

Old Basic

THIS ITINERARY IS OBSOLETE

OVERVIEW

This Walt Disney World itinerary is designed for a specific December week—although it works just fine the weeks immediately before and after that week.

You can review the basic itinerary by **clicking on the thumbnail**; **to enlarge it, when it's open, click it again a couple of times.**

If you can't do the Basic Itinerary, see [Other Itineraries](#) for alternatives for both the December week and all of the rest of the year.

As in all the itineraries on this site, there is also **a detailed page for each day of your vacation, with specific instructions for that day.**

The links to those pages can be found on the second of the two pages of this entry, the link for which can be found at the end of the text on this page.

ITINERARY DESIGN GOALS

The basic itinerary was designed to meet several goals: to ensure that you

1. See the **best that Walt Disney World has to offer**
2. See the parks **in the order that works best for kids** (essentially Epcot first, as it is potentially the most disappointing, and the Magic Kingdom last, as it is likely to be the best loved)
3. **Avoid unnecessary waiting** (sometimes by being at the parks when they open, but also by using other tactics...)
4. **Avoid unnecessary traps**—for example, do not attend park-closing fireworks events on the nights that these events... actually close the parks, as you will then be stuck in a crowd of tens of thousands all trying to exit at once
5. **Have as much time off, and as few early mornings, as practical**
6. **Avoid unnecessary spending**—for example, the basic itinerary does not require you to buy the “Park Hopper” option, saving you more than \$200

If you can't do the Basic Itinerary, see [Other Itineraries](#) for alternatives for both the December week and the rest of the year.

CLICK TO ENLARGE

BASIC ITINERARY

	Saturday 12/5/09, 12/4/10, 12/3/11	Sunday 12/6/09, 12/5/10, 12/4/11	Monday 12/7/09, 12/6/10, 12/5/11	Tuesday 12/8/09, 12/7/10, 12/6/11	
Meals:	Travel Hotel Counter 6:30 Akershus Banquet Beaches and Cream	Hotel Room* Backlot Express 6:15 50's Prime Time Café Sci-Fi Diner	Hotel Room Flame Tree Barbecue 7:15p Hoop-Dee-Do Revue**	Hotel Counter 7:15p Whispering Canyon 6p Liberty Tree Tavern	<u>Underline</u> Counter Service
Parks, etc:	Travel Travel Check in Epcot by 5:30 Epcot depart by 9:30p	Hollywood Studios by 8:30 Hollywood Hollywood Hollywood Hollywood Hollywood Hollywood up to 11p	Animal Kingdom by 7:30 Animal Kingdom Animal Kingdom Leave AK for Fort Wilderness Hoop-Dee-Do Revue at FW	Off Off Off Magic Kingdom by 2:45p Magic Kingdom Magic Kingdom up to 12 MN	Bold = Table Service Italic=Cash, not Dining Plan credit
Events:		3p Parade 8p Fantasmic 6p Osborn Xmas Lights	4p Parade	10:30p Parade 9:30p Holiday Wishes Mickey's Xmas Party*** 10:15p "Celebrate the Season" 11:15p "Night Before Xmas"	Red Character Meal
Parade					
Fireworks					
Special Event	6p Xmas Tree Lighting View Yacht Club Xmas View Beach Club Xmas				
Special Event					
Special Event					

	Wednesday 12/9/09, 12/8/10, 12/7/11	Thursday 12/10/09, 12/9/10, 12/8/11	Friday 12/11/09, 12/10/10, 12/9/11	Saturday 12/12/09, 12/11/10, 12/10/11	Sunday 12/13/09, 12/12/10, 12/11/11
Meals:	Hotel Room TBD: Cinderella's Royal Table 8p Rainforest Café DTD	10:30a Chef Mickey's -2p Hotel Counter 8p 1900 Park Fare Dole Whip at Captain Cook's	Hotel Room Sunshine Season Food Fair 5:30p San Angel Inn**** Boulangerie Patisserie	Hotel Counter -2p Pecos Bill Café 8p Crystal Palace Dole Whip at Aloha Isle	10:30a House of Blues Gospel Brunch Travel
Parks, etc:					
Early Morning	Magic Kingdom by 8:30 Magic Kingdom	Off	Epcot by 8:30 Epcot	Off	Off
Late Morning	Magic Kingdom	Off	Epcot	Off	Off
Early Afternoon	Magic Kingdom	Off	Epcot	Off	Off
Late Afternoon	Depart MK by 4:30p for DTD****	Off	Off	Magic Kingdom by 2p Magic Kingdom	Off
Evening	6p Cirque du Soleil DTD	Off	To Epcot by 5p Epcot stay up to 12 MN	Magic Kingdom up to 12Mh	Travel
Late Evening					Travel
Events:					
Parade		9:15p Water Pageant		3p Parade	
Fireworks			9:30p Illuminations		Gospel Brunch
Special Event	Cirque du Soleil DTD	View Contemporary Xmas View Polynesian Xmas View Grand Floridian Xmas	8:15p Candlelight Processional View Boardwalk Xmas		
Special Event					
Special Event					

* Cereal, juice, fruit, etc. in room.

**Two table service credits

*** Officially, "Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party," abbreviated MVMCP

****Downtown Disney

*****As Candlelight Processional Package

FIRST SATURDAY AGENDA: 12/5/09, 12/4/10, 12/3/11

Check in, get settled if your room is ready, and be at [Epcot](#) as soon as you can—and no **later than 5:30p**. **Depart Epcot no later than 9:30p** to avoid the crowds leaving after the fireworks show "Illuminations," which during the holiday season begins at 9:30—which you will see on Friday.

