A WALT DISNEY WORLD DOSSIER

The Hollis Family Disney *Playbook*

Seven nights, planned to the minute

For **Marcus, Dana, Ellie and Theo** **Disney's Grand Floridian**

March **14 to 21, 2026**

VOLUME I · DAYS 1 TO 3

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DISNEY'S GRAND FLORIDIAN RESORT AND MAGIC KINGDOM

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Three ways to do each meal

76 pages

this volume alone (Days 1 to 3), 105 timed stops and 14 meals with three options each. That is the real printed length of the PDF on this page, measured, not estimated.

DAY 1 • SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2026 • DISNEY'S GRAND FLORIDIAN RESORT AND MAGIC KINGDOM

Wheels down, castle in view: an easy first night

Day one is designed to be easy, not intense. Instead of jumping straight into a full rope-drop day, the plan gives everyone time to land and recover from travel. You'll spend the afternoon at the resort and pool so Theo can rest and Ellie can burn off energy on the slide. Then you'll head to Magic Kingdom for a short, low-key evening: dinner at 6:00 inside the Beast's castle, three easy walk-on rides, and Happily Ever After from the hub before heading back. Nothing is rushed on purpose: the goal is a calm, magical first night.

PARK HOURS

Magic Kingdom is open approximately 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM (estimate for mid-March; the Hollis family only enters in the evening). Confirm exact hours in the My Disney Experience app.

WEATHER

Warm and mostly sunny, high near 80F, cooling to the low 60s after sunset, with a low chance of a brief afternoon shower. Pack a light layer for the evening fireworks and a poncho just in case.

SUNSET

Approximately 7:35 PM (daylight saving time began March 8, so the evenings are lighter and later).

FIREWORKS

Happily Ever After, approximately 9:00 PM. Spring post-DST showtimes sometimes run 9:30 PM, so confirm the exact time in the My Disney Experience app the morning of and shift the hub arrival accordingly.

DAY ESTIMATE

Estimate only: roughly $1,900 to $2,300 all-in for the family of four this day. One Grand Floridian night is about $850 to $1,050, ground transport about $70 to $120, quick-service and table-service food about $400 to $500, and four one-day park tickets about $520 to $640 (a multi-day ticket lowers the per-day cost). Verify live prices before booking.

The plan for today

- Treat this as an easy arrival day. Spend it at the resort and keep the evening low-key; save rope drop and the full Lightning Lane playbook for the days ahead.
- Do online check-in before you land. The room-ready text lets you skip the front desk entirely, drop bags with Bell Services, and go straight to lunch and the pool.
- Book Be Our Guest at the 60-day mark for a 6:00 PM slot. It is a French prix fixe now (about $72 adults, $43 kids 3 to 9) and a 6:00 seat finishes comfortably before the 9:00 fireworks.
- Tonight's rides are all no-height-requirement, no-paid-Lightning-Lane classics: it's a small world, Haunted Mansion, and the PeopleMover. Skip buying any Lightning Lanes tonight and keep Multi Pass powder dry for a full park day.
- Claim a hub fireworks spot by 8:45. After the show, skip the post-fireworks monorail crush: the lit Grand Floridian walking path or the resort boat is usually faster than the long Resort-line loop.
- Marcus hates lines, Theo is a slow riser, and Ellie is already asking about the big coasters, so cap the first night at three gentle walk-on classics as a warm-up and save the real touring, with Lightning Lane and the thrill rides, for later in the week.

In the day bag

- Refillable water bottles for everyone
- Sunscreen for the pool afternoon plus one reapply
- Light layers or thin jackets for the low-60s fireworks evening
- Ponchos for the low afternoon-shower chance
- Portable charger and cables
- MagicBands paired and charged, plus the My Disney Experience app logged in
- Swimsuits and pool shoes
- Snacks for Theo (granola bars, pretzels)
- Sunglasses and hats
- A small first-aid kit and any family medications
- Be Our Guest reservation confirmation and ground-transport confirmation

Breakfast 6:30 AM (travel morning)

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

O'Hare pre-flight grab-and-go

Chicago O'Hare, near your departure gate • Coffee and bakery • $

An early flight means eating light and fast before boarding so no one is starving at cruising altitude.

