

The Hoop Dee Doo Revue at Disney's Fort Wilderness Campground: A Disney Dining Review

by Erin Souder, PassPorter Guest Contributor

Hoop Dee Doo Revue is a dinner show at Fort Wilderness Campground at Walt Disney World.

Despite hearing how much people enjoy it, we had never been willing to part with the two table service credits it requires on the dining plan. Once we tried it, we were hooked. It is such fun and the food is delicious. Plus the trip to Fort Wilderness for the show is an adventure in itself.

On our most recent trip we had spent the day at Animal Kingdom. We took the bus from Animal Kingdom to the Magic Kingdom where we boarded the boat for Fort Wilderness. The boat ride is beautiful and relaxing. Our boat made one stop, at the Wilderness Lodge, on the way. Upon disembarking the boat at Fort Wilderness, we took the short walk to Pioneer Hall where the Hoop Dee Doo Revue takes place. It is important to arrive 30 minutes before the show. You will need to wait in line to check in and pick up your tickets. They have a photo station much like at many character meals available as well. The photos were included with our Memory Maker purchase. It is also important to stop in the restroom, because there are no restrooms inside the show building. You don't want to miss part of the show to run next door to the restroom. If you can arrive even earlier there are plenty of things to do near Pioneer Hall. There was a playground calling to our children, but we didn't arrive early enough. The Tri-Circle-D Ranch is located nearby and offers pony rides and trail rides. There are also horse and carriages to watch or ride. Another option is renting a boat from the Fort Wilderness Marina which is located in this area.

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□As show time approaches they begin seating all guests. You are shown to your pre-assigned table. We had a Category 2 table on the main floor. We have done Category 2 seating both times and would do so in the future. The Category 3 tables face away from the stage and you must swivel in your chair to see the show. For the most part you are eating while the show isn't happening, but there are times you want to eat and watch. The Category 1 seats are more expensive if you pay out of pocket and not available on the dining plan. Our Category 2 tables have been perfect for us. All of us, including our young kids, have felt as though we could see well.

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☐ Drinks are included in the show cost. They offer soft drinks as well as beer, wine, and sangria. All drinks are bottomless. Food is all you can eat and served family style. The meal starts with delicious corn bread with butter and salad. While you are enjoying the salad course, the show starts. The show is singing and dancing with a large dose of silly. The slapstick comedy had my kids laughing nearly the whole show. The show itself was fun for adults too, but we also had a great time watching the kids have so much fun. The atmosphere is lively and loud. As the main course is served the show performers take a break. There is music while everyone digs in. Food offerings included fried chicken, ribs, mashed potatoes, beans, and corn. The meats are served in metal buckets. Plates are metal as well and drinking glasses are glass jars. Everyone in our group enjoyed the food. We asked for and received multiple refills. We were even able to request specific pieces of chicken in our refill buckets. As people start to finish eating, the show picks back up. There are more silly songs, stories, dancing, and plenty of corny jokes. The performers move around throughout the dining room during the show. Towards the end of the show several people from the audience are invited to participate in the closing piece which is super silly and fun. The grand finale includes delicious strawberry shortcake for everyone for dessert. Also all audience members join in the music by using spoons to play washboards which were delivered to the table by the servers.

If there is a down side to the Hoop Dee Doo experience, it is transportation after the show. You can take a boat to the Magic Kingdom, or you can use the Fort Wilderness internal bus system to reach buses for the Magic Kingdom or other parks. We had chosen to go back to the Magic Kingdom and transfer from there to a Pop Century bus. The lines for both buses and boats get very long very quickly when Hoop Dee Doo releases. After our most recent show, we walked to the boat line. A boat was just pulling out and we were far back in the line. We didn't know if it would be to our advantage to change plans and go to the bus stop instead. It is a reasonable walk from the boat dock, back past Pioneer Hall, and over to the bus stop. We thought there would probably be a long line already formed over there too. So we stayed in the line for a boat. We were surprised at just how long we had to wait for the boat. The cool evening and the breeze from the water coupled with standing on tired feet after a long day in the parks made for an uncomfortable wait. Plan ahead. Do not plan to get anywhere quickly after the Hoop Dee Doo Revue. Be patient and know that getting "home" is going to take some time. Bring jackets for everyone if the evening might get cool. Consider bringing a stroller for kids to sit while waiting.

☐ I think everyone should go to the Hoop Dee Doo Revue. We have attended with people ranging in age from six months to 74 years old.

Everyone has enjoyed it. I think entertainment and atmosphere have a wide appeal. The experience feels very Disney, but it is just a little bit off the beaten path. The whole evening feels just a little bigger or more intense than most attractions and meals you experience during a Disney trip. Even a year after our first Hoop Dee Doo Revue, my kids often bring up Hoop Dee Doo Revue or various acts or performers from it. They also have such vivid memories of the reactions of our family members to specific moments. What great memories for them to have. That is the key to any Disney trip; having fun and making memories with our trip mates. Hoop Dee Doo Revue absolutely deserves being classified as a dinner show and is certainly worth the two credits on the Disney Dining Plan.

About The Author: Erin is a "retired" engineer who is now a homeschooling mom of two girls. As a long time Disney fan, she would love to make more frequent Disney trips but counts herself fortunate to visit Walt Disney World about once per year.

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