

The Treehouse Villas at Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort: A Walt Disney World Resort Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

□ For as many years as I can remember, I've always wanted to stay at the Treehouse Villas located along the Sassagoula River. The first time I saw them, they were sad remnants of their former selves, no longer available for anyone to stay in. For many years, they remained that way, until a further expansion was announced to Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort and Spa, which would see the Treehouse Villas renovated, and brought back online for Disney Vacation Club Members to use their points for or for cash stays.

□ I'd been hoping to stay in a Treehouse Villa on our 2013 trip, but the news that the Grand Floridian Villas would be opening just a week before our arrival took precedence. On our latest trip, I finally got my wish, spending just one night in a Treehouse Villa. Why such a short stay? Well, in truth, it was a real extravagance, as they're designed to sleep up to nine people in a three-bedroom villa.

□ Traditionally, three-bedroom villas at the Disney Vacation Club resorts sleep 10-12, but in the Treehouse Villas, once you've accommodated two people in each of the three bedrooms (in the other resorts, usually two of the three bedrooms accommodate four people each, as they have two beds), the only remaining places to sleep are a queen-sized sleeper sofa, and a sleeper chair. This was where we encountered our first issue with the layout of the villas. Had we had the full complement of people, the person in the sleeper chair would have been right in front of the door to the master bedroom -- not the greatest planning in the world.

□ We were also surprised at how small the living room is in a Treehouse Villa. It's combined with the kitchen, and if you're all in there, you'll be fighting for spaces to sit in, with only the sleeper sofa and sleeper chair as comfy places to sit. Sure, you can sit in one of the three stools at the kitchen counter or around the table, but it would be tough to get your whole group together in one place here. It was perfect for the two of us, but I would not want to be in a Treehouse Villa when it's at maximum occupancy.

□ Aside from the potential trip hazard getting into or out of the master

bedroom, we found that the sleeper sofa was spacious enough, and the master bathroom was the same. You enter it, and the toilet is off to one side, completely on its own, with the sinks opposite, and then the shower, with the Jacuzzi tub located behind it at the end of the bathroom. While I thought it was an interesting arrangement to have the shower in front of the tub, it didn't necessarily work as a layout, as our shower was leaking slightly, making the floor wet. I have to confess I wasn't overly impressed with the Jacuzzi tub either, as the jets were all to each side, with none at the end. One thing I love is having jets on my feet after a hard day walking in the parks, but here, it's sadly not possible.

□ One thing that is really fun at the Treehouse Villas, and which will no doubt be a hit if you have younger members of the family, is the fact that one of the bedrooms is home to bunk beds. Of course, given the octagonal shape of the villas, it makes perfect sense, as this room is smaller than the others, being located right by the entrance door. I can imagine all sorts of arguments over who gets the top bunk!

□ As I've already alluded to, the third bedroom, which is also home to a queen sized bed, is considerably smaller than the master bedroom. The other two bedrooms also have to share a bathroom, but even this is a reasonable size, although it's a shame that the toilet couldn't have been separated off from the rest of the bathroom. Unfortunately, it's part of the rest of the bathroom, which I can imagine could be irritating if everyone's trying to get ready at the same time to head out.

□ The kitchen comes fully equipped with just about everything you can think, if cooking is part of your vacation (trust me, it's not for us!), and there's a large counter space for food preparation. I particularly liked how they had the wine glasses hanging from the bottom of one of the cabinets. It's an ingenious use of space.

□ Something else that's worth knowing before your stay at the Treehouse Villas is that they are a bit isolated. It's perfect for a complete getaway, and getting to the parks is reasonably easy, with bus stops at either end of the complex. However, if you don't plan on cooking, the nearest option for something to eat is over at Saratoga Springs's Carriage House. We were told that the walk over there was about 10 minutes, but that's from the closest Treehouse Villa. As we were at one nearest the main entrance, it would probably have been a good 15 minutes, not something we fancied doing when we were tired.

□ Equally, if you have anyone who has mobility difficulties, and cannot easily manage stairs, a stay at the Treehouse Villas may not work for your party. Located 10 feet off the ground, there's a set of steps leading

to the main entrance, and there's no other way into them.

□ If this article sounds quite negative about the Treehouse Villas, then in a way, that would be right. Having wanted to stay there for so long, I was disappointed by our stay in a number of ways, but don't get me wrong, I'm glad we finally had the opportunity to experience them. I was surprised by how small they were, although given their octagonal shape, it probably shouldn't have come as that much of a surprise to me.

□ I certainly wouldn't like to stay there as a group of nine, but we enjoyed our time there as a couple, and they are beautifully furnished, and themed, and you do feel as if you're stepping into a woodland area, complete with calming browns and greens in evidence everywhere. If you're looking for a complete getaway from it all, the Treehouse Villas may be the perfect place for you.

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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