ORDER Coffee and a croissant or bagel, Oatmeal cup, Fruit and yogurt parfait

None, walk-up only

At your departure gate

In-flight breakfast box

On the plane • Snack boxes • $

Keeps the kids busy and fed on the roughly 2.5-hour flight so they arrive happy instead of hangry.

ORDER A protein snack box, A fruit and cheese plate, Juice or water

Buy onboard or pre-order with your airline

Your seat

Quick bite at MCO

Orlando MCO main terminal food court, Level 3 • American grab-and-go • $

If breakfast was too early, a small bite steadies everyone before the motorcoach; save real hunger for the resort lunch.

ORDER Breakfast sandwich, Fresh fruit, Bottled smoothie

None

Main terminal Level 3, near Ground Transportation

11:15 AM to 11:30 AM

Final descent into Orlando (MCO) TRANSIT

Trays up, devices and headphones gathered, and one last plane-restroom stop for the kids before landing, because MCO gates can be a long walk from the terminal. Left-side window seats often catch the first flat green sprawl of central Florida. Landing is targeted around 11:30 AM.

- Use the aircraft restroom before landing to avoid the gate crush
- Water refill stations are near the airside shuttle boarding, not at the gates
- Nearest MCO restrooms sit just off each airside gate cluster

11:35 AM to 11:50 AM

Deplane and ride the airside shuttle TRANSIT

MCO's gates sit on remote airsides, so everyone rides an automated shuttle to the main terminal before any bags appear. Let Theo push the button or lead the way so the slow riser feels in charge from minute one. Keep the family together on the packed little train.

Automated airside shuttle (people mover) — About 4 minutes

11:40 AM ○ Board, Your airside gate shuttle station

11:45 AM ● Arrive, MCO main terminal, Level 3

Or: There is no alternative from the remote airsides; the shuttle is the only connection, so just aim for the next train.

- Restrooms are at the airside shuttle station before you board
- If you want a rental stroller, arrange it after baggage, not here
- Water refill is near the shuttle boarding area

11:50 AM to 12:00 PM

Baggage claim on Level 2 LOGISTICS

Take the escalators down to Level 2 for baggage claim. If you checked bags, grab them at the carousel; carry-on-only families can head straight for ground transportation. A good moment to open the app and confirm online check-in shows complete so no front desk stop is needed later.

- Restrooms and a companion/Baby Care restroom are on Level 2
- Charging benches by the carousels let you top phones before the ride to the resort
- Water fountains sit near the baggage carousels

12:00 PM to 12:15 PM

Ground transport decision on Level 1 LOGISTICS

The day's big logistics choice, all from Level 1 Ground Transportation on the Terminal B side. Sunshine Flyer and Mears Connect are shared motorcoaches at similar prices (roughly $17 to $20 per adult one way, kids less), comfortable but they may stop at a resort or two, so budget 45 to 60 minutes. A rideshare from the Level 1 pickup is direct, about 25 to 35 minutes, roughly $45 to $65 for the four of you. A rental car via the Car Care Center is about 35 minutes but adds Grand Floridian self-parking and a counter stop. For a first trip with a splurge resort, the motorcoach or a rideshare keeps it simple.

- Restrooms are at the Level 1 Ground Transportation hall
- A rideshare is easiest since Theo (7) is past a car seat, though rideshares do not supply boosters
- Water fountains sit by the transport desks

12:15 PM to 1:15 PM

Board the Sunshine Flyer to Grand Floridian TRANSIT

The Sunshine Flyer leans into a vintage-railroad theme, with conductors and porters that delight kids and make the first leg feel like part of the trip. It may make a stop at another resort before Grand Floridian, so plan on 45 to 60 minutes door to door. The coach AC runs cold, so a light layer helps.

Sunshine Flyer motorcoach — About 45 to 60 minutes

12:15 PM ○ Board, MCO Level 1 Ground Transportation, Terminal B side

1:15 PM ● Arrive, Grand Floridian bus loop and Bell Services

Or: A rideshare from the Level 1 pickup is direct at about 25 to 35 minutes (arriving near 12:50, roughly $45 to $65); a rental car via the Car Care Center is about 35 minutes but adds resort parking; Mears Connect is the same shared-coach idea at a similar fare.

