



The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World 2014

Bob Sehlinger, Len Testa

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Compiled and written by a team of experienced researchers whose work has been cited by such diverse sources as *USA Today* and *Operations Research Forum*, *The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World* digs deeper and offers more than any other guide. *The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World* explains how Disney World works and how to use that knowledge to make every minute and every dollar of your vacation count. With advice that is direct, prescriptive, and detailed, it takes the guesswork out of travel by unambiguously rating and ranking everything from hotels, restaurants, and attractions to rental car companies. With an *Unofficial Guide*, you know what's available in every category, from the best to the worst and step-by-step detailed plans allow the reader to make the most of their time at Disney World.

The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World 2014 Details

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From Reader Review The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World 2014 for online ebook

Jon Hieneman says

I purchase a copy in advance of every Disney vacation, and have never been disappointed! I always learn something new to prepare for my trip. It's also a great reference in case I need to look something up while I'm there - and that doesn't even count the touring plans!

Redfox5 says

Phew! After a week of carrying this around in my bag I'm glad to be finished! The book gets bigger every year! I love these guides and I've read several editions. I like to read the lastest one everytime I go :)

THIS IS THE DISNEY BIBLE!

If you only have money for one guide book. This is the one. This book has everything. It can however be overwhelming for the first time visiter but any Walt Disney World fan will tell you, planning is half the fun :) I love the detail on all the rides and restaurants. I love the readers comments, some of them make me laugh out loud. I even love all the science behind how the guide manages to get all it's facts to make the touring plans.

Talking of touring plans, I've never actually used them. I always go in Sept/Oct and it's never been super busy. But I also do pay the extra money to view their website with the best days to go to which park and that information helps me have a stress free trip. I also know what rides to hit first. I think if you go during off season the touring plans are optional. Not so much in the busy season though!

As great as this book is, it's aimed at the American market, so if you are British I also recommend The Brit's Guide To Orlando. Just because this has some really good information on holiday packages that the unofficial guide doesn't cover.

All in all, this book is well worth the money and I can't recommened it enough :D

Amy says

I thought I had checked out an edition of this book years ago and I didn't like it. Now I think it might have been a different book or something. As I've been researching Disney World, many bloggers recommended this book, so I checked it out from the library to give it a shot.

It is awesome. This is the fourth Disney World guide I've read, nearly cover to cover, only skipping the parts about the hotels (because I'm not interested). You'd think I'd be done after the first three guides, but this one answered questions that I hadn't been able to find in other places.

Hey, I understand that lots of Disney fans like staying on the resorts, but someone has to know how to travel

to Disney World and stay elsewhere. Here was finally a source of information on driving directions and suggestions for how to avoid road traffic, not just foot traffic. I had read about many events and shows at the parks, and this is the first that had the most information about the specific locations of the events and shows.

After reading this edition from the library, I ordered the newer edition as well. That's right, after reading four books, two that I had bought myself, I liked this book so much I bought the newer edition so that I could get their take on the new attractions.

Yes, my husband thinks I'm obsessed. I have promised the family that I'm not actually planning every second. We travel a lot and I find that the more I know about where we're traveling, the happier I am. It's a big area in a state I've never been to, and I'd hate to feel like I was flying blind.

Chris Batchelor says

I bought this book, a few months ago. And although I just picked it up about two weeks ago, after some hard reading times, I finally finished it. After enjoying the 2008 Disneyland "Unofficial Guide" a few years ago, I decided it was "time" to read through the updates on the newest rides, since my last trip to Disney World more than 9 years ago. I always love to read, watch or somehow participate with almost anything-Disney, and this book definitely helped me recognize this same feat/feeling that nothing will come in it's path- when the task is accompanied to the Disney World/Land name. Thanks for an interesting read, and keep the updates coming.

THE only thing I didn't feel to read were the tours themselves. NOT many people enjoy crossing the parks continuously. Most people tend to ride-hop from one nearby ride to another. Yes, for those people who want to get on rides without much wait, the plans seem sufficient, but those who don't mind the wait in line, I feel there should be a separate plan for those not minding to wait the lines out, and that's one place this book is sure to disappoint.

I do like though, that this book included the other Central Florida parks (mainly SeaWorld Orlando and the Universal Orlando parks). I didn't like that each "attraction" wasn't outline in the SeaWorld chapter, but it was briefly described. All other chapters were very well written, and I was able to read them, not loosing any detail with the subject matter described.

Tommy Obenrader says

Easily the best book to make your Walt Disney World vacation as smooth and enjoyable as possible. By following the included touring plans you not only get to enjoy more attractions but you also spend on average 4 hours less per DAY waiting in lines.

A must for anyone making the trip to WDW!

Leslie says

I would not visit WDW without reading the latest edition of The Unofficial Guide. I pick up the latest

version every time we visit (usually every 18-24 months). I am generally a frugal person; if I am going to spend a lot of money on a vacation, I'd better get my money's worth. The Unofficial Guide assures that I will. My family is used to me directing them about the parks. While we're at WDW I am no longer Mom; I am the Tour Guide.

