

The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World 2016

By Bob Sehlinger, Len Testa

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Compiled and written by a team of experienced researchers whose work has been cited by such diverse sources as *USA Today* and *Operations Research Forum*, *The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World* digs deeper and offers more than any other guide. *The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World* explains how Disney World works and how to use that knowledge to make every minute and every dollar of your vacation count. With advice that is direct, prescriptive, and detailed, it takes the guesswork out of travel by unambiguously rating and ranking everything from hotels, restaurants, and attractions to rental car companies. With an Unofficial Guide in hand, and authors Bob Sehlinger and Len Testa as guides, find out what's available in every category, from best to worst, and use step-by-step detailed plans to help make the most of time at Walt Disney World.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

What's **NEW in the 2016 edition** of the Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World?

The 2016 edition has fabulous new trip planning tools and is completely re-organized for easier reading. Here are the highlights:

The Introduction has a new chart showing what's new in Walt Disney World over the past 2, 5, and 10 years. If you haven't been to Disney World in a while, these are the highlights for your next trip.

Part 1 – Planning Before You Leave Home has an excellent new trip planning timeline. A vacation to Disney World is different than other places, because there's more demand than supply for the best rides, restaurants, and hotel rooms. This new timeline shows when you can make those reservations, and where in the book to read for more information.

Part 2 – Time and Money has a new chart showing how much Disney vacation your family can get for $500, $1000, $1500, and $2000. The #1 thing most families are unprepared for is the cost of a Disney trip, so this chart shows what you can get at different price points, and the tradeoffs to be made for different budgets.

Other new and updated things in Part 2 include: A new section showing how to save $400 on your trip; updates to how FastPass+ affects your wait in line at specific attractions; and the latest on Disney admission prices, including where to find the best Disney ticket discounts.

Part 3 – Accommodations Includes updated reviews of Disney's Grand Floridian Resort and Villas, the Polynesian Village Resort and Villas, upcoming construction at Disney's Wilderness Lodge and Villas; the B Resort at the Disney Springs Resort Area, and information on the new budget hotels opening at Disney's Flamingo Crossings in 2016. We've also updated the "best rooms to request" and room diagrams for every Disney resort.

This section also includes the new rules for Disney's Dining Plan, spelling out Disney's expanded policy on what counts as a snack.

Part 4 – Dining We moved this section of the book toward the front, because dining is such an important part of planning your Disney vacation. We've got reviews of new restaurants include The Boathouse at Disney Springs and Harambe Market at the Animal Kingdom, plus updates to dozens of restaurant reviews throughout Walt Disney World.

Part 5 –Walt Disney World with Kids includes new recommendations for discount stroller rental companies in Orlando. These companies offer cheaper rates than Disney for long stays, more comfortable strollers, and they'll even drop off and pick up at your resort. We've also got the latest on where to meet the Disney characters at each park, and where to find the best character meals.

Part 7 – Arriving and Getting Around has new reviews of the Uber and Lyft ride-sharing apps for getting around Walt Disney World and Orlando. (Spoiler alert: Uber was about half the cost of a taxi during our test

trips over identical routes.) We've also got updates on bus transportation times between every Disney resort and theme park.

Part 9 – The Magic Kingdom Includes a new chart showing when each Magic Kingdom attraction typically runs out of FastPass+ reservations during the day. This is what you need to know when you're choosing your advance FastPass+ reservations, because it'll show you what the high-demand rides are for you to get 2 months before your visit, and which can wait until you're in the park. We've also got new dining charts, showing the Magic Kingdom's best restaurants for counter-service and sit-down restaurants in each area.

Other new or updated features include: Our favorite new spots for watching the Wishes fireworks, news on Adventureland's new Skipper's Cantina restaurant, and how to navigate around the park's parades. Our Magic Kingdom touring plans include new advice on which attractions make best use of FastPass+, and what time of day you should make those reservations. Finally, we've got all new behind-the-scenes anecdotes from Disney historian Jim Hill.

