

Disappointing Disney: How I got over a 'Disappointing' Disney Trip

by Lisa Smith-Lester, PassPorter Guest Contributor

It should not be possible, right? To come back from Walt Disney World disappointed, that is.

Well, it happened to me. Our trip was a "Grand Gathering." There were 15 family members consisting of my parents, their children and grandchildren. Included in this was my husband, two daughters and I. We had been mentally planning for three years and actively planning for 18 months. The recipe was there for an amazing trip.

Unfortunately, I came home so upset. I hadn't ridden Space Mountain or Big Thunder Mountain Railroad. I didn't get to Test Track. I didn't see all the characters I had wanted my daughters to visit. I felt that in our 15 nights I had not spent enough time "in" Disney. I had no PhotoPass pictures of my family of four in Hollywood Studios. Magic Kingdom was PACKED on each of the days we visited. Lots of little things added up to make me feel this holiday was a failure, a waste of so much money.

□ When we got home, for two weeks or so, I didn't want to talk about it. I didn't want to think of going back. I didn't want to look at the 3000-plus photos my husband had taken, or my PhotoPass pictures. It sounds dramatic, and to me it was. Our last visit had been three years earlier. Our next would be in at least another three years. I think I was grieving for the holiday I had planned and anticipated for so long.

□ I started talking to my sister about what I felt had gone wrong. We discussed what did work and what didn't. We need our own cars next time rather than sharing to have our own independence. We need to be a bit more selfish and think of our own families. We need to accept that Magic Kingdom is an amazing park that is of course sure to draw huge crowds. I started to think that maybe I could do a family trip again.

I logged on to mydisneyphotopass.com. There were approximately 400 photos. This upset me. There were 15 of us; we should have had so many more. They had a complimentary 15 day extension promotion. I took up this offer and logged out.

□ A couple days later, I heard the music to the Dream Along with Mickey castle stage show. My husband and our girls were again watching one of the photo DVDs he had made. I had avoided all previous showings. I went in to have a look. The pictures he had taken looked good. I remembered what we had done that day and smiled. I sat and watched

the rest of the DVD. I think it was I who then asked for the next disk to be put on.

□ I decided to log onto mydisneyphotopass.com again. The first pictures were from Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party. My youngest daughter's face when seeing Mickey Mouse for the first time was beautiful. How did I not realise there were so many good photos? I started editing. The borders were great and soon I had over 800 photos. Over a period of a couple of weeks, this number rose to 1320. I had added borders to most pictures. I had cropped everything to just my daughters, the look on their faces a priceless memory.

□ The pictures taken of my eldest daughter at Bibbidi Bobbidi Boutique in Magic Kingdom were amazing. The look of delight and contentment on her face as the Fairy Godmothers-in-Training worked their magic bring a tear to my eyes. How on earth had I pushed this amazing memory away in favor of remembering I hadn't ridden Space Mountain?

□ The reaction my daughters got from Pluto when he saw his own page in their autograph books; the look of sheer excitement on my youngest daughter's face at seeing Pluto; the good memories were creeping back in.

□ I had pre-ordered the Disney photobook along with the archive CD. I started working on this. I got to choose different backgrounds, add my favorite pictures, and write about our trip. Writing about the trip meant I had to read through my trip notes. There were many details I had forgotten or pushed from my memory.

□ I remembered the perfect evening we spent walking around the BoardWalk, with my almost-5-year-old being pushed in the stroller and my almost-2-year-old very happily skipping/running/jumping all the way around. This was one of my favorite moments from our trip.

□ I remembered the lovely day we had for both of my daughters' birthdays, from breakfast at Akershus Royal Banquet Hall with specially ordered birthday cakes to spending a fun afternoon at the pool.

□ I remembered our last day, all together on an almost empty Main Street, reminding me that my Mum's wish had come true. Her five grand-daughters had walked together down Main Street.

□ I ordered a Cinderella Castle word art for my parents. I chose 20 words relating to our trip. I picked a color scheme that matched the room the picture would be in. It arrived, and now I would like one for my own home.

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□ Two days before Christmas, I arrived home to find a card had been left by the postman. He had two international parcels that would not fit through the letterbox, so I'd have to go to the post office to claim them. It was my photobooks. I was so excited I actually jumped around the room! I collected them the next morning, one for me to keep, the other a gift for my parents.

□

□ I started my trip report. Uploading the photos my husband had taken excited me. I was excited about the trip I had taken. Reading through my notes again made me wonder why on earth I had ever been so upset. Ok, I didn't ride a few rides and would like to have spent more time inside the parks, but my girls loved their holiday. They loved the characters they saw, spending time in the pool, and just being together as a family. The two of them being happy is all that matters.

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□ I needed some time. I needed some reminders of the good things. I needed to look at the photos taken from the beach at the Polynesian to remind me of the lovely morning we spent walking to the Grand Floridian and riding the Monorail. I needed my daughters to constantly ask for the holiday DVDs to be put on. I needed to write this and gain some perspective. I needed some dates for when we could go in 2016....

□ I now have those dates. My sister and I have started making plans. I will be going back to Walt Disney World. I will absolutely be following the advice I hear from Sara on the [PassPorter Moms Podcast](#) each week to, "Do less, enjoy more." I will not be disappointed at missing anything as long as my daughters are happy.

About The Author: Lisa Smith-Lester is a working mum with two daughters who, despite the title of this article, does not get to visit Walt Disney World anywhere near as often as she would like!

Article last updated: 02-06-2014

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