While the guide covers everything from when to go to which attraction to visit first to the size of the guest rooms at the Disney hotels, the best advice is to "arrive early" and "take a nap at your hotel each afternoon." You don't have to read the book cover-to-cover but can simply read the sections relevant to your plans. That said, I closely read almost every page of this 800-page tome. (I did skim through the descriptions of the golf courses.) The authors are forthright, humorous, and informative. I've read some of the same material 10 times but still chuckle with the latest reading.

If you are planning a trip to WDW, buy this book. It is worth every penny. It will save you much frustration and hours of standing in line.

Terri Lynn says

I read the latest edition of this each year to get the true facts on what one needs to know for a trip to Disney World. The official guide- the Birnbaum book- has to meet Disney's approval and to hear them tell it, there are never any problems at Disney World and all is perfect. They are the Stepford Disney writers but the Unofficial Guide is quite different.

This book is larger, includes details and inside information you need to choose hotels, restaurants, shops, rides, etc. They go there several times each year and actually try out everything- all the hotels, rides, shops, food, etc and they also use data from actual visitors. I love hearing what actual visitors have to say about hotel rooms, the food, and the rides. They have tips on everything from how to shorten waits in lines, how to plan a day in the water parks, and the best transportation options. They offer tips and secrets and THIS is the book you want to take along and the one you want to preplan with. Don't even think of going to Disney World without reading this first.

B. Jay says

An invaluable resource for planning a trip to Orlando's Mouse Mecca. Not the final source of info, but probably your best starting point before moving online. The reader commentaries, which frequently offer alternative opinions than the authors, are a nice bonus and demonstrate the difficulty of designing a gameplan for Disney that will satisfy everyone in your group.

April says

Really informative..almost too much so. I was a little stressed leaving. Good info if going to Disney though. If anyone want it I have and will give to you

Holly says

I read this before our trip and recommend it to anyone going to WDW. The fast pass parts are dated as Disney has made a lot of very recent changes with the fast pass plus system, but the rest of the book had a lot of entertaining and useful information. I found myself reading parts of the book that didn't apply to our visit because I was enjoying it.

Natalie Bruner says

Great book, especially for newer/infrequent visitors to the park. These authors offer research-based projections of individual park crowd levels (including a handy crowd calendar), attraction wait times, and optimal touring plans. The authors are excellent writers, and there are plenty of humorous and entertaining tidbits and reader feedback interjected throughout the book. This book goes well with my Type A personality-type vacationing style. And my fiance enjoys reminding me of the "Spouse's Bill of Rights." It gives me a structured plan and checklist for all the rides and attractions I would like to view every day in the park. For those that value more spontaneity, less structured and detailed "not-a-touring-plan touring plans" are available.

There is a companion website, TouringPlans.com, that I have been a subscriber to for years. There is a small yearly fee associated with the website, but it offers any information you may ever need on hotels, attractions, crowd patterns, restaurants (restaurants are attractions, too!), and blogs on all things Disney. I love how you can easily sort attractions by ratings according to age groups. You can create personalized touring plans online that optimize waiting and walking times to stay one step ahead of the crowds, for only those attractions that you want to see. There is a phone app in which you can view your plans (and waiting times) and check off steps as you complete them. For extra fun, listen to the free WDW Today podcast. They are hilarious. And the stats geek in me loves to listen to Len Testa talk about averages and standard deviations when it comes to ratings.

Jeffrey says

If you are planning to go to Disney World in 2014, then "The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World 2014" by Bob Sehlinger and Len Testa is a must read. This is the fourth time that we are planning to "vacation" at Disney World and this time it is in the middle of Spring Break. Obviously, we want to ensure that we take advantage of every possible shortcut and the Unofficial Guide is just the book to help. If you are planning to go at any time of the year or during a busy time, this book provides all of the key information necessary to plan your trip. It rates the rental car companies at Orlando, it provides clear ratings of hotels in Disney World and outside of it, rates the various attractions and provides touring plans and strategies that can help you to navigate the various parks. Every time we go to Disney World, I make it a point of reviewing this book.

A key issue this year is the rollout of the Disney World's new Fastpass + system. While, Universal and Six Flags have sold a line cutting card for years, Disney askewed this popular way of making more money at its parks by providing the popular Fastpass system for line cutting rides. Disney had stations at the most popular rides, where people could insert their tickets and receive printed out cards providing a beginning time and

ending time to go on the ride in the future via a separate "Fastpass Line". The system was without cost and was available on a first come first served basis. Disney only allotted a certain amount of Fastpass tickets per hour per day. Thus during busy times of the year, both the amount of available Fastpass cards could be totally allocated by Noon. Another disadvantage of the Disney system is that people selecting later Fastpass cards -- would have their ride times be later in the day -- so a person picking up a Fastpass card at 11:30 am might be told to return to the ride at 10:00 pm, when the kids you wanted to have ride the ride were already tucked away in their beds back at the hotel room. In addition to this issue, the Guide and other popular guide books influenced some people to pick up Fastpasses to popular rides during the early part of the day. Thus a skilled Disney visitor could "game" the system by obtaining a lot of Fastpasses earlier in the day to rides to use later in the day when the specific park was busiest. Although Disney had specific times written on the Fastpass tickets, the people collecting same did not always make people go back during the specific time slot.

