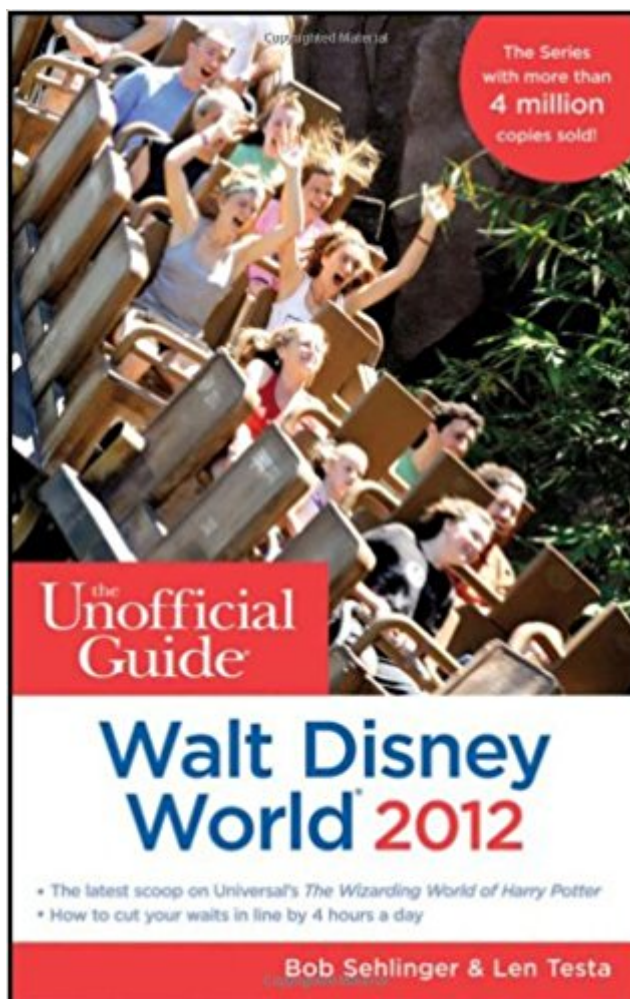


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# The Unofficial Guide Walt Disney World 2012 (Unofficial Guides)



## Synopsis

This best selling and definitive guide to Disney World isÂ bigger and better than ever! Exhaustively researched and packed with insider advice that will save you both time and money! Tried and tested touring plans that save as much as four hours of standing in line in a single day! Tips, advice, and opinions from hundreds of Walt Disney World guests in their own words! Almost 250 hotels rated and ranked for quality and value, including the top non-Disney hotels for families! A complete Dining Guide with ratings and reviews of all Walt Disney World restaurants, plus extensive alternatives for dining deals outside the World! Every attraction rated and ranked for each age group.Â Coverage of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter including best times to beat the crowds, the best places to buy Butterbeer, and the scoop on all the shops in the village of Hogsmeade. Walt Disney World Resort theme parks are rated best in the world. earning high marks for things outside of the traditional theme park experience. Epcot's International Food & Wine Festival, which takes place for six weeks every fall and showcases food from twenty-five countries, was rated by Forbes Traveler as one of the Best U.S. Food and Wine Festivals. In 2011, Disney not only launched its new cruise ship, the Disney Dream, it also announced plans of a complete overhaul of Pleasure Island set to begin construction and reopen as Hyperion Wharf

Q&A with Author Bob Sehlinger      Author Bob Sehlinger

Do you need a car at Walt Disney World? I prefer to have a car. The Disney Transportation System is very efficient, but with the exception of commuting to the Magic Kingdom, driving your own car is usually faster. Plus, having your own car makes it easier to dine outside WDW where restaurants are less expensive. We've documented that the bucks you save eating outside the World will more than pay for the rental car. Also, having a car allows you to visit other area theme parks like Universal Studios, Islands of Adventure and SeaWorld.