FIRST THINGS

- Arrive at your hotel, following the instructions in your Disney Magical Express packet if you are using it to get from Orlando International to your Disney Resort. Check in
- Unless you are arriving late, your room will likely not be ready, but you can get your keys, meal credits, special show tickets, and park tickets. Change into clothes more appropriate for the weather—which your [To-Do List](#) reminded you to pack in your carry-ons. You will be able to check any carry-ons until you return later tonight, and to call later to find out your exact room

- If your room is ready, and if you have time, get food and supplies (bowls, napkins, scotch) for your breakfast in the morning, which you will be eating out of your room. Also get (from the counter service restaurant) a “Refillable Mug,” which you will be able to re-use at your resort for free drinks over your entire stay
- If you arrive early enough, and are hungry, have lunch at your hotel’s counter service restaurant (counter credit)
- Leave your hotel no later than 4:30p (Pop Century) or 4:50p (Polynesian)
- Head to Epcot (if Pop Century, find your resort’s bus stop and take the bus labeled Epcot; if Polynesian, walk to the Epcot monorail at the Ticket and Transportation Center (TTC) (not the resort monorail that stops in the Poly’s main building!) and take it)

AT THE PARK

- Go through the turnstiles and pick up a park map and “Times Guide”—a schedule. Check your map, and go straight, walking through Future World, heading towards the World Showcase. (You will see the attractions in Future World you are walking by on Friday)
- Check the time. If it is nearing 5:45, wait by the Christmas tree at the beginning of the World Showcase (ask a cast member if you can’t find it) for the 6pm lighting ceremony, and then from the ceremony turn left and walk along the lagoon to Norway, wandering through the shops and exhibits at Norway until it is time for your 6:30 reservation at Akershus in Norway (table credit)
- If it is earlier than 5:45, still go left, but see the pavilions starting with Mexico, skipping Norway until around dinner time at 6:30, and continue to head clockwise around the lagoon. Each pavilion will have some or all of shopping, special exhibits, a ride, a movie, a special Christmas story that is part of Epcot’s “Christmas Around the World” program, and other special events—such as acrobats in China. Check your map, time schedule, and the pavilion itself, to see what each pavilion has. For scheduled events like the Christmas story, acrobats, etc, sequence what you do when among items that are not scheduled (shops, exhibits, and rides), and bounce back and forth between nearby pavilions, so that you don’t have to wait long for the scheduled items. **Keep your eye on your watch** until it is time to return for the 6p Christmas tree lighting ceremony at 5:45. Follow the other steps in the “Check the time” entry above
- Continue to visit the pavilions
- Keep an eye on your watch, and around 8:30 pm, head (still clockwise) for the International Gateway located between France and the United Kingdom. (You will see the pavilions you are walking by on Friday)
- Exit through the International Gateway, and as you exit ask a cast member for directions to Disney’s Beach Club Resort. (Basically, walk straight, avoiding lefts when they offer themselves)
- At the Beach Club, find Beaches and Cream’s “to go” window, get some ice cream, and while eating it look at the Christmas decorations in the Beach Club lobby
- If you have time (by 9:30 you need to be out of Epcot entirely—to have walked back to Epcot, entered, walked through it to the entrance where you came in, and exited) visit the lobby of Disney’s Yacht Club Resort (right next door to the Beach Club) and view its Christmas decorations. (If you don’t have time, see it Friday. You will also see the decorations at the Boardwalk—the other Disney deluxe hotel here—on Friday)

- Exit where you entered Epcot to begin your day here no later than 9:30 to avoid the crowds leaving after the special Christmas showing of the Fireworks show “Illuminations” at 9:30. (You will see this Friday, when as a Walt Disney World Resort guest you can stay after closing, and thus avoid these crowds.) Find either the bus stop (for Pop Century) or monorail (for the Polynesian)
- Polynesian guests should ask the cast member at the monorail station to ride in the front cab of the monorail. (Pop guests will do this Thursday)
- Note to Polynesian guests: to find the walkway from the “Ticket and Transportation Center” (TTC), which is where the Epcot monorail stops, to the Polynesian, stay as right as you can once you leave the monorail ramp and begin exiting the TTC. You will see eventually a small sign directing you to the Polynesian

NOTE: Bring [The Comprehensive Guide to Rides](#) and [Rides that Might be Skipped](#) with you in case your day gets too intense.

BACK AT THE HOTEL

If your hotel gift shop is still open, buy food, supplies (bowls, spoons, etc) and refillable mugs for breakfast in your room if you did not have time, or a room assignment, earlier

PREVIEW OF TOMORROW

You will be seeing Disney’s Hollywood Studios, and getting up early enough to be finished with breakfast and at your hotel bus stop by 7:35a, so set your alarms, arrange a wake up call, and go to bed!

FIRST SUNDAY AGENDA: 12/6/09, 12/5/10, 12/4/11

A very full day at Disney’s [Hollywood Studios](#), known until 2008 as Disney’s MGM Studios, capped by Fantasmic at 8 pm.

Because you are a Disney resort guest, you can stay as late as 11 pm—missing the crowds leaving after Fantasmic, and giving you more time earlier in the evening to see several special Christmas shows.