- Use the restroom before boarding; most coaches run nonstop with no stop of their own
- Charge phones on the coach if it offers USB ports
- Keep a water bottle handy and a light layer for the cold AC

1:15 PM to 1:30 PM

Arrive Grand Floridian: Bell Services and bag drop LOGISTICS

You roll up under the grand Victorian porte-cochere. Hand luggage to Bell Services and take the claim ticket so you are hands-free while the room finishes. Thanks to online check-in, you do not need the front desk at all unless something needs fixing; the room-ready text does the work.

- Lobby restrooms are off the ground floor of the main building near the elevators
- Resorts do not rent strollers, so use Bell Services luggage carts; charging outlets are in the lobby seating
- Refill water at Gasparilla Island Grill by the pool

Lunch 1:30 PM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Gasparilla Island Grill

Disney's Grand Floridian, poolside • American quick service • $$

The fastest, most casual option, steps from the pool, so you can eat and swim; mobile order in the app skips the line entirely.

ORDER The Grand Floridian burger, A flatbread, Chicken tenders for the kids

None; mobile order in the app

Ground floor near the Beach Pool, about 2 minutes from Bell Services

Grand Floridian Cafe

Disney's Grand Floridian, main building • American table service • $$$

A calmer sit-down to start the splurge gently, with real plates and cool air after a long travel morning.

ORDER The Grand sandwich, Shrimp and grits, A burger for the kids

Recommended via My Disney Experience

Ground floor of the main building, about 3 minutes from the lobby

Capt. Cook's at the Polynesian

Disney's Polynesian Village Resort • Hawaiian-American quick service • $$

A fun one-stop monorail hop to kick off the trip with island flavors, and a mini-adventure for the kids before the pool.

ORDER The Aloha Pork Bowl, Pulled pork nachos, Spam musubi

None; mobile order in the app

One Resort monorail stop from Grand Floridian, about 10 minutes door to door

1:30 PM to 2:15 PM

Relaxing lunch at the resort MEAL

Everyone is hungry and travel-frayed, so eat before the pool. Gasparilla Island Grill is quick counter service steps from the water, and mobile order in the app skips the line. If you want to ease into the splurge, the Grand Floridian Cafe is a calmer sit-down. See the three lunch options below.

- Gasparilla supports mobile order in the app to skip the queue
- Refill water bottles at the drink fountains before heading to swim
- Restrooms are adjacent to the pool dining area

2:15 PM to 2:30 PM

Resort orientation and the castle beach PHOTO

Walk the grounds so the resort stops feeling like a lobby: the monorail glides right through the Grand Floridian's great hall, and the white-sand beach on Seven Seas Lagoon looks straight across at Cinderella Castle. This is the first family castle photo of the trip, in daylight, before anyone is tired.

- Nearest restroom is off the pool and beach area
- Reapply sunscreen here before the pool
- No swimming at the beach, but it is the best photo spot on property
- Best photo: the family on the sand with the castle across the lagoon, and again on the monorail platform

2:30 PM
to 3:30 PM

Pool time so Theo can play REST

Head to the Beach Pool, the larger family pool with a slide, or the quieter Courtyard Pool if the kids want calm. This is the day's real breather for the seven-year-old slow riser, and it lets fearless Ellie burn energy on the slide. Reapply sunscreen first; the March sun is strong even at 80F.

- Pool restrooms and changing rooms are poolside
- Refill water bottles at the pool bar
- Towels are provided at the pool
- Free life vests are available poolside, and lifeguards are on duty

Snack 3:30 PM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Gasparilla Island Grill ice cream

Grand Floridian, poolside • Ice cream and snacks • $

Cools the kids down right after the pool without ever leaving the deck.

ORDER Soft-serve or a hand-scooped cone, A soft pretzel, A fresh fruit cup

None

Poolside, steps from the water

Grab-and-go pastries at Gasparilla

Grand Floridian • Bakery grab-and-go • $

A quiet sweet and coffee for the parents while the kids wind down by the pool.

ORDER A chocolate croissant, A cookie, Iced coffee

None

Ground floor, about 1 minute from the lobby seating

In-room snacks you packed

Your Grand Floridian room • Packed snacks • $

The cheapest, calmest choice; a familiar snack helps Theo reset during his afternoon breather.