Where can you find crowd estimates for the days of your visit? The website for The Unofficial Guide To Walt Disney World is [touringplans.com](http://touringplans.com). For a small subscription fee you can access our Crowd Calendar that is updated daily, and projects crowd levels for all four Disney parks for every day of the year. The calendar also specifies which park will be least crowded for a particular day. We used to publish the Crowd Calendar in the guidebook until it became apparent that to be accurate it required updating every day.

What's the best Disney park to visit on a really crowded day? While there are a couple of exceptions relating to unusual circumstances, Epcot is the go-to park for holidays and other periods of extremely heavy attendance? Epcot is large, spread out, and open with plenty of elbowroom. Additionally, most Epcot attractions are engineered to accommodate more guests per day than attractions in the other parks.

If you have to take your Disney vacation in the summer, is one time less crowded than another? Because most families take a couple weeks to get into their

summer routine after school lets out, and another week or two to prepare for returning to school, late May, early June, and the last two weeks of August are the least crowded. The school year in Florida starts a week or more earlier than in most of the rest of the country. Consequently, comparatively few locals visit the theme parks on weekdays. Do hotels outside Walt Disney World provide free transportation service to the parks? Many do, but the shuttles don't run as often as those serving Disney hotels. What's more, non-Disney shuttles usually do not have the ability to increase carrying capacity during the busiest hours in the morning and at park closing. Though some shuttles serve only one hotel, others provide service to several hotels making for a long and potentially crowded commute.

What is Downtown Disney? Located on the north side of WDW, Downtown Disney is a shopping, recreational, dining, and entertainment complex arrayed around Lake Buena Vista. Divided into three contiguous areas: Disney Marketplace, Hyperion Wharf (formerly the Pleasure Island nightclub complex), and the West Side. While the Marketplace is Disney World's shopping Shangri-La, the West side offers a 24-screen AMC movie theater and is home to Cirque du Soleil's La Nouba. Also on the West Side is DisneyQuest, a sophisticated electronic games arcade frequently referred to as "a theme park in a box." Hyperion Wharf is a venue in the making that may become Hyperbole Wharf, Wishful Wharf, or any of a dozen other things as Disney laboriously ponders its options.

What is the best Disney World restaurant for a quiet romantic meal? Our experience and that of our readers indicate that quiet romantic meals are few and far between at WDW. Children are the rule rather than the exception at WDW's better restaurants, and readers attest to the presence of kids at all hours of the evening. Often, the later the hour, the crankier the children. Pressed to offer a suggestion, however, I would recommend Citricos at the Grand Floridian Hotel and Spa. The food is excellent and the subdued atmosphere tends to attract fewer families than other Disney dining venues.

What's available for adults in the way of nightlife at Walt Disney World? With the former nightspots at Pleasure Island shuttered, what remains is an Irish Pub and the House Of Blues, both offering live music at Downtown Disney. Overt at Disney's Boardwalk there's a dueling piano bar and a dance club. At the Swan Resort, there's Kimonos, a Japanese sushi and tempura restaurant that hosts karaoke after 9 p.m. Rounding out the roster at the Coronado Springs Resort is Rix Lounge, a Vegas-ultra lounge clone that seems to come to life only when there's a big convention at the hotel.

What's the best time of year to go to Walt Disney World? If your children are pre-school age go in the off-season, preferably in November before Thanksgiving or in early to mid-December before Christmas. The crowds are comparatively light, the weather is usually warm and sunny, and the theme parks sparkle in their Christmas regalia. If you have school age kids your best bets for avoiding huge

crowds are early June as soon as school is out or late August just before classes resume. How old should a child be to go Walt Disney World? Just about any age can be rewarding as long as you're practical and realistic. Children three years and younger will respond to the color and festivity and you'll bring home some really sweet pictures of the kids on Dumbo, but they won't remember a lot about their experience. And our research has documented that kids up to age 7 or 8 cite swimming in the hotel pool as their favorite thing on a Walt Disney World vacation. If your objective is to spend most of your time in the theme parks wait until your children at least a mature seven or eight.

