

Celebrating a Birthday Onboard Disney Cruise Line: Disney Cruise Line Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

As someone who's spent five of my last 12 birthdays at Walt Disney World, I was curious to see what a birthday would be like on board a Disney cruise ship. .

It wasn't just any birthday either, this was a rather special one that started with a four and ended with uh-oh, as I'm sure any of you who've reached this milestone will agree!

Of course, there's a myriad of ways for youngsters to celebrate a birthday on board a Disney cruise, but what about adults?

□ Well, I had some experience of enjoying a Disney cruise during a birthday celebration, having been in Alaska on the Disney Wonder a year earlier for my husband's birthday. The first thing we learnt from that is, unlike a Disney World vacation, you don't need to worry about advertising your birthday, as the crew will already be aware of it. We were impressed that our servers at dinner told us early on in the cruise that there would be a couple of birthday celebrations later on in the week, then we realised that they had a note of our birthdates through our passports. Nice touch from Disney to think about that, and to ensure that nothing was missed. The least you can expect is a special dessert on the night, although one of our friends, who was only three weeks off celebrating her birthday, was able to get in on the act as well.

□ Sadly, I learnt the hard way that if you have a special celebration booked for your birthday night, as we did (we were heading to Remy for dinner), you may miss out on the dinner fun. We popped in to see our fellow diners on our table, and our servers, and although they mentioned that they were going to do something for me, it was a busy time, and they just ran out of time, before we had to head off to our dinner, which was a shame.

As for my birthday meal itself, it didn't quite work out the way I'd planned. One thing that can happen at sea that (hopefully!) won't affect you if you're celebrating at Walt Disney World, is that you might run into bad weather. We knew we were in for a rough night, having had bad weather earlier at Castaway Cay, and our captain confirmed that possibility not long after we left there.

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□ We made it through most of the meal alright, although by the time we got to the cheese options, I was feeling the movement. Sadly, by the time, they brought out a special plate for me, with a birthday message on it, I really was at the stage where I almost couldn't have cared less. All I was concentrating on was trying not to feel any worse. That's certainly something I hadn't counted on when we booked the trip, and I have to be honest, it does put me off cruising on future birthdays again.

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□ The rest of the day was a little more magical, even if our original plans to have a massage in the cabanas at Serenity Bay on Castaway Cay were foiled by the weather. Of course, Disney came through, offering us the opportunity to have our couples massage back on board, something we willingly took up.

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□ There was also some unexpected magic, starting with a beautiful sunrise, which was just wonderful to see, but better was to come. It was almost as if Disney knew it was a big celebration for me, as we were in Senses Spa, when we heard Crew Members asking, "Is that the Dream?" and, sure enough, it was! Seeing her cruise alongside us was a truly magical moment, and one I will cherish for a long time to come. Sometimes the best moments are the ones you don't plan, and that was very much my experience on this birthday.

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□ Something that I didn't realise before I boarded the Fantasy for my birthday cruise is that the Disney Cruise Line offer birthday buttons. It's not something I've seen advertised, and I only found out about it by accident, as I happened to mention it at Guest Services, and surprised, I was asked "haven't you got a birthday button?" It was just as fun as having one of these at Walt Disney World, with people randomly wishing you a happy birthday, and of course if you want to see the characters, and I certainly do, as I'm just a big kid at heart, they have a field day with you.

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□ I got some wonderful interaction with them, although sadly, as it was the last day of the cruise, the official photos had stopped by the afternoon, so we don't have the greatest record of those memories. I just wish I'd known about the birthday buttons earlier on in the cruise, as I know some of the characters we encountered would've had a real ball with them.

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□ If I celebrated another birthday on a Disney cruise, there are a couple of things I'd do differently. Firstly, I'd try to find a cruise where my birthday doesn't fall on the last night. While it's nice to have it to look forward to, I missed not having the photographers out, and the last night is hectic, which means you're rushing around, and can't enjoy your day as much as perhaps you'd like. I'd definitely pick up a birthday

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button at the start of my cruise as well, so I could celebrate throughout the whole time we were at sea. I mean, why not?!

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□ Don't be shy about telling them it's your birthday. They may know from your passport, but if they know you want to celebrate, they'll make sure they do it in style. After all, this is Disney, and celebrations are one of the things they love to do. And finally, don't forget, magic can come from the most unexpected quarters, like the sunrise we enjoyed or the seeing the Dream in the distance.

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□ Celebrating my birthday on a Disney cruise as opposed to at Walt Disney World was a very different experience, but it was still a very neat experience, and given half a chance, one I'd do again.

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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