ORDER Granola bars, Pretzels, Fruit from the resort market

None

Your room

3:30 PM
to 4:00 PM

An afternoon snack by the pool SNACK

Dry off and grab an afternoon snack poolside to bridge to the 6:00 dinner, an easy bit of downtime before the evening. See the three snack options below.

- Gasparilla has ice cream and grab-and-go by the pool
- This is a good charging window back in the lobby or the room
- Restrooms are nearby at the pool complex

4:00 PM to 4:30 PM

Room-ready text: settle and charge LOGISTICS

The room-ready text typically lands early-to-mid afternoon. Collect bags from Bell Services or let them deliver, find the room, and plug in every phone and the portable charger. Lay out light evening layers now so the pre-dinner scramble is calm.

- In-room outlets and USB ports for a full charge before the park
- Refill water bottles at the room or Gasparilla
- Lay out thin jackets for the low-60s fireworks evening
- Confirm MagicBands are charged and paired in the app

4:30 PM to 5:00 PM

Theo's afternoon breather REST

A real 30-minute down-shift before the park: shoes off, feet up, maybe cartoons. A rested seven-year-old at a 6:00 dinner is the difference between magic and a meltdown, and this is exactly the breather Theo needs after a heavy travel morning.

- Everyone takes a bathroom break before leaving the room
- Pack the day-bag now: water, ponchos, charger, snacks, layers
- No sunscreen needed for the evening

5:00 PM to 5:15 PM

Head down to the monorail platform TRANSIT

Take the elevator to the second-floor monorail platform inside the main building. You want the Resort line toward Magic Kingdom, which is the very next stop from Grand Floridian. Riding up front in the cab with the pilot is no longer offered, but the front car's big window still makes the short hop fun, so wave the kids toward the first car as it pulls in.

The Walt Disney World monorail

- The platform restroom is back on the ground floor, so go before you go up
- Fold any stroller for the monorail
- Aim for the front car's front window for the best castle approach

5:15 PM
to 5:28 PM

Resort monorail to Magic Kingdom TRANSIT

Grand Floridian to the Magic Kingdom station is a single, quick hop on the Resort line.

Resort monorail — About 10 to 13 minutes with the wait

5:15 PM ○ Board, Grand Floridian second-floor monorail platform

5:28 PM ● Arrive, Magic Kingdom monorail station

Or: The resort boat launch from the Grand Floridian dock reaches Magic Kingdom in about 10 to 12 minutes and is more scenic; the dedicated Grand Floridian walking path to Magic Kingdom is about a 10-minute stroll.

- Restrooms are at the monorail station and again just inside the park
- Tap MagicBands at the entrance tap points

5:30 PM
to 5:35 PM

Tap in and security at Magic Kingdom LOGISTICS

For the Resort monorail, security and bag check happen before you board, so from the station you walk almost straight to the tap points. Tap each MagicBand and grab the family entry photo at the floral Mickey. Take a breath; you made it.

- First Aid and the Baby Care Center are up Main Street next to Casey's Corner and the Crystal Palace
- Restrooms are just inside on the right beneath the train station
- City Hall on the left handles any ticket or MagicBand issue

5:35 PM
to 5:50 PM

Main Street USA in the late-afternoon light PHOTO

Slow down for the reveal: the train-station tunnel opens onto Main Street with the castle at the far end, and the light is warming toward golden hour. Do not rush the kids past this. Let them take in the horse-drawn trolley, the music, and the smell of the confectionery.

Main Street U.S.A. toward Cinderella Castle

- Restrooms are behind the Emporium and near City Hall
- Best photo: the castle straight down Main Street, and the trolley if it is running
- Refill stations are near Casey's Corner

5:50 PM
to 5:58 PM

Walk to Fantasyland for dinner TRANSIT

Stroll up Main Street, then either through the castle breezeway or around the hub to the right into Fantasyland. Be Our Guest sits at the far north edge, past the castle. The through-the-castle route is the most scenic first pass.

Walking — About 8 minutes

5:50 PM ○ Board, Main Street hub

5:58 PM ● Arrive, Be Our Guest Restaurant, Fantasyland

Or: Cutting through the castle breezeway is the most direct and scenic; going around the right side past the Plaza avoids the thickest castle-photo crowds.