What are some considerations concerning selecting a hotel? Selecting a hotel can be tricky with over 220 hotels in the area to choose from. Perks like extra hours in the theme parks, free parking, and use of the Disney transportation system come with staying in a Disney hotel, but comfortable, clean hotels outside the World can be had for a fraction of the price. Kayak.com, a travel search engine will tell you which Internet travel seller has the best price for any hotel you are interested in. After finding the best Internet rate, call the hotel itself (not the national reservation number) to ask about specials. About 25% of the time the hotel will beat the best Internet rate available. Inquire about the age of the hotel and when the guestrooms were last refurbished. Also consider a vacation home rental. These offer exceptional room and amenities at a fraction of what comparable quality in a hotel room would cost. Finally, because Walt Disney World is so large, be aware that some hotels and vacation homes outside of the World are actually closer to the theme parks than several on-site Disney resorts.

How can you save money on food and dining? Disney World restaurants are typically expensive so economizing on meals is much easier if you stay and eat outside Walt Disney World. Free coupon books abound outside of Walt Disney World and can save a considerable sum. Whether you lodge in or out of the World it's a good idea, not to mention a time saver, to buy a cheap cooler and breakfast staples so that you can have breakfast in your hotel room.

What type of admission is best? Depends. Disney theme park admissions start with a Base Ticket or a Starter Pass. Features such as visiting more than one park in a day (park hopping), a no expiration option, and the inclusion of minor theme parks and attractions admission can be added to the Base Ticket on an a la carte basis at additional cost. The objective is to purchase exactly what you need, no more, no less. The Website TouringPlans.com has a nifty free program that will tell you, after answering a few basic questions about your itinerary, what the best admission option is for you.

What's the best way to avoid the long lines? For starters, try to visit during a slower time of year. Secondly, arrive before the park opens, admission in hand. Third, have a plan. The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World offers scientifically derived, field-tested touring plans for each of the theme parks that can save you 4 1/2 hours of standing in line on a day of average to

high attendance! The research behind the touring plans has been the subject of features in the New York Times, the Dallas Morning News, and in numerous academic journals. What are your five most important tips for having a successful Disney vacation? 1. Prepare physically. You'll walk as much as 8-12 miles in a day. Start your family on a walking regimen months in advance to build endurance. 2. Don't overload your agenda. Less is more at Walt Disney World. Better to devour Disney World a bite at a time with plenty of rest and relaxation in between. 3. Resign yourself to not being able to see everything in one visit. 4. Have a plan but don't over plan. It's about having fun, not sticking rigidly to an itinerary. Allow for spontaneity. 5. Anticipate surprises both good and bad. Stay loose, roll with the punches, and maintain a good sense of humor.

## Book Information

Series: Unofficial Guides (Book 283)

Paperback: 864 pages

Publisher: Wiley; 7 edition (September 6, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 111801233X

ISBN-13: 978-1118012338

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 1.7 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 1,112 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #974,529 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #56 in Books > Travel > United States > Florida > Disney World #441 in Books > Travel > Specialty Travel > Theme Parks #1128 in Books > Travel > United States > South > South Atlantic

## Customer Reviews

"A Tourist's Best Friend!" â "Chicago Sun-Times "Indispensable" â "The New York Times Six Great Features and Benefits offered ONLY by The Unofficial Guide: Exclusively patented, field-tested touring plans that save as much as four hours of standing in line in a single day Detailed tips and secrets on Universal's The Wizarding World of Harry Potter from butterbeer to broomsticks More than 200 hotels rated and ranked for quality and value, including the top non-Disney hotels for families A complete Dining Guide with ratings and reviews of all Walt Disney World restaurants, plus extensive alternatives for dining deals outside the World Attractions rated and ranked for each age group; extensive, objective, head-to-head comparisons of the Disney and Universal theme parks The Unofficial series is completely independent. If a restaurant serves lackluster food or an

attraction isn't worth the wait, we'll tell you Check out The Unofficial Guide: The Color Companion to Walt Disney World, filled with 560 full-color photos: It's the perfect companion to this guide. The latest scoop on Universal's The Wizarding World of Harry Potter How to cut your waits in line by 4 hours a day

