

Disney's Coronado Springs Resort: A Disney Resort Hotel Review

by Mary Augustine, PassPorter Guest Contributor

We recently spent four days at a Walt Disney World resort, and didn't enter the theme parks.

Not even once. No, it wasn't due to illness, loss of tickets or money, or poor planning. We decided to try this option, to relax after a Disney cruise. I have to admit, we had a great time. How was this possible? Read on.

Last March, we experienced our first Disney cruise, on the Disney Dream. We started with a couple of nights in Florida, then cruised for four nights, and ended with three nights at a Walt Disney World resort. Although we are new to Disney cruising, we've made dozens of visits to Walt Disney World over the years. We've stayed in many of the Walt Disney World resorts, and have experienced nearly all of the attractions. For this trip, we were traveling with just our youngest daughter, on spring break from college. Admittedly, if our young grandchildren had been along, our plans may have been very different. But with just adults, we were planning to have a relaxing vacation, with lots of family time.

□ The first night of our Disney Cruise/Walt Disney World vacation was short, as our daughter had a late flight into Orlando after finishing classes. We dined at our hotel and retired relatively early, adjusting to Eastern Standard Time. We then spent a day in Port Canaveral, relaxing and enjoying local restaurants and shops. By the next morning, we were ready to sail, and arrived at the port shortly after the cruise terminal opened. Needless to say, the cruise was wonderful! We did enjoy late nights as well as early morning activities, and were ready for a more relaxed pace after the cruise. We used the Disney Cruise Line transfers from the port to our hotel, and found it to be very efficient, arriving at our resort at 09:15 am. We stayed at the Coronado Springs Resort, one of the few Walt Disney World resorts we'd not previously visited.

□ The resort was beautiful! We were fortunate in that there were no large conventions during our stay, with just one small group meeting being held during our first day at the resort. We stayed in the Casitas 2 building, relatively close to the dining, shopping, and check in areas. The weather was cool, but clear, and the nearly one mile walk around the lake was spectacular, with many fountains, flowers, trees, and beautiful vistas. Hammocks were available and the pool was uncrowded.

The marina was closed for the first couple of days, but that just meant that things were especially peaceful around the lake. At night, the lighting was beautiful, and the views around the lake were dazzling.

We were pleased with our room, which seemed large for a moderate resort, and had queen beds, as well as a larger bathroom area. Resort amenities included a fitness center, a salon and spa, and room service. The theme pool area is very interesting, called the Dig Site, and includes a Mayan temple with a waterfall, a tall jaguar slide, an arcade, a playground, a sand court for volleyball, and a large hot tub. We liked the location of Coronado Springs Resort, and thought that the Disney transportation was more efficient than we've experienced at times in other moderate resorts.

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□The food service at Coronado Springs included a quick counter service area, Cafe Rix; a food court with beverage service, The Pepper Market; and one table service restaurant, Maya Grill. We were pleased with the accommodations for our dietary issues (gluten sensitive, vegetarian). There was also a lounge in the main building, Rix Lounge, with a DJ on weekend nights. In addition, drinks and snacks were served at Siestas by the pool and the Laguna Bar, lakeside.

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□We enjoyed leisurely meals at several Downtown Disney locations, as well as our favorite resort restaurants, shopped at resorts as well as Downtown Disney, and enjoyed the nightlife at Downtown Disney. To avoid any stressful driving or parking, we used Disney transportation, and enjoyed the trips, as we weren't hurrying to arrive in time for an attraction or a reserved meal time in the parks. We were able to enjoy time at the resort with relatives who live in Orlando. We slept late every day. We did things that had been planned on prior trips, but had been skipped due to lack of time, such as designing T-shirts at Disney's Design-A-Tee in Downtown Disney, watching live entertainment there, taking Disney 'slow boat' transportation, and more.

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□When our last vacation day arrived, we were rested, happy, and ready to return home and to college. Would we do this again? Yes! Perhaps not on our next trip, but anytime the goal is to relax or "recover" we'd consider it. In the past, we've spaced park days with days off, and found that to be quite relaxing. I think of this vacation as a variation on that theme. Stay at a Walt Disney World resort without visiting the parks? Just one more option to consider when planning a relaxing Disney vacation.

About The Author: Mary Augustine is retired. She has been a Disney fan since the original Micky Mouse Club was on television!

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