- Restrooms in Fantasyland are near Pinocchio Village Haus
- Best photo: the castle up close as you pass beneath the archway
- Refill near Pinocchio Village Haus

Dinner 6:00 PM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Be Our Guest (the plan)

Fantasyland, Magic Kingdom • French prix fixe table service • $$$

The headline dinner inside the Beast's castle, and a 6:00 seat finishes in time to claim a fireworks spot.

ORDER French onion soup, Steak frites, The Grey Stuff dessert

Book at the 60-day mark; a 6:00 PM slot is prized and disappears fast

About 8 minutes from the Magic Kingdom entrance, through the castle into Fantasyland

The Plaza Restaurant

Main Street USA, Magic Kingdom • American table service • $$

An easier reservation and a kid-pleasing menu right on the hub, so you finish steps from your fireworks spot.

ORDER The Angus cheeseburger, A club sandwich, Hand-dipped milkshakes

Easier to get than Be Our Guest, but still book ahead

Right on the Main Street hub, about 1 minute to fireworks viewing

Liberty Tree Tavern

Liberty Square, Magic Kingdom • American colonial family feast • $$$

A hearty all-you-care-to-enjoy Thanksgiving-style dinner right by the Haunted Mansion, great for very hungry kids.

ORDER Roast turkey, Pot roast, The Ooey Gooey Toffee Cake

Book ahead; served family style

About 5 minutes from the hub into Liberty Square, next to Haunted Mansion

6:00 PM
to 7:15 PM

Be Our Guest dinner in the Beast's castle MEAL

A 6:00 seating means you finish comfortably before the fireworks. It is a French prix fixe now, about $72 adults and $43 kids ages 3 to 9, each picking an appetizer, entree, and dessert. Ask to see all three rooms: the grand Ballroom under snow-lit windows, the moody West Wing with the enchanted rose, and the Rose Gallery. See the three dinner options below.

Be Our Guest, in the Beast's castle

- Restrooms are inside the restaurant, to the left of the entrance
- High chairs and a kids menu are available
- This is the calmest air-conditioned break of the evening
- Best photo: the Beast's portrait in the West Wing and the falling snow outside the Ballroom windows

Plan B. If the kids are fading, ask for the check early and box dessert; The Grey Stuff travels fine and can be the walking treat on the way to the first ride.

7:15 PM
to 7:20 PM

Regroup outside Be Our Guest BREAK

Quick reset in Fantasyland: bathroom, water top-up, and a plan. You have three easy classics ahead and about 90 minutes before you want to plant at the hub, so there is no need to hurry.

- Restrooms near Pinocchio Village Haus are 90 seconds south
- Refill water there
- Best photo: the Fantasyland spires going blue at dusk

7:20 PM
to 7:40 PM

it's a small world RIDE

A gentle, air-conditioned boat ride and the perfect first Magic Kingdom attraction for a tired seven-year-old, with no height requirement so the whole family rides together. Evening waits are usually short, often close to a walk-on. The gold-and-white clock facade is beautiful lit up at night.

it's a small world, Fantasyland

- Closest restroom is by Pinocchio Village Haus, just south
- Rider swap is not needed since there is no height limit and everyone rides
- Stroller parking is to the left of the entrance
- Nearest refill is the Pinocchio Village Haus drink counter
- Lightning Lane: it is on Multi Pass, but skip paying tonight since standby is short
- Best photo: the illuminated clock facade before you board

→ **Next.** Right after this, Peter Pan's Flight is 60 seconds away but usually posts a long standby, so skip it tonight and save it for a Multi Pass day.

Plan B. If small world somehow posts over 20 minutes, walk 2 minutes and do the PeopleMover first, then loop back.

7:45 PM
to 7:50 PM

Walk to Liberty Square TRANSIT

Exit small world and bear west into Liberty Square toward the Haunted Mansion, a short, flat walk along the waterfront. The Rivers of America and a docked Liberty Belle riverboat make it scenic in the fading light.

Walking About 5 minutes

7:45 PM ○ Board, it's a small world exit

7:50 PM ● Arrive, Haunted Mansion, Liberty Square

Or: You can cut through the Fantasyland side past Columbia Harbour House for a similar time, with restrooms and refills on the way.