Part 10 – Epcot As with the Magic Kingdom, the Epcot chapter includes the new day-of FastPass+ availability chart, and new dining chart showing the best restaurants in the park.
We cover the Frozen-themed attractions in Norway that open in 2016: the Frozen Ever After boat ride, and Royal Sommerhaus princess meet-and-greet. The chapter also includes updates on the closure of Innoventions West, tips on visiting The Seas at night, and whether IllumiNations is a good use of FastPass+. Jim Hill has all new anecdotes, too.

Part 11 – Disney's Animal Kingdom includes the new day-of FastPass+ availability chart, and new dining chart showing the best restaurants in the park. We've also got new reviews for the park's expanded Discovery Island Trails, and lots of information on the new nighttime Rivers of Light show that opens in 2016. That show promises to expand afternoon crowds at the park, so we've got new tips on how to avoid traffic in the park, too. There's also a new set of Animal Kingdom stories from Jim Hill.

Part 12 – Disney's Hollywood Studios The big news here, and it's controversial, is that we recommend skipping the Studios on trips of 1 to 3 days. There are so many closed or outdated attractions at the park that it's not worth your hard-earned $80 to $100 of admission. And while Disney should eventually announce formal plans for major Star Wars- and Pixar-themed expansions, it'll take years for those to be finished. In the meantime, we suggest Universal Studios as an alternative.

If you've got more time on your trip, our updated Studios coverage includes the new day-of FastPass+ availability chart, and new dining chart showing the best restaurants in the park. The chapter contains a new review of For the First Time in Forever: A Frozen Sing-a-Long Celebration, plus new insider stories from Jim Hill.

Parts 13 to 15 cover the expansions at Universal Studios Florida, including the new Skull Island: Reign of Kong attraction scheduled to open in 2016, the new, moderately-priced Sapphire Falls resort also opening in 2016. We also cover the new restaurants at Universal CityWalk: NBC Sports Grill & Brew, with an on-site microbrewery, Cowfish sushi and burgers (they're delicious), and more. Finally, we keep you updated on the latest Harry Potter news at Diagon Alley and Hogwarts Castle.

Two more big changes to mention: We've consolidated all of our nightlife and shopping coverage into a single chapter covering Disney Springs and Universal CityWalk. Both Disney and Universal are putting huge amounts of money into ambitious expansion plans for these shopping/dining/entertainment complexes. We've unified our coverage of these into a single chapter, allowing you to see in a single place everything

that’s available in each location.

We’ve also consolidated our coverage of Disney’s recreation, sports, and spa options into a new chapter, so you can see all of the options available to your family in a single place. The chapter includes new sections on runDisney, Disney’s ever-expanding lineup of family-friendly distance races, with coverage on each race and how to get started training. And if talk of running makes your muscles sore, we’ve got a review of the fabulous new Four Seasons Resort Orlando spa.

About the Author
Bob Sehlinger, a Lowell Thomas Award-winning journalist, is best known as the creator and producer of "The Unofficial Guide" series.
He is the founder and co-owner of Keen Communications, a book publishing company that includes Menasha Ridge Press, Clerisy Press, and Wilderness Press. The author of 27 books, Sehlinger is a past president of the Publishers Association of the South, and he has served at the invitation of the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Information Service on educational missions for publishers in Hungary, Romania, and Russia. He lives in Birmingham, AL.
A lifelong Disney theme park fan, Len Testa co-authors "The Unofficial Guides to Walt Disney World, Disneyland," and "Britain s Best Days Out." In grad school, Len s master s thesis described new computer techniques for generating efficient theme park touring plans, for which Len was awarded a U.S. patent. These days, Len leads the team at TouringPlans.com, the website and research arm of The Unofficial Guides. Len has stayed at every Disney hotel, experienced every Disney ride, and eaten at every Disney restaurant and food cart in the U.S. When he s not at a Disney theme park, Len lives in Greensboro, NC.
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Charles Lemaster:

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