

Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge Villas: Disney Vacation Club Resort Review: Kidani Village

by Erin Martin, PassPorter Guest Contributor

Giraffes and zebras and Disney -- oh my!

Where else can you find all the African animals you could want and sleep near them? At **Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge Resort** in the most magical place on Earth, Walt Disney World!

Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge is one of my favorite deluxe resorts at Walt Disney World, so I was excited to plan a stay at **Kidani Village**, the newly-added Disney Vacation Club facility. During this trip we needed larger accommodations than just a standard room, so we opted for a two bedroom villa.

I was already excited about going to Animal Kingdom Lodge again, but I was even more excited about staying at Kidani Village. The first stop was the lobby for check-in. Kidani Village has its own lobby, which is smaller than Jambo House (the original lodge building), but looks very similar with the **dark wood and the African artwork**. On the one side of the lobby is the check-in area and concierge desk. On the opposite side is Johari's Treasures. This small store sells a limited selection of groceries, as well as Animal Kingdom Lodge merchandise and souvenirs. You can also find a beverage station in Johari's Treasures where you can fill your refillable mugs with hot or cold beverages.

I had completed my check-in online prior to arrival, so I looked for the **"online check-in" counter**. I was informed that due to the small size of the Kidani Village lobby, there was no counter dedicated to on-line check in. Instead, you could go to any available counter. Although there was no dedicated line, we were still in and out in no time and on our way to our villa.

Our room at Kidani Village was located on the **same floor as the lobby**, which was very convenient. I chose to stay in a standard view room instead of a savannah view room to save money. I was initially concerned about missing out on the view, but the room more than made up for it!

The **size of the room was really incredible**. We entered into the main living area. Here we found the washer/dryer (tucked inside the closet), a full bathroom, kitchen with breakfast bar, kitchen table, sofa, chair,

and entertainment center. The entertainment center included a television and DVD player. The kitchen came well stocked with dishes, silverware, and various cooking supplies. This room also had sliding glass doors that lead out to the balcony, which we found stretched the entire length of the villa. As a result, each bedroom had direct access to the balcony.

To the left of the main living area was the **second bedroom with two queen size beds** and another full bathroom. A door closed off this section from the rest of the villas, which is nice if you are sharing with more than one family. Off the right side of the living area was the master bedroom and bathroom. This room included a king size bed, television, and DVD player. While this was all very nice, the master bathroom was really the most amazing spot. The bathroom was extremely large with a Jacuzzi tub and a separate shower. The shower itself was so large a whole family could get clean at once! The toilet in this room is contained in its own separate area, with a door, which makes it nice if multiple people are trying to get ready.

The theming of the room was also quite incredible. The **African theme** blended nicely into the decor. Additionally, Disney put its own special touch in the room with a very subtle Lion King theme throughout. The Lion King could be found in special ways on chairs and even in the bathroom. If you're staying here, be sure to look for Hidden Lion Kings as well as Hidden Mickeys!

Although I didn't want to leave the room because it was so amazing, I did pull myself away to see the rest of the resort -- and it was well worth it! As I had said earlier, we skipped the Savannah View in our room to save money, but there were plenty of other opportunities to see animals. Just walking from our room to the lobby we passed a large hallway where we could **look onto the savannah**. We saw several different animals at different times throughout our stay including ostriches, zebras, and giraffes.

While the room was a highlight of the trip for me, the pool was definitely another highlight of staying here. Kidani Village has its own pool area, which is very large and encompasses several sections. The **Samawati Springs Pool** was the main pool. This pool has a zero entry side, which is great for little ones. My own two-year-old spent a lot of time splashing here, since he could reach the bottom. Another fun activity for him was one of the two slides that the pool offered. This slide was short and small and meant for younger children; while the other slide was much larger and intended for bigger kids (or the kid in all of us!). This main pool area also hosted a pool party most afternoons with different games and music. These proved to be fun for the whole

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family!

Next to the Samawati Spring Pool is the **Uwanja Camp**. This is a very fun water area for children of all ages. This area includes slides, rope climbs, water shooting cannons, and other fun water activities. There is even a small baby pool, where I saw many parents of infants letting their children splash around. My son loved this whole area as well, but I could see older children enjoying it just as much. Beware, though, if you bring your children here they might never want to leave!

The pool area also included the **Maji Pool Bar**, which had drinks as well as light food and snacks. On the side of the bar is also an area where you can fill your refillable mug. The beverage selection is very limited, but it was still a nice feature.

Back in the main resort area there is also a kid's club. Children of any age can come in and play games, color, or watch television. I took my son down a few times and we were able to sit together and color pictures. Additionally, in the resort is the **Safari So Good Arcade** as well as a laundry room for those staying in Studio rooms where there are no washers and dryers.

The only thing we found that Kidani Village lacked was food choices. There is one full service restaurant, Sanaa, but **no counter service restaurants here**. For that, we had to go to Mara at Jambo House. In order to get there you can hop on one of the park buses, which stop at Jambo house before continuing on to the theme parks (this does not apply to Downtown Disney buses, though, which pick up Kidani Village last). The other option is to walk, which we did on most days. There is a path to follow and if you are moving at a quick pace, it takes about 10 minutes.

Overall Kidani Village was a **truly magical experience** for us. Our group ranged from 2 to 62 years old and we all found it to be quite enjoyable. If you are considering a Deluxe Resort for your next stay, don't overlook the Animal Kingdom Lodge Kidani Village -- you won't be disappointed!

About The Author: Erin Martin previously contributed to PassPorter News with an article on [Newfoundland, Canada](#). She and her family love to travel to Walt Disney World and sail on the Disney Cruise Line.

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