Restrooms and refills are at Columbia Harbour House on the way

Best photo: the riverfront and the Liberty Belle riverboat if it is docked

7:50 PM
to 8:10 PM

Haunted Mansion RIDE

A slow-moving Doom Buggy dark ride, spooky but more silly than scary, with no height requirement so the whole family rides together. Fearless Ellie will rate the stretching room and the graveyard finale the best part of the night, while a sensitive seven-year-old like Theo may want a hand to hold, but it stays gentle throughout. Evening is a wonderful time for it.

The Haunted Mansion, Liberty Square

- Closest restroom is Columbia Harbour House between Liberty Square and Fantasyland
- Nearest refill is Columbia Harbour House
- Rider swap is not needed as there is no height limit
- Lightning Lane: on Multi Pass, but the evening standby is manageable so skip paying tonight
- Stroller parking is to the right of the entrance
- Best photo: the manor facade lit at night and the invisible-horse hearse out front

→ **Next.** The interactive queue tombstones are worth arriving a few minutes early to touch and play with while you wait.

Plan B. If Theo gets nervous, the stretching room is the only enclosed part; reassure him it stays a slow, gentle ride the whole way, and there is a chicken exit before boarding if he wants out.

8:10 PM
to 8:20 PM

Walk to Tomorrowland TRANSIT

Cross back past the castle hub toward Tomorrowland for one last easy ride. It is the longest of tonight's walks but flat and full of things to look at, with the sky going purple over the castle.

Walking

About 10 minutes

8:10 PM ○ Board, Haunted Mansion exit

8:20 PM ● Arrive, Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover

Or: If the kids are done, stop at the hub now and skip Tomorrowland, claiming your fireworks spot about 25 minutes early instead.

- Restrooms are near Cosmic Ray's Starlight Cafe and behind Auntie Gravity's in Tomorrowland
- Refill at Auntie Gravity's Galactic Goodies
- Best photo: the castle from the hub with the sky turning purple

8:20 PM
to 8:35 PM

Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover RIDE

The ideal nightcap ride: a breezy, elevated, no-height-limit cruise around Tomorrowland that even dips inside Space Mountain. Star Wars fan Theo will love the sci-fi hum, and Marcus will love that there is essentially never a line. It is one of the most relaxing rides in the park.

The Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover

- Closest restroom is behind Auntie Gravity's, just steps away
- Nearest refill is Auntie Gravity's Galactic Goodies
- Rider swap is not needed with no height requirement
- This ride is not on Lightning Lane and rarely has a wait
- Stroller parking is at the base of the entrance ramp
- Best photo: the elevated night view over Tomorrowland and the peek inside Space Mountain

→ **Next.** Right beside it, the Astro Orbiter and Buzz Lightyear are options if the kids still have energy, but the plan is to head for fireworks now.

8:35 PM
to 8:45 PM

Restroom, snack, and move to the hub BREAK

Last pit stop before staking out fireworks: bathrooms, a shared popcorn or churro, and jackets on now that the evening is dropping into the low 60s. Head for the Main Street hub before the wall of people forms.

- Tomorrowland restrooms are near Cosmic Ray's
- Grab popcorn or a churro from a Tomorrowland cart
- Put light jackets on now for the cooling evening
- First Aid is on Main Street by Casey's Corner if anyone needs it

8:45 PM
to 9:00 PM

Claim a hub fireworks spot LOGISTICS

The central hub in front of the castle is prime real estate. Aim slightly right of center, facing the castle, for the best mix of castle projections and high shells. Sit the kids down, keep water handy, and enjoy the pre-show music. Arriving by 8:45 for a 9:00 show gives you room without an exhausting wait.

- Closest restrooms are near the Plaza Restaurant and Tomorrowland Terrace on the hub's east side
- Refill near Casey's Corner
- Best photo: the castle center-frame with headroom for the bursts above
- Keep the stroller at the hub edge and out of the walkways cast members clear

Plan B. Spring post-DST showtimes sometimes shift to 9:30 PM, so confirm the exact time in the app that morning and adjust your 8:45 arrival. If the hub is packed, the far end of Main Street near the flagpole still catches the high shells.

