

Disney Without Your Kids: It's Not the Food and 'Whine' Festival

by Nicole Groves, PassPorter Guest Contributor

This is not an article on a child-free couple enjoying the World free of any ties.

□ This is an article by a parent for parents on the blessings of ditching your kids and going to Walt Disney World -- just the two of you! Don't get me wrong. I really love being with my kids. As a stay at mom I'm with them a lot. I take them everywhere; rain or shine, in sickness or in health until college we part. In fact, I really fell in love with Walt Disney World the first time we took our kids. It was truly magical to see their faces light up as they saw Cinderella Castle for the first time. That being said, kids are jerks! Really! They fight. They complain. They don't want to see the Hall of Presidents!?! Going on a Disney trip just the two of you can be relaxing, romantic and a completely different type of magic.

Letting GO of the Guilt! had long dreamed of going to the Epcot Food & Wine Festival. My husband made that dream come true for my birthday last November. The catch -- it was just going to be the two of us! I'll admit at first I felt guilty. They would be so sad not to go to their favorite place on Earth! Then we booked a room at the Boardwalk Villas, a place my smarty son doesn't like, "I don't like this place. It has white wood work." He really said that. Soon my guilt started to fade as I realized how much fun we could have without them!

□ The first benefit to leaving the kids at home was how much "cheaper" it is to go to Walt Disney World. My husband prefers separate sleeping quarters from the kids. This usually requires a one bedroom villa which is great but pricy. Not this time! We were able to book a beautiful studio villa at the Boardwalk, a place I love, at a much better price than we would find for a one bedroom at any resort. Also, only having to buy two adult tickets was a big savings. We saved enough that we felt we could get the Park Hopper ticket. This was another savings because we didn't have to stay as long to experience the things we wanted to see. I can't say that the food cost was less. I love food -- which is why I wanted to go to the Food & Wine Festival. We probably spent more on food and drinks this trip than we normally would.

□ A second benefit of an adult's only trip is FREEDOM!! Often on family vacations there are things we just don't get to experience. My kids would not have wanted to try the food at the Marketplace Booths at the Food & Wine Festival. However, my husband and I were able to try

several dishes. We would grab an adult beverage, a small plate, find the nearest spot and enjoy while we people watched. There is NO people watching with my kids!

Adult Fun at Disney World Attractions are another thing that can become a problem traveling with kids. I love attractions like the Hall of Presidents and the American Adventure. My kids love me enough to do these only once. We never look around because, "It's too boring", according to my beautiful daughter. A visit without kids meant we could spend some time listening to the Voices of Liberty and looking at the artifacts on display.

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□ Also, the Food & Wine Festival has great events that are geared to adults. I had a great time learning how to make Bolognese and gnocchi from Disney Chef Paul Nichols. I still use the recipe at home. I haven't made the cocktails from the beverage seminar we attended, but the really enjoyed the presentation and samples! Something we couldn't do with the kids around is have a spa treatment. One afternoon we enjoyed a couple's massage in the Ship Shape health club at the Yacht Club resort. It was so invigorating! Afterward, we stopped at the lounge in the resort and had a great conversation with the Cast Members.

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□ We finished our day with a leisurely dinner at Trattoria al Forno. It was so much fun to spend time just us. We talked and laughed, we just relaxed. These are things we just couldn't have done with the kids. I can't overstate how much fun a vacation is when you don't hear any complaining or fighting.

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Save Money Without the Kids □ Another benefit to leaving the kids at home is time savings. My husband truly was a darling on this trip, as he was perfectly happy to go where I wanted when I wanted. He had some things he wanted to do too, and we had plenty of time. Time was much easier to manage with just two adults. Our family are usually late sleepers (I know! A BIG Disney No-No.). I really thought we wouldn't make it to the parks before 11 am. That wasn't the case at all. With no kids to wake, feed and get out the door we were at the parks most days by 9:30! (I know. Still late).

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□ Really, the best part of going to Walt Disney World without our kids was experiencing my favorite place with my favorite man! It was like we were teenagers again. We got an opportunity to do exactly what the Disney vacation is designed to do, leave ours concerns at the main gate and live a little magic.

About The Author: Nicole Groves is a Stay at Home Mom of two (usually) great kids, married for almost 20 years to always great guy, whose hobbies

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