The Unofficial Guide folks totally get it! I purchased their guide to Disneyland in the past and learned so much amazing info! I actually didn't follow the touring plans and just created my own plan based on their information. It worked like a charm until Disney changed their Fastpass system and took all the fun and efficiency out of my plan. My dad, brother and I planned a trip to DisneyWorld last Christmas and we used this guide to make some of our plans. I also used it to choose restaurants and attractions to visit. I'm certain that the information in this guide saved us time and money. As we were out wandering around the parks, I just kept thinking "if you came here for the first time with zero knowledge of how things work, you'd spend SO much time in line and waste so much time on everything really." There is a ton of info in this book, so much that I didn't have time to read it all before we went, but since we were already familiar with Disney and my dad read a lot of it too, we were good to go! I will definitely buy the new version next time I go...Disney changes things so often that you need the updates! I highly recommend this book to anyone planning a trip to DisneyWorld, especially if you're going for the first time.

You must get this book if you are planning a visit to Disney World. I have used The Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World for each visit over many years, and I have never waited in line for any attraction longer than a half hour even during peak weeks. Follow their touring plans and your vacation will be made of memories of your favorite rides and shows, not how many hours you waited in line. The book is funny and informative and worth the time to read it cover to cover. They didn't pay me to write this, but I did write a review of Mission Space that they published (I'm the Woman from Lisbon, CT). Bob Sehlinger, I'm ready to be your senior on the ground at Disney if you need me!

I wouldn't go to "Disney World" without this book. Having said that, I didn't read all of it until half way through the vacation. It could have easily saved me \$700 plus. The tips on Fast Pass and planning each day were very helpful. Only once during a 9 day stay did we wait in line for more than 30 minutes. Most of the time we waited less than 10 minutes.

excellent source of info for anyone venturing to Orlando and its parks; had a previous issue but this is updated; has real reviews and comments from both the authors and mom & pop people that have been there, stayed in the hotels, gone to the parks and also used info from the book; living in FL and going to Orlando a few times a year, we wouldn't use any other source of information; they rate hotels (including Disney's) on things like quietness, suitability for families/singles/couples, restaurant food/quality, times for transportation to get to the parks vs. the visitor driving themselves, etc. cannot recommend enough.

This was my 5th trip to Disney & using this book as a resource. We love this book. I have shared these guides & recommended it to many people as a great starting point to planning a Disney vacation. The vast amount of information can seem overwhelming, I recommend reading just the chapters you need, as you need them to plan your vacation. There are so many facets to planning a fun, busy Disney vacation & this book really addresses them all. The reviews & information about the attractions are very helpful & informative. Although Walt Disney World is for children, there are attractions & rides that are not for the very young even if they meet the height requirements. This book helps explain the scare factor & appeal to a broad range of ages. Through the years I have used this guide to steer my children on the right attractions at the right ages so now they will ride everything & anything with little or no fear/apprehension. It always saddens me to hear & see kids at Disney who were put on a ride because it was "Disney" only to be freaked out & scream & cry the whole time. For attraction information, I highly recommend this book. The recommended touring plans are invaluable! We have truly spent very little time in line & have enjoyed so many attractions at Disney because we had a TOURING plan. I always enjoy reading the book because it is written in a humorous manner. I used the website & downloaded the corresponding app. With this guide you can access "member-only" aspects to the website & app. They are worth the price of the book! The app was fabulous! It really helped us adjust our touring plan on the fly. I will be using this book as a beginning point to plan our Universal Studios vacation for Fall 2014 & updating my subscription to the app too.

Cuts your wait times by 45 minutes to an hour. Fun to plan your trip and read the hilarious descriptions of rides and the crazy people who do crazy things to ride them.

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