9:00 PM
to 9:20 PM

Happily Ever After SHOW

About 18 minutes of castle projections, lasers, and fireworks set to Disney themes, and a perfect first-night finale for a family on its first trip. Ellie will be wide-eyed at the high shells while Theo may want his ears covered; hold the kids close, the finale is loud and bright. This is the memory the whole week is built around.

Happily Ever After over Cinderella Castle

- Stay seated through the finale to protect your sightline
- Cover Theo's ears for the biggest booms if they bother him
- Best photo: put the phone down for the first minute and just watch with the kids, then shoot the finale

9:20 PM
to 9:35 PM

Let the first wave clear BREAK

The instant the show ends, tens of thousands move toward the exits at once. Wait 10 to 15 minutes, let the kids finish the popcorn, and browse a Main Street shop window rather than joining the crush with tired legs.

- Restrooms near City Hall and the Emporium before you leave
- The Emporium stays open after fireworks and lets you drift toward the exit under cover
- Refill water for the ride home
- Best photo: the castle still lit as the crowd thins

9:35 PM
to 9:58 PM

Exit and ride home to the Grand Floridian TRANSIT

With tired kids, the monorail is the classic ride home, but know the Resort line reaches Grand Floridian the long way around, past the Contemporary, the TTC, and the Polynesian. After fireworks, the boat or the walking path is often faster than the loop.

Resort monorail About 15 to 18 minutes (the Resort loop reaches Grand Floridian after the Contemporary, the TTC, and the Polynesian)

9:40 PM ○ Board, Magic Kingdom monorail platform

9:58 PM ● Arrive, Grand Floridian monorail platform

Or: The lit Grand Floridian walking path is about a 10 to 12 minute stroll and skips the post-fireworks monorail crush entirely; the resort boat from the Magic Kingdom dock is scenic and often quicker than the long loop.

- Last restrooms are just outside the tap points
- Carry a sleepy Theo or use the stroller
- Keep MagicBands accessible for the ride
- Best photo: the castle glowing behind you as you leave

Plan B. If the monorail queue is enormous, just walk; the path is flat, well-lit, and faster than the line at its worst.

9:58 PM
to 10:15 PM

Home to the Grand Floridian, lights out REST

Back to the Victorian glow of the resort: a quick wash-up, water by the beds, and everyone down. Set no alarm. Tomorrow can start slow after a big travel day, and day one has landed exactly as intended, gentle, magical, and unhurried.

- Refill water bottles for the room
- Plug in every phone and the portable charger overnight
- Lay out tomorrow's pool or park clothes
- The Grand Floridian Cafe opens early if anyone wakes up hungry

DAY 2 • SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2026 • MAGIC KINGDOM

Rope drop to fireworks, the whole Magic Kingdom in a day

This is the day the whole trip is built around: a full rope-drop-to-fireworks Magic Kingdom marathon, engineered so Marcus never stands in a line longer than about 25 minutes. The skeleton is simple: Early Entry knocks out Fantasyland's headliners before the park officially opens, pre-booked Lightning Lanes carry the family west through Liberty Square, Frontierland, and Adventureland before lunch, a real pool break at the Grand Floridian resets Theo in the afternoon heat, and the family returns rested for dinner, Tomorrowland, and Happily Ever After. Every move between lands has a route, every ride exit has a restroom and a water fountain, and every big coaster has a rider-switch plan for Theo.

PARK HOURS

Estimated for mid-March: Early Theme Park Entry 8:30 AM (Disney resort guests only), official open 9:00 AM, close 10:00 PM. These are typical mid-March hours, not published ones: confirm the exact times in the My Disney Experience app the week of the trip, since Disney adjusts hours 1 to 2 weeks out.

WEATHER

Estimate for mid-March Orlando: mostly sunny, high near 80F, overnight low near 61F, humidity moderate, about a 20 percent chance of a brief afternoon shower between 2 and 5 PM. Sun is strong by 10 AM even when the air feels mild.

