

Disney's Old Key West Resort: A Resort Review

by Colin Lundy, PassPorter Guest Contributor

As you enter Disney's Old Key West Resort, you immediately feel the calm, cool, and leisurely pace of the resort through the tall palm trees and pastel-colored buildings.

There is nothing like hearing "welcome home" from all of the incredible cast members who are sure to make your stay truly unique. There is so much to do at Old Key West for the whole family, whether it's hanging out by the pool or renting a pontoon boat for a leisurely ride to Downtown Disney.

Old Key West offers some of the most spacious lodging options at Walt Disney World. Studio accommodations are great at Old Key West because they are basically a hotel room with a kitchenette. They are great for a couple or small family on a weekend getaway. One bedroom vacation homes are my personal favorite, most likely because it happens to be the type of villa my family and I stay in the most. These vacation homes offer a full living room with a love seat and a queen-size sleeper sofa, which is quite comfortable. There is also a nice-sized dining room table and a full kitchen, complete with all the bare necessities you need to cook a fabulous meal, including real dishes and glasses instead of paper dishes. The master bedroom has a king-size bed and plenty of room to store all of your belongings. The master bathroom is incredible. There is a two-person Jacuzzi tub! This is great because it's basically having your own private, end of the day retreat. There is also a large closet, stand-up shower, and double sinks (one near the tub and one near the shower). Two-bedroom vacation homes are also great if you bring the whole family. A two-bedroom is composed of a one bedroom vacation home and a studio put together and sleeps eight.

Now that you have an idea on what wonderful rooms you can choose from, now you can worry about what you're going to do while staying at Old Key West (besides going to the parks)! Old Key West has three smaller pools scattered throughout the resort and one main feature pool located at the Hospitality House, the center for resort services and activities. The three smaller pools are a good size and will keep you entertained for quite awhile. Each smaller pool also has a small playground, a picnic area where you can cook on small charcoal grills, and a nice hot tub. The village pool on Old Turtle Pond Road also has a quick service dining option, the Turtle Shack. The feature pool at the

resort is quite nice. There are plenty of lounge chairs and tables around the pool, so you will be sure to have a seat. The slide at the pool resembles a sandcastle and is great for children, teens, and even adults. At each of the pools, there are also washing machines and dryers which are complimentary to both members and guests.

In that welcome folder you received at check-in, you will find a copy of Hank's Happenin's, which is the resort activity schedule. You can also obtain a copy at Hank's Rent 'n Return if you need an extra. On this activity schedule, there are many things to do including Wii Mania on the Turtle Krawl, poolside BINGO, crafts, and basketball tournaments. There are usually four to six activities per day, so there is plenty to do to keep busy. Of course, Florida weather does restrict some activities due to weather, so be sure to check Hank's for activity updates! One of my favorite activities to do at Old Key West is to rent a boat and go for a leisurely ride to Downtown Disney. Along the way, you can take some great photos of Peninsular Road, Saratoga Springs Resort, and Downtown Disney. You can also ride the boat over to Port Orleans and take some great photos over there, too. There are also two extremely small arcades at Old Key West. One of them is on the Turtle Krawl and the other is at the Turtle Pond village pool. There are about 10 games in each arcade and offer just enough if you need to play for a little while.

Dining options at Old Key West may seem limited when you see the selection of places to eat, but all of the dining options ensure a fabulous meal. Olivia's Cafe, which is the only table service restaurant at Old Key West, offers not only a great selection of food, but also a great atmosphere to dine in. Breakfast at Olivia's is pretty simple. Olivia's offers pancakes, omelets, eggs, and sausage. It's your basic restaurant breakfast. For lunch and dinner, you can choose from a variety of options. Olivia's offers a nice selection of both meat and seafood. The thing that I enjoy the most about lunch and dinner at Olivia's is the Pineapple-Coconut Bread. This bread is served warm and is absolutely delicious.

The only other places to eat at Old Key West are Good's Food To Go and Turtle Shack Poolside Snacks, which is only open seasonally. Good's serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner and offers a pretty small menu. They have cinnamon rolls, fruit, and omelets for breakfast, and for lunch you can get basically just a hamburger, hot dog, or a sandwich. I would recommend the cinnamon roll for breakfast and a hot dog for lunch. The lines at Good's can get especially long during the lunch rush, so be sure to plan accordingly if you're in a hurry. The Turtle Shack is located at the village pool on Old Turtle Pond Road. If you're staying over there, you can get the same type of food as Good's. The menu is slightly different from Good's because they do not have the same

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cooking equipment.

If you're looking for resort merchandise while at Old Key West, you can stop by Conch Flats General Store. Here you can purchase resort logo merchandise, pins, beer, wine, and Disney Vacation Club merchandise (membership ID required). They also sell pre-packaged breakfast and snack foods such as chips and Disney-branded candy and nuts. It is a great place to pick up an item you left at home or a logo item to show your resort pride!

Old Key West does have a pretty consistent transportation system. Bus service at Old Key West services all theme parks, water parks, and Downtown Disney. There are five bus stops throughout the resort, with the Hospitality House usually being the last stop. This is great especially if you do not have a car. The Downtown Disney bus does stop at the Hospitality House as it enters and exits the resort, so if you need a ride back to your villa, the Downtown Disney bus is the best one to board (especially on a hot day)! If you're looking for a leisurely trip to Downtown Disney, you can also catch the boat from the Hospitality House, which offers a great opportunity to relax before a great time at Downtown Disney.

Overall, Disney's Old Key West Resort is a great place to stay. You're really treated like part of the family while you're there. With the large accommodations, relaxing atmosphere, and great activities, Old Key West is a great choice for families coming to Walt Disney World, because it is truly Disney's Best Kept Secret!

About The Author: Colin is a sixteen year old high school junior from Massachusetts. He enjoys spending time with his family at Walt Disney World and cannot wait for his trip back to Disney's Old Key West Resort in August. He and his family have been Disney Vacation Club members for sixteen years.

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