FIRST THINGS

- Get up early and eat breakfast in your room
- Be at your hotel bus stop by 7:35 am, and take the bus labeled “Studios” or “Hollywood Studios”

AT THE PARK

- Arrive at the park by 8:15 am
- Get in line and await the opening

- After the 9:00 opening, pick up a “Times Guide”—a schedule—and park map, walk to Toy Story Mania on Pixar Boulevard, fastpass it, and come back later
- Head for Sunset Boulevard, and while walking double check this itinerary against the actual show and Fantasmic schedule and revise your plans if needed.
- Ride Rock N’ Roller Coaster
- Ride Tower of Terror
- Based on today’s show schedule, return for your fastpasses, and see Indiana Jones Epic Stunt Spectacular, the Backlot Tour, and Lights, Motors, Action Extreme Stunt Show. Work in lunch at the Backlot Express (counter credit) when you can



- See the American Idol Experience
- Watch the 3p parade from the Sunset Boulevard side of Mickey’s hat
- See the 3:30 Beauty and the Beast, Live on Stage
- See Walt Disney: One Man’s Dream, and The Magic of Disney Imagination
- If you have time, see Playhouse Disney Live on Stage and then Sounds Dangerous—unless you have kids younger than 6, don’t worry if you have to skip both; if you have younger kids, and have to skip one, skip Sounds Dangerous
- Return to the streets of New York, explore, and see the 6pm lighting of the Osborne Family Spectacle of Dancing Lights
- Have dinner at 6:15pm at the 50s Prime Time Café, where your waiter will interact with you in a comic way (table credit)
- Get in line for Fantasmic by 30 minutes before it starts
- See Fantasmic
- Grab another dessert in the Sci-Fi Diner (cash), which is unlike any other restaurant you have seen
- Get your wrist bands allowing you to stay late if you don’t have them already
- See the Voyage of the Little Mermaid
- See the Great Movie Ride
- See Star Tours
- See the Muppet Movie
- Return to any other rides you missed or want to do again
- Return to your hotel when you choose—**but tomorrow is an early day!**

NOTE: Bring [The Comprehensive Guide to Rides](#) and [Rides that Might be Skipped](#) with you in case your day gets too intense.

PREVIEW OF TOMORROW

Tomorrow is your earliest day! **Set your alarm so that you can** have had breakfast in your room, packed spare clothes, and **be at your bus stop by 6:40 am!**

MONDAY AGENDA: 12/7/09, 12/6/10, 12/5/11

See Disney's [Animal Kingdom](#), and go from there to Fort Wilderness for the [Hoop Dee Doo Revue](#) Dinner Show.

FIRST THINGS

- Get up early and eat breakfast in your room
- Pack spare clothes in a plastic bag (because on one of the rides, Kali River Rapids, you will get soaked!)
- Remember to bring your Hoop Dee Doo tickets!
- Be at the hotel Animal Kingdom bus stop by 6:50 am

AT THE PARK

- Arrive at the Animal Kingdom park by 7:30 am
- Get in line and await the opening
- After 8:00 opening, pick up a Times Guide and park map, go to Africa, and ride Kilimanjaro Safaris
- Stroll through the Pangani Forest Exploration Trail just outside the Safari exit
- While strolling, double check the time schedule against the shows on this list and revise your plans if needed
- Head to Asia, and fastpass Expedition Everest. Your return window will likely begin after 10am
- Go to Dinoland USA, and ride Dinosaur
- You need to be in Camp Minnie Mickey by 9:20, so only if time permits, ride Primeval Whirl and Triceratops Spin
- Go to Camp Minnie Mickey, and see the 9:30 Festival of the Lion King
- Return to Asia via Discovery Island and fastpass It's A Bugs Life as you pass by
- Ride Expedition Everest
- If time permits, and you missed them earlier, ride Primeval Whirl and Triceratops Spin; don't worry if you miss them entirely
- In Asia, see the 11:30 Flights of Wonder
- Juggle lunch (Flame Tree Barbecue, counter credit), your fastpass return to It's A Bugs Life, and the Wildlife Express Train so that you can be in line (between Dinoland and Asia) for the 3:15 pm Finding Nemo show by 2:30 pm. If time presses, skip the train and the Conservation Station
- See the 3:15 Finding Nemo show
- Go back to the bridge next to Flights of Wonder and watch the 3:45 pm parade from the Everest side of the path
- Stroll through the Maharajah Jungle Trek
- Ride Kali River Rapids if the day is warm enough: you will get soaked!!! Change into your dry clothes
- Re-ride your favorites; don't worry if you missed the Wildlife Express Train and Conservation Station
- Exit the park in time to be at the Animal Kingdom's Fort Wilderness bus stop by 6p sharp; explore the exhibits in the Oasis as you leave

NOTE: Bring [The Comprehensive Guide to Rides](#) and [Rides that Might be Skipped](#) with you in case your day gets too intense.

YOUR EVENING

- Be at the Animal Kingdom's bus stop for the Fort Wilderness bus by 6p
- When you arrive at Fort Wilderness, you will be outside the resort. Get off the bus from Animal Kingdom and transfer to any INTERNAL Fort Wilderness bus—tell the driver as you board that you are going to the Hoop Dee Doo Revue
- Get off at the stop your driver directs you, check in for the Revue (two table credits), and enjoy
- Find the boat docks and take the boat to the Magic Kingdom
- Return to your hotel by monorail if you are staying at the Polynesian or bus (at the Magic Kingdom bus area to the right of where you exit the boat) if you are staying at Pop Century

PREVIEW OF TOMORROW

You get to sleep in tomorrow! You are off all morning, and your first scheduled item is a 1:15 pm lunch at the Whispering Canyon Café at Disney's Wilderness Lodge. From there it's off to the Magic Kingdom!