SUNSET

About 7:30 PM (estimate; DST began March 8, 2026)

FIREWORKS

Happily Ever After, estimated 9:00 PM showtime for mid-March (showtimes move with sunset and park hours; confirm in the My Disney Experience app the morning of the day)

DAY ESTIMATE

Rough estimate for the day, excluding park tickets and the hotel: about 550 to 750 dollars for the family of four. Breakdown (all estimates): Lightning Lane Multi Pass roughly 100 to 160 total depending on the day's pricing; breakfast 35 to 50; lunch 55 to 90; snacks 25 to 40; Liberty Tree Tavern dinner 150 to 180 with tip; souvenirs 75 to 150; optional TRON Single Pass for two, 40 to 60, if you choose to buy it. Presented as a planning estimate, not quoted prices.

The plan for today

- Everything is pre-booked. As an on-site resort guest you set all your Lightning Lanes a week out in one sitting: today's three Multi Pass windows (Big Thunder Mountain 10:00 to 11:00, Tiana's Bayou Adventure 11:00 to 12:00, Jungle Cruise 12:00 to 1:00) and, because TRON Lightcycle / Run has no free virtual queue anymore, the Individual Lightning Lane (Single Pass) for the two thrill riders, Marcus and Ellie, with an evening return. This morning one parent just opens My Disney Experience to confirm the windows are showing, there is no 7:00 AM scramble. A rope-drop or late-evening standby when the posted wait dips is the free fallback if you would rather not pay for TRON.
- Do NOT buy the Seven Dwarfs Mine Train Single Pass. Early Entry at 8:30 with a 7:50 departure from the resort gets the family on it standby for a shorter wait than most of the day will see. That is the whole reason to be at the tap points by 8:05.
- Rebooking cadence for Marcus: the moment each Lightning Lane is tapped, book the next one. After Big Thunder, book Space Mountain for the 7:00 to 8:00 PM window. After Tiana's, book Buzz Lightyear or Winnie the Pooh for the evening. Never leave a slot idle.
- Heat and stamina plan: sunscreen before leaving the room, reapply at 9:40 and 2:30, water at every quick-service counter (any register hands out free ice water), and a hard-committed pool-and-nap break at the Grand Floridian from about 4:10 to 5:25. Theo is a slow riser and this break is what makes the fireworks possible for him.
- Rider switch (Disney calls it Rider Switch) is the Theo plan on anything 44 inches or taller: the waiting parent gets a return pass and rides after with up to one guest, which means Ellie legally rides Space Mountain and TRON twice. Measure Theo at the ride entrance, not at home: cast members measure with shoes on.

In the day bag

- Four refillable water bottles, filled at the room
- Sunscreen (full bottle morning, stick format for the 9:40 and 2:30 reapplications)
- Portable battery pack, 10,000 mAh or better, plus one cable per phone platform
- Two lightweight ponchos (20 percent afternoon shower chance, and Tiana's splash insurance)
- Hats and sunglasses for all four
- Bag snacks: bananas, granola bars, the pastry bought at breakfast
- Theo's small Star Wars figure for queue entertainment
- Zip-top bag to protect phones on Tiana's Bayou Adventure
- Fresh socks in the bag OR staged in the room for the 5:15 PM change
- Band-aids and moleskin, first big walking day; first aid is beside The Crystal Palace if anything bigger comes up

- Contingency posture: if any standby posts more than about 10 minutes over the plan, skip it and slot the listed fallback. The evening block from 7:30 to 8:30 is deliberately flexible so a TRON standby run, or a purchased Single Pass return, can land there.

6:45 AM
to 7:00 AM

Wake up, dress, room prep LOGISTICS

Alarms at 6:45 for the adults and Ellie; let Theo sleep until 6:55, he is the slow riser and today is his longest day of the trip. Lay out park clothes the night before so the morning is zero-decision. Marcus starts the in-room coffee maker and fills all four water bottles from the tap over ice from the hallway machine.

- Charge check: both phones and the portable battery should be at 100 percent, today burns 60 to 80 percent of a phone by dinner
- Swimsuits stay in the room, you will be back at 4:10 for the pool break, no need to carry them
- Wear the broken-in shoes, not the new ones: today is an 8 to 10 mile day (estimate)

Plan B. If Theo simply will not wake, one parent takes Ellie on schedule and the other follows 30 minutes later; the Early Entry plan still works for two.

7:00 AM
to 7:08 AM

Lightning Lane check and the TRON plan LOGISTICS

Over coffee, