on one of Disney's private guided bass fishing excursions. Angle for a trophy-size catch on Walt Disney World's lakes and canals onboard a 21-foot Tracker pontoon boat that fits five people or a tournament style Nitro Bass boat for one or two people. It's the perfect opportunity to return home with a good fish tale about the one that got away. \$235 (afternoon) and \$270 (morning) on two-hour trips; \$455 for morning four-hour trips. Call (407) WDW-PLAY or (407) 939-7529.

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.