TUESDAY AGENDA: 12/8/09, 12/7/10, 12/6/10

Sleep in, have breakfast in your hotel, and go to the Wilderness Lodge for lunch. From there head to the [Magic Kingdom](#) for an afternoon of fun and [Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party](#) (MVMCP) in the evening!

FIRST THINGS

- Sleep in, have breakfast in your hotel's counter service restaurant (counter credit), grab your MVMCP tickets, and depart by 12 (Pop Century bus) or 12:20 (the Resort Monorail stop at the Polynesian—the one reached from the second floor of the Great Ceremonial House) for the Magic Kingdom
- At the front of the Magic Kingdom—before you enter the park—find the boat to the Wilderness Lodge. Ask a cast member for help finding it if you need it
- Get off the boat at the Wilderness Lodge stop (not the Fort Wilderness stop) and follow the crowd into the main building. If you have time before your 1:15 lunch, view the Christmas decorations. Otherwise look at them after lunch
- At 1:15 be at the Whispering Canyon Café and have the Family Skillet Lunch (cash). Your wait staff will lead you in all kinds of fun!
- Be at the boat dock no later than 2:15 and take the boat to the Magic Kingdom

AT THE PARK

- Enter the park, asking as you enter how to get your Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party (MVMCP) armbands, get a guide map, and walk through Adventureland to Splash Mountain. Fastpass it
- Explore the area around Splash Mountain and Big Thunder Mountain until the 3:00 parade starts. Don't leave this area or the parade will trap you on the wrong side of the park!
- Watch the first 5 minutes of the parade (you will see the full parade tomorrow or Saturday) from the Splash Mountain side and then walk to Big Thunder Mountain and ride it (the wait will not be long, as the parade will have drawn off many riders)
- Get off, and head back into Adventureland using the road to the right of Pecos Bills. Adventureland will be less crowded not only because of people watching the parade, but also because it is the only land that the parade cuts off
- Do the rides in Adventureland as you come to them, starting with Pirates of the Caribbean and making your way towards the Swiss Family Tree House
- Return to Splash Mountain when your fastpass time indicates and ride it
- If you have time before your 6pm dinner, return to Adventureland and continue there; otherwise, head to Liberty Square and explore while waiting for 6p
- As 6p nears, make your way to the Liberty Tree Tavern. If you have time, get your MVMCP armbands if you haven't already. Enjoy your 6p meal (table credit)
- MVMCP begins at 7. Get your armbands if you hadn't already, grab a MVMCP schedule and check against the times below
- Head to Tomorrowland and do all the rides you can there, beginning with Space Mountain
- Ignore the first parade—you will watch its identical repeat at 10:30
- Your first scheduled element of the evening is the 9:30 p.m. special Christmas fireworks. If you finish the rides in Tomorrowland well before then, make your way to Liberty Square and do the Haunted Mansion
- Near 9:30, make your way as close to the Cinderella's Castle as you can to watch the 9:30 fireworks
- After the fireworks, continue to edge in towards Cinderella's Castle to position yourself to...
- Watch the 10:15 show, on the Main Street side of the Castle, "Celebrate the Seasons," and to be in a good spot to...
- Watch the 10:30 Parade as it passes by
- After the parade, you may have time for one more ride in Tomorrowland before you make your way to the Galaxy Palace Theater by the Carousel of Progress to...
- See the 11:15 "Twas the Night Before Christmas"
- Do another ride or two if you have the energy. The park will be quite empty now
- Head back to the entrance, and leave the park. Pop Century guests go back to your hotel by bus at the same area where you got off this morning. Polynesian guests will save as many as 20 minutes by taking the express monorail, not the resort monorail, back, getting off at TTC and walking back

NOTE: Bring [The Comprehensive Guide to Rides](#) and [Rides that Might be Skipped](#) with you in case your day gets too intense.

PREVIEW OF TOMORROW

Another early-ish morning—which is why you have Thursday off! You will spend the day in the Magic Kingdom, with the option of a break for a nap in the middle of the day, and the evening in Downtown Disney seeing the fantastic Cirque du Soleil. You need have finished breakfast in your room and be at the bus stop at Pop Century by 7:40, or at the Resort Monorail Stop at the Polynesian (the same one you used today) by 8:10.

WEDNESDAY AGENDA: 12/9/09, 12/8/10, 12/7/11

- Today you will continue at the Magic Kingdom and make your way to [Downtown Disney](#) (DTD) in the evening for the spectacular [Cirque du Soleil](#) La Nouba show, with dinner following at the Rainforest Café
- The itinerary shows you as at the Magic Kingdom all day; however, if you were lucky with crowds Tuesday, or are just beat, you should have enough visiting time Saturday to depart the Magic Kingdom today as soon after your Cinderella's Royal Table Lunch as you wish, and take a nap or play by the pool until time to depart for Downtown Disney

FIRST THINGS

- Finish breakfast in your room, make sure you have your Cirque du Soleil tickets, and be at the Magic Kingdom bus stop at Pop Century by 7:40, or at the Resort Monorail Stop at the Polynesian by 8:10

AT THE PARK

- Arrive by 8:30. When you are let in at the opening at 9, head straight for Cinderella's Castle and go through it to Fantasyland
- Ride first the attractions that because of their capacity, popularity, or both, get busy quickly—in order, Dumbo, Cinderella's Golden Carousel, Peter Pan, the Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh, and Snow White's Scary Adventures. If your children imagine they are too old to enjoy one or both of the first two—then they are, and skip to the next items on the list
- Finish the remaining rides in Fantasyland
- Note the time of your seating for Cinderella's Royal Table Lunch (cash) and interrupt your morning for it as needed
- When you have finished both Fantasyland and lunch, either return to your hotel for a nap and a swim, or, if you are up for, it return to (in order) Liberty Square, Frontierland, Adventureland, and Tomorrowland to ride any rides you either did not get to or were closed yesterday. (Not all the minor rides were open during MVMCP)
- If you are still present, keep track of the time, and get yourself ready to...
- Watch the 3p parade. (If you have left, you can see it on Saturday)
- If you have not finished with the attractions in the principal lands, continue; otherwise take the train to Mickey's Toontown Fair and explore for a few minutes

NOTE: Bring [The Comprehensive Guide to Rides](#) and [Rides that Might be Skipped](#) with you in case your day gets too intense.

YOUR EVENING

- If still at the Magic Kingdom, by 4:30 walk or take the resort monorail to the Contemporary Resort, and there find the bus stop for Downtown Disney (DTD), and take the bus to DTD. (You go to the Contemporary because buses do not run from the parks to DTD)
- If you had returned earlier to your hotel, be at your hotel's bus stop by 5p, and catch the bus to DTD
- Ask the driver which stop to get off for Cirque Du Soleil (special ticket, cash)
- Find Cirque du Soleil. If it is 5:30 or later, enter and find your seats. If earlier, explore DTD a bit, being sure to be inside Cirque du Soleil by 5:30
- Exit Cirque du Soleil, get a map, ask a cast member for directions to the DTD Rainforest Café (cash), walk through DTD to it, and either enter if it is near 8 or explore a bit if you are earlier than your reservation
- After dinner, spend as much time in DTD as you like, and when you are ready, look at your map, find the closest bus stop, and take the bus back to your hotel

PREVIEW OF TOMORROW

Other than a couple of scheduled meals (at 10:30a and 8p) you are off!

THURSDAY AGENDA: 12/10/09, 12/9/10, 12/8/11

Other than scheduled meals at 10:30a and 8p, and viewing the [Electrical Water Pageant](#) at 9:15p, you are off today!

- You may be tempted, as you read this in advance of your trip, to plan to go today to a Disney water park, or one of the other wonderful non-Disney parks in and around Orlando
- Don't make any firm commitments to doing so until today, or the night before. Your vacation will have been much more physically challenging to this point than you think, and you are almost certain to simply need most or all of today off!

YOUR DAY

- Be up in time to make your 10:30 character brunch at Chef Mickey's at the Contemporary Resort
- Pop Century guests will need to be on a bus to the Magic Kingdom by 9:30. To get from the Magic Kingdom bus stop to the Contemporary Resort, you can then either walk (5-10 minutes depending on your pace), take the boat that goes to the Contemporary, or take the resort monorail. Ask a cast member for directions to the transportation mode you prefer

- Polynesian guests need to be at their resort monorail stop by 10:10, board, and exit at the Contemporary Resort
- Enjoy your 10:30 character breakfast at Chef Mickey's (cash) and...
- Explore the Christmas decorations in the Contemporary lobby
- Polynesian guests can then take the resort monorail back to their hotel
- Pop guests should take the resort monorail from the Contemporary to the Polynesian and see its Christmas decorations, and then find their way in the Polynesian to Captain Cook's and get a Dole Whip (cash)
- Pop guests return to the Polynesian resort monorail station when ready, and ask the cast member in the station if they can ride in the front cab of the monorail. Get off at the Magic Kingdom...perhaps after riding the monorail in a full circuit first...and grab a bus back to Pop Century
- Enjoy a late lunch at your hotel counter (counter credit) and be ready to depart for the Grand Floridian for your 8 pm character meal at 1900 Park Fare
- Pop Century guests should be at their bus stop by 7p, take the Magic Kingdom bus, and then the resort monorail to the Grand Floridian
- Polynesian guests can walk to the Grand Floridian (10-20 minutes) or be at their resort monorail stop by 7:40 and take it to the Grand Floridian
- If time permits before your seating, explore the Grand Floridian's Christmas decorations; otherwise do so after dinner
- Enjoy your 8p character dinner at 1900 Park Fare (table credit). Ask your waiter when the Electrical Water Pageant will be passing by the Grand Floridian (typically 9:15p), and the best place to watch it
- Watch the Electrical Water Pageant
- Return to your hotel

PREVIEW OF TOMORROW

Tomorrow you will complete Epcot. Pop Century guests will need to have finished breakfast in their room and be at their bus stop by 7:50. Polynesian guests need to have completed breakfast in their room, walked over to TTC, and be on the Epcot monorail platform by 8:10.

FRIDAY AGENDA: 12/11/09, 12/10/10, 12/9/11

- Today you will complete Epcot, with an afternoon break at your hotel. As a Walt Disney World Resort guest, you can stay at Epcot until midnight
- Don't forget your Candlelight Processional tickets.
- Pop Century guests need to complete their breakfast in their room and be at their bus stop by 7:50. Polynesian guests need to complete breakfast in their room, walk over to TTC and be on the Epcot monorail platform by 8:10

AT THE PARK

- Be at Epcot by 8:30
- Enter the turnstiles when the park opens at 9, grab a map and Times Schedule, and follow the cast members to Soarin

- Ride Soarin, then walk across the park to Mission: Space. Fastpass it
- Walk to Test Track and ride
- If your Mission: Space fastpass is ready, use it (ride the “green” version of the ride; if you love it, you can ride the much more intense “orange” version later tonight); otherwise ride Ellen’s Universe of Energy
- When you have ridden both the above, cross the park again to the Seas pavilion and see Turtle Talk with Crush, and then the Seas with Nemo and Friends
- Return to The Land pavilion—where you saw Soarin—and see the other rides in this building. If you wish, fastpass Soarin for another ride, if the return time works. (You will be able to see it again tonight after 10p)
- If you are ready for lunch, have it now, as you will be eating lunch in this building, in the Sunshine Seasons Food Fair (counter credit) on the same level as Soarin. If not, continue with the steps below and return for lunch when you are ready
- Move on to the Imagination building, and see Honey I Shrunk the Audience. Skip Journey Into Imagination with Figment unless you have a lot of time on your hands. A lot of time...



- You have now (almost) completed what you must do in the morning and early afternoon. You can begin heading back to your hotel now—seeing Innoventions and Spaceship Earth on your way out—or go on to the World Showcase and both continue your tour of it, and try out [Kim Possible’s World Showcase Adventure](#).
- If you continue in the World Showcase, go counterclockwise starting with Canada, as the gardens and flowers in Canada, England and France are at their best at daylight. As on Saturday night, attend the items with defined schedules and work the unscheduled items at the pavilions around them
- Check out Innoventions and ride Spaceship Earth on your way out, and return to your hotel and goof off

AT THE PARK: EVENING

- Be back at Epcot by 5p—Pop guests need to be at their bus stop by 4:20; Polynesian guests at the Epcot monorail stop at TTC by 4:40
- Make your way to Mexico and your 5:30 dinner reservations at San Angel Inn (table credit.) This is your special Candlelight Processional dinner which guarantees you a seat at the 8:15 Candlelight Processional show. Be sure to inform your waiter and ask if there is anything special you need or need to do
- After dinner, continue visiting the World Showcase until about 7:45

- At 7:45, find the line for the guaranteed seating for the Candlelight Processional. There are TWO lines—one standing room only, and one, for YOU, guaranteed, because you did the Candlelight Dinner package. The guaranteed line is usually the one that goes counterclockwise and ends at the American Pavilion stage. Check with a cast member (not with another, possibly equally confused, guest) to be sure you are in the right guaranteed seating line!
- See the 8:15 Candlelight Processional
- After the show, get your armband that allows you to stay late, and the list of rides and restaurants that will remain open late. You likely will have time to tour one more pavilion—but not see a movie or ride in it—before finding a spot to watch Illuminations
- Between 9 and 9:15, find a spot to watch Illuminations—given where you are, the bridge near the International gateway is as good as any
- At 9:30, watch the special Christmas version of Illuminations
- If you have not already seen the American Adventure, see it now
- Return to the International Gateway, exit, and see the Christmas decorations at the Boardwalk, and also at the Yacht Club if you missed them Saturday
- Stop in Boulangerie Patisserie for a snack (cash)
- Decide based on the list of what is open what rides to see again. Families often split on this. Some members may even wish to return to the hotel, while others stay.
- Return to your hotel by the means you used to get to Epcot

NOTE: Bring [The Comprehensive Guide to Rides](#) and [Rides that Might be Skipped](#) with you in case your day gets too intense.

PREVIEW OF TOMORROW

You are off all morning and the early afternoon, and don't need to be at the Magic Kingdom until 2:00 for lunch

SECOND SATURDAY AGENDA: 12/12/09, 12/11/10, 12/10/11

You are off all morning and the early afternoon, and don't need to be at the Magic Kingdom until 2p to have lunch. The Magic Kingdom is open until midnight tonight.

- However, those of you still with excess energy may wish to revisit a favorite park other than the Magic Kingdom in the morning—to see Soarin again at Epcot, Tower of Terror at the Studios (today is morning Extra Magic Hours at the Studios, so it opens at 8, not 9, for Walt Disney World Resort guests), or Kilimanjaro Safaris or Expedition Everest at Animal Kingdom, for example.
- For each person who wants to do so, you will need to add (at the concierge desk of your resort, or at the ticket office at the park) a \$45 plus tax “Park Hopper” option to the ticket of each person who wants to spend their morning this way. (The “Park Hopper” option allows you to see more than one park in a single day.)

FIRST THINGS

- You are free today until early afternoon. Sleep in, play at the pool, and if you are in the mood, begin to organize your gear for your departure tomorrow
- Eat a late breakfast at your hotel counter service (counter credit)
- Pop Century guests, be at the Magic Kingdom bus stop by 1:20; Polynesian guests, be at the resort monorail stop by 1:40

AT THE PARK

- Enter the Magic Kingdom by 2p, grabbing a schedule, and double checking the fireworks time
- Make your way back to the corner of Adventureland and Frontierland to Pecos Bill's, fastpassing anything that you pass or nearby for a later visit, and have lunch (counter credit)
- Step outside and, if you did not do so Wednesday, complete watching the 3p parade that you saw the first few bits of on Tuesday
- The rest of the afternoon, and the evening, are make up time. See anything in the principal lands of the Magic Kingdom that you missed—don't miss Tom Sawyer Island!—or want to see again. Use fast passes for rides with waits—or duck into them a few minutes after the evening parade begins, as you saw a better version of this already at MVMCP
- At some point during the day, grab a Dole whip at Aloha Isle in Adventureland
- Make your 8p Character Dinner at the Crystal Palace. (Table credit)
- Parents, make a call on what to do about fireworks, which will be similar to, but not as good as, the fireworks you saw on Tuesday night. The fireworks period is a great time to dive in to high demand rides for a repeat visit, as the lines shrink when people wait outside to watch the fireworks. On the other hand, the best finale to your Walt Disney World vacation is for your family to watch the fireworks together at the Magic Kingdom
- Depart when you are ready—except don't leave within thirty minutes of the fireworks (or a parade) ending

NOTE: Bring [The Comprehensive Guide to Rides](#) and [Rides that Might be Skipped](#) with you in case your day gets too intense.

PREVIEW OF TOMORROW

Tomorrow is your last day. You need to be at the Downtown Disney bus stop by 9:45a, having by then already packed up, checked out, and either have checked your luggage

- With your resort's front desk for later recovery, or
- Through the Disney Magical Express, or
- Directly to your airline if a. you aren't taking the Express, and b. your airline participates in Disney's resort check in program (all airlines at Orlando International can take bags from Disney's Magical Express, but not all can take a resort bag check from those guests who are not using the Express)

If the weather, and your departure schedule, suits, keep one bag of pool clothes and gear (and, if you are staying at Pop Century, towels), as you will be able to use the pool at your hotel in the afternoon, even though you checked out.

SECOND SUNDAY AGENDA: 12/13/09, 12/12/10, 12/11/11

Organize your gear, check out, see the [Gospel Brunch](#) at the House of Blues in Downtown Disney, and weather and your travel schedule permitting, spend the afternoon before you depart at your pool, or in Downtown Disney.

YOUR DAY

- Skip breakfast, as your brunch at 10:30 covers breakfast and lunch
- Get yourself ready to go and check out. You need to be at the Downtown Disney bus stop by 9:45a, having by then already
 - Packed up, checked out, and taken care of your luggage: have either
 - Checked it through the Disney Magical Express, or
 - Checked it directly at the resort to your airline if
 - a. you aren't taking the Express, and
 - b. your airline participates in Disney's resort check in program (all airlines at Orlando International can take bags from Disney's Magical Express, but not all can take a resort bag check from those guests who are not using the Express.), or
 - Checked your luggage with your resort's front desk for later recovery.
- If the weather, and your departure schedule, suits, beside the bags you are keeping as carry-ons, keep out one bag of pool clothes and gear (and, if you are staying at Pop Century, towels), as you will be able to use the pool at your hotel in the afternoon, even though you checked out.
- Be at the resort Downtown Disney bus stop by 9:45 with your carry on/pool gear
- Ask your driver which stop to get off for the House of Blues
- Find the House of Blues, check in, check your bags, and enjoy the Gospel Brunch (cash)
- If you have time, wander around Downtown Disney
- Return to the Downtown Disney bus stop at least 75 minutes before you need to be back at your resort for your departure
- At your resort, if you have time and the weather suits, goof off at the pool
- Leave for home

“From this day on it will never be like it was, but only as each person remembers it.”—Woolie Reitherman

(For the summary of this itinerary, see [this](#). For a 180-90 day calendar, see [this](#).)

Your To-Do list for the Walt Disney World [basic December itinerary](#) follows.

To-do lists for Walt Disney World itineraries other than the basic December one can be found [here](#).

NOTE: CALENDAR TO SHIFT BACK TO 180 DAYS

Many sources—e.g. WDWinfo.com [here](#)—are reporting that **on October 27th, most/all WDW restaurants will be returned to being reservable 180 days in advance.**

This means that for **arrival dates January 25th 2010** and later, for “90 days” below, you should read “180 days,” etc.

It also means that, as Mark Goldhaber of MousePlanet.com notes [here](#), that Disney reservations will be very busy on October 27!

A. MORE THAN 90 DAYS (180 DAYS BEGINNING 10/27) BEFORE YOUR PLANNED ARRIVAL DATE

1. Confirm your budget, planned dates, kids’ development paths and heights, and your transportation choice and its availability for your planned dates.

2. Make your plane reservations, if flying. Make any other needed transportation arrangements.

3. Set up your hotel and tickets. Call 407-939-7675 (preferred, because this allows you to tell the reservationist which building at your resort you wish to be in, which the new WDW website no longer allows you to do), or click [here](#) to use Disney’s online system.

- When the page opens, click “Book Vacation Packages”
- Add your dates, party size and age of your kids
- Set up your basic package:
 - Click “Advanced Search”
 - Click “I know the Resort I want.”
 - In the drop down menu that appears, click to open, and scroll to pick your hotel
 - Click “Dining Plan”
 - Click “Continue”
 - Wait
- Fix the options—a page will open that has selected several options for you, most of them wrong. You will need to fix in each section, and update the sections as you go.
 - At the top of the page you will be put into the most expensive room. Click the button for the least expensive instead. (The views aren’t worth it for first time family visitors, except Animal Kingdom Lodge visitors should always pick a Savannah view)
 - Click “Update” and wait
 - Click, in the “Park Tickets and Options” section, the button in the upper right that says “Open.”
 - Unclick the “Park Hopper” and “Water Parks and More” boxes
 - Change the number of days in your tickets to 7
 - Click “Update” and wait

- Click “Ground Transportation” and when it opens, click Disney’s Magical Express, and add your airline info
- Click “Continue” and wait
- Click “Select this Offer” at the bottom of the page and wait
- When the pricing pages shows up, unclick Trip Insurance (if offered)
- In the “Special Room Requests” section, click to open, then click “Refrigerator”
- If you are on the phone, tell the reservationist what room you want
 - If a Polynesian guest, ask for a room on the third floor (quieter) in Rapa Nui or Tahiti. (These are 2 of the only 3 buildings with both the largest rooms and balconies on all floors, and are the 2 buildings closest to the Epcot monorail. You are in fact so close to TTC that you can take the express monorail home from the Magic Kingdom—much faster than the resort monorail.)
 - If a Pop Century Guest, ask for a room on the 4th floor (quieter) in the 1970s area. (This is the only building group at Pop Century that does not surround a pool, so it will be quieter at night.)
- Complete the transaction with your credit card.

B. 91 DAYS (181 DAYS BEGINNING 10/27) BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL DATE

Go to the online restaurant reservations page [here](#), set up an account if you don’t already have one, and practice trying to reserve restaurants.

This may well drive you crazy, but the site works better than it used to...and is likely the only way you can get your Cindy reservations done! (as the site opens up a new reservable day at 6a, whereas the phone reservation line opens at 7a).

Collect your restaurant reservations together. You will want to do them online in order of hardest to reserve first. This is how they are listed below.

C. EXACTLY 6am EST, EXACTLY 90 DAYS (180 DAYS 10/27 AND LATER) BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL DATE

(For the summary of this itinerary, see [this](#). For a 180-90 day calendar, see [this](#).)

C. EXACTLY 6am EST, EXACTLY 90 DAYS (180 DAYS 10/27 AND LATER) BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL DATE

(For an 180-90 day calendar, see [this](#)).

1. Be on the restaurant website [here](#) by at least 5:50am EST, and have your Cindy reservation all set up on the page. Keep refreshing, as you will be let in as soon as Disney’s system decides it is 6a.

Make as many of the following as you have patience for (try to get through at least Akershus), in the exact order listed:

- **Cinderella's Royal Table Lunch** (cash): Wednesday at 11a or later if you can; earlier than 11 only if your sole option...
- **Chef Mickey's** (cash): Thursday at 10:30a if you can; ok anytime 9a and later, but earlier times cut into sleeping-in time
- **Hoop-Dee-Doo Revue** (dining plan, two credits): Monday 7:15p show. The other two times don't work well
- **Crystal Palace** (dining plan): Second Saturday 8p if you can; earlier or later ok
- **Akershus Banquet** (dining plan): First Saturday 6:30p if you can, but no earlier than 6:15p, no later than 8p
- **Downtown Disney's Rainforest Café** (NOT the Rainforest café at the Animal Kingdom!!) (cash): Wednesday 8p if you can; no earlier, but later is ok
- **San Angel Inn as Candlelight Processional Package for the 8:15 Candlelight Processional show** (dining plan): Friday 5:30. Earlier OK but cuts into your pool/nap time; no later than 6:30p
- **1900 Park Fare** (dining plan): Thursday 8p. Between 7:30p and 8:15p
- **Liberty Tree Tavern** (dining plan): Tuesday 6p. Can be earlier; no later than 7p
- **50's Prime Time Café** (dining plan): First Sunday 6:15p. Not earlier; can be up to 15 minutes later
- **Whispering Canyon** (cash): Tuesday 1:15p. Can be earlier, but no later

For those you don't make online, make them by calling call (407) WDW-DINE (939-3463)

2. Go to the site for [Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party](#), and order tickets for your family for Tuesday (Cash)

3. Order your Cirque du Soleil tickets (Category 2) for the 6p show on Wednesday at [this site](#) (cash).

4. Call the House of Blues Orlando at (407) 934-BLUE and order tickets for your second Sunday 10:30 Gospel Brunch (cash)

D. CHECK THIS SITE IN THE MIDDLE OF EVERY FOLLOWING MONTH FOR ANY CHANGES.

E. NOTES ON PACKING, ETC. BEFORE YOU LEAVE

1. Check in online at the link you can find on [this](#) page

2. If you use Disney's Magical Express, *you do not need to collect your bags at the Orlando airport.* Disney will get them for you and, *eventually*, deliver them directly to your room. *Your bags may arrive hours after you do;* so, depending on the weather forecasts, have a carry-on with an appropriate change of clothes for Orlando weather on Saturday, as you *will almost certainly go to Epcot on Saturday before your checked bags arrive.*

- 3. Follow the instructions in the Magical Express packet you will receive in the mail regarding both tagging your bags pre-departure, and where to go at the Orlando airport to find your transport to your resort.**
- 4. Bring a copy of your room reservation, confirmation numbers (such as for the Gospel Brunch) and any tickets for special events you may have received in the mail.**
- 5. Pack breakfast utensils, as they are not always available in the gift shop: bowls, spoons, napkins**
- 6. When you arrive at the hotel, look for the special “On-line Check-in” line, and get into it.**