

Top 10 Things I love About Disney's Epcot: A Walt Disney World Park Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

The final part of this [series](#), looking at the top 10 things I love at each of the Walt Disney World parks, focuses on my favorite, Epcot.

After all, why not save the best until last? And my goodness, when it came to compiling this list, I really struggled to narrow it down to just ten, showing why this is my favorite. I will fess up now, there are some cheats in here, where I've managed to combine more than one thing into each item, as I just couldn't narrow it down to only ten. So, with that confession out of the way, eyes down for my top ten…

10) World Showcase shops, especially in China and Japan

□ I love browsing the shops in World Showcase, but I have to give a very special shout-out to the Far Eastern ones in China and Japan. I just love their fashion and accessories, and always ensure we have time to explore those, in case there's something that takes my fancy. I have to give honorable mentions to the shops in Morocco, which also stock some great fashion, the wine shop in Germany, as it carries one that we love, and of course we always have to check on what's in offer in the United Kingdom, even if it's only to wince at the prices we see for things we take for granted at home!

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9) Norway pavilion

□ This now feels like a very bittersweet one for me, given the recent announcement that this is being turned into a Frozen-themed pavilion. It was visiting this pavilion that made me want to visit Norway itself, and I absolutely loved seeing the real Akerhus castle, and immediately thinking "I've seen this in Epcot." I hope that, once the conversion is complete, I'll still love it, but at the moment, the jury is out. I think my heart will probably sink when we walk around World Showcase and reach this pavilion on our next trip.

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8) Spaceship Earth

□ How can this not be in the list? It's always been one of my favorites, right from my first visit here with my parents back in 1987. I wasn't sure how much I'd like it after it underwent its radical refurbishment a few years ago, complete with new narration, but actually I love it. Now that I've said that, hopefully I'll have the same reaction when the work on the Norway pavilion is complete.

7) Japan pavilion including Teppan Edo

□ The Japan pavilion has always been my favorite of all those at World Showcase, mainly because I'd always wanted to visit the country. I was fortunate to be able to do that back in 2009, and I hope one day we'll get to return there. In the meantime, every time I walk through this pavilion it takes me back there. It's also home to my only absolute must-do restaurant in Epcot, Teppan Edo. We adore this restaurant, as we don't have many of this type of restaurants at home. It's a real treat to have the food cooked in front of you in such a fun show. I'll say a word here about the dining in Epcot. There are so many wonderful restaurants, but in truth, while I'd have loved to have added more into my top ten, I stuck to things that we do every time we visit the park, and apart from Teppan Edo, there isn't another restaurant we visit each trip. I suspect that's got more to do with the fact that there are so many wonderful restaurants here, with Tokyo Dining, Via Napoli, Tutto Italia, and Akerhaus just some of those that immediately spring to mind. How can you give them all the attention they deserve?

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□6) The Seas with Nemo and Friends

□ This is another, just like Spaceship Earth, that I've loved since my first visit to Epcot, although it's changed so much over the years. I remember watching the deterioration in this pavilion, before Nemo and his friends finally gave it a new lease on life. To me, no visit to Epcot is complete until we've been in here to say hello to the marine animals who make their home here, and now it's most special than ever, as you see kids happily screaming "Nemo" or "Dory" and appreciating what they're seeing here.

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□5) Test Track

□ This is an attraction I've loved ever since it opened, although I'll be honest, prior to its refurbishment, it would've been a bit further up my top ten. Somehow, the new look to it just doesn't do anything for me, and I much preferred it the way it was. Thank goodness the ride experience is at least still as much fun as it always was.

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□4) Soarin'

□ This is another one that was love at first flight for me, although just like Test Track, a few years ago, it would have been higher up the list. What's changed? Well, being honest, in recent visits, the quality of the film hasn't been that great, and it desperately feels like it needs an upgrade, and I'd also dearly love to see a new film, or a series of new films (like Star Tours), so you never know what you're going to get. How about Soarin' over Florida, America as a whole, Europe… the list goes on! Please Disney, make it happen for me.

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□3) Flower and Garden Festival & Food and Wine Festival

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☐ Now this is a bit of a cheat, as originally I had these two festivals separated out, but I couldn't fit everything I wanted in my top ten if I did that, so together they go. Between them, they're the reason we either head to the world in the spring or the fall, as our favorite park has something extra to enjoy. The park just looks stunning during Flower and Garden, while we love to sample the offerings during Food and Wine, although take my word for it, and avoid these festivals during the weekends.

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☐2) Holidays Around the World

☐ Continuing in the same vein, the holidays are a special time of year at all the Walt Disney World parks, and that's very much the case in Epcot. My favorite thing is the Candlelight Processional, a beautiful retelling of the Christmas story, and we always get the dining package to ensure we can enjoy it. The holiday storytellers are also a huge amount of fun, and educational too, as you get to learn about the traditions in different countries.

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☐1) IllumiNations

☐ As this is my absolute favorite thing of anything in any Disney World theme park, this had to come in at number one. Our vacation just isn't complete unless I've watched this (and preferably more than once!), enjoyed the musical score, the superb fireworks, and the images on the globe in the middle of World Showcase lake, all of which combine to reduce me to tears every time I see it. To me, this is Disney magic at its best, and long may it continue.

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☐ Hopefully these articles, looking at my favorites in each of the Walt Disney World theme parks, has some similarities to yours. Maybe it'll even set you thinking about things you haven't done before, or things that perhaps you haven't appreciated. If so, that's great, as that's what I was hoping to do with this. After all, there's something new to discover on every Disney trip!

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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