

Expect the Unexpected... To, From, and At the Happiest Place on Earth (Part 2): A Walt Disney World Planning Article

by Amy Jones, PassPorter Guest Contributor

I'm happy to report that the bulk of our Walt Disney World vacation did go as planned, and the majority of our time there was awesome.

However, as I said in [Part One](#) last week, we live in a crazy world where the unexpected can lead to new adventures and problems that need to be solved. Still, the unexpected can lead to unforeseen treasures, too, and we experienced both this trip.

Adventure and surprise treasure. Jack Sparrow would be proud.

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□ We arrived at Walt Disney World the night before we had originally intended. I foresaw this possibility while en route and had gotten us a room for one night at Pop Century using the mobile My Disney Experience website. On our first trip to Walt Disney World in 2015 we had stayed only in Disney Vacation Club resorts and at Port Orleans Riverside, so I wanted to try a value resort, just to check it out.

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□ My honest take on Pop Century? It's fun, but I wouldn't want to live there. I can't think of a better way to describe it. The outdoor decor in the 1950's part, where we stayed was right up my alley (pun intended) with its huge bowling pins and matching pool, plus giant replicas of Lady and the Tramp. And I got a fit of the giggles at the giant jukebox entry entitled "My Love Will Last (Like Space Age Plastic)"--hey, it was late, and I was tired and giddy. Maybe it was the Tie Dyed Cheesecake filtering through.

Our night at Pop Century was sufficiently comfortable, but somewhat cramped, and my husband and I found that we've become quite spoiled to king and queen sized beds. Still, the kids seemed to sleep well, and we made it to the next morning with no complaints.

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□ Our original intention was to sleep in a little, let the kids swim, then make our way over to our first resort for the trip, Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort and Spa. However, after leaping into swimsuits that morning, we discovered that the pool was closed and wouldn't be open again until after we left.

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□ Never fear--a Super Disney Planning Mom (yeah, whatever) always has a second choice at hand! The night before, just to make sure we

ended up well-fed, I had obtained late breakfast reservations at Boma, a restaurant to which we had never been. We had eaten in Tusker House and enjoyed it, so we were excited to give Boma a try.

It was soooo worth it, and made such a nice first meal this trip at Walt Disney World. None of us had eaten properly since the afternoon before, so we were quite ready for the beautifully laid-out buffet of African-style foods in the dark-wood-accented restaurant. Trees and running water enhanced the relaxing ambience, even though the restaurant was crowded. I can't remember or name a fraction of what we had, but I think we consumed most of the Circle of Life, and I personally drank my weight in Jungle Juice.

We will definitely be back at Boma, our first unexpected treasure.

Since we have annual passes, we were free to go to the park(s) of our choice that day, and since we were so close to Animal Kingdom, that was where we went. We hadn't even originally planned to be in Orlando yet by this time, so this park day was a treat. It took a little time to activate our annual passes (which I was able to do, thanks to having my driver's license with me!), but we had a nice, relaxing time in the park, rode the safari, took turns visiting Mr. Yeti on Expedition Everest, and were into our room at Saratoga Springs early enough to rest a little and get ready for Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party that night.

As I said at the beginning of this article, most of the rest of our vacation went pretty much as planned, with a few hidden treasures (and hiccups) along the way. One hidden treasure was a lady who worked at a shop in the Grand Floridian. I will call her Miss K. Miss K was about seventy, of Asian heritage, tiny, adorable, and talked to me about her home and her children for about an hour. When she wrapped up the shirt I bought for my mother, Miss K pulled out every kind of button she had (1st Visit, Birthday, etc) and gave them to me to give to my mother. I told her I would do that and that I would tell her about my conversation with her when I did (and I did!).

Our original intention (I've said that before) was to leave Walt Disney World on Saturday and get home Sunday night. But, the best laid plans of Mickey Mouse and men go oft awry, and so did ours. I'll explain more about that unexpected adventure in Part 3!

About The Author: Amy Jones lives in Kentucky with one husband and two future Disney Imagineers. She is a stay-at-home mom, a runner, a writer, and a Disney planning fiend. She and her family have been to the World twice and have two more trips scheduled for 2017 to celebrate birthdays, Star Wars, and a long-awaited 20th wedding anniversary.

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