Fastpass + is Disney's new system for line cutting rides and its a major change in the system in place at Disney World. While people can still go to the Disney park's and obtain fastpasses at kiosks located at the parks, Disney is now permitting its hotel guests to buy their way to get ahead of the line. This is similar to the system in place at Universal. Universal hotel guests staying at Universal's higher end hotels ---- Hard Rock Hotel and Loews Hotel (but not the new Cabana Hotel) currently receive a great perk -- an "Unlimited Express Pass" enabling the guests to go to the front of the line of nearly every ride at Universal (for as many times as they wanted). Universal sells this pass to visitors to its parks, who are not staying on property, for \$85.

Now Disney has put in place a similar for pay system. If you are staying at one of the designated Disney hotels or vacation spots in the program, a hotel guest can obtain a fast pass for each person staying at the hotel by going on the Disney website up to 60 days in advance of the first day that you are going to be at your Disney hotel and selecting the rides that you want your party to go on using Fastpass + for entire stay at Disney. They system, however is very different than the prior Fastpass system that previous Disney visitors are familiar.

First, you are only allowed to obtain Fastpass + for three rides per day at one park per day. So if you were planning to go to Animal Kingdom during the day and got a fast pass to its roller coaster Everest and were then planning to get a fast pass at a night time visit to Magic Kingdom, you will not be able to do so. You can only get fastpasses for one park.

Second, you are limited to only 3 Fastpass rides per day. In a park like Hollywood Studios where there are 4 major rides -- Toy Story Mania, Tower of Terror, Aerosmith Roller Coaster and Star Wars, you will have to decide on a ride to go on without the benefit of fastpass.

Third, Disney further limits your ability to choose the specific rides that you want by instituting a tier system. Like eating dinner at a Chinese restaurant, you will only be able to select some rides from column A and some rides from Column B. Thus, when planning our trip, for Epcot, grouped in Tier B -- was Soarin and Test Track and you were only permitted to choose one ride for the Fast Pass +.

Finally, if all of the Disney hotel guests make ride reservations and Fastpass prior to their stay - then the people who go to the park who do not stay on Disney properties will be left to whatever Fastpass + tickets are then available when they get to the Park. Likely to rides that do not even need fast passes.

As the Unofficial Guide further explains, Disney has also permitted many more rides, parades and shows to have Fastpass +. Thus you may be subject to more people going ahead of you on rides that previously were

not subject to official line cutting techniques.

Why would Disney change the popular system. The likely answer is simple - money. People who go during busy times of the year will now be more willing to stay on Disney properties to obtain the Fastpasses, which means Disney will be able to get more fees from its hotels. Its also possible that Disney is changing its system so that people who wanted Fastpasses during the early and midday slots can obtain them rather than getting stuck with a less desirable late night slot.

Under these circumstances, the Unofficial Guide's touring plans are even more helpful for letting you know which rides to go on and which parks per day. The Unofficial Guide also provides strategies for deciding whether to go during Extra Morning Hours or selecting a different park to counter program.

In all, the Unofficial Guide is a key tool for a Disney World vacationer.

Debs DiGiorgio says

This book has a lot of great advice, however, we were there during the slow season so there was no reason to try their touring plans. When someone is offering you Space Mtn fast pass that's about to expire, you get on the ride!

Shanwow says

I picked this book up in preparation for our upcoming trip to Disney. The thing that caught my eye was on the Netherlands front it said "How to cut you wait in line by 4 hours a day". Then when I picked up the book I opened it to a chapter that had a title "Saving Money." How can you not dive into a book that can save you time and money.

I have flipped through a few books and this is the most comprehensive of any travel books I have come across. I have read almost every page skipping the spa section because there is not a chance I'll get treated to spa time and the section on Universal Studios.

I found the breakdown of every park and every ride quite helpful as well as the corresponding app on the iPad has been an excellent planning tool. The website is more comprehensive and the features are accessible at a tiny additional fee but worth every penny I paid.

At times I found the book was overwhelming with maybe too much information to read from front to back and at times I felt a bit of anxiety going there and trying to decide what to take our son on and what would make for a well rounded trip for everyone.

This book despite some of the small things that I didn't like will be packed and traveling with us. It covered everything I wanted to know, much I didn't know I needed to know and some fun facts in between.

I highly recommend this book for anyone traveling to Disney. It's been several years since I have been to Disney and this book has prepared me for the trip.

PJ says

I use these books to plan trip. I use the ride and food guides most. It is especially useful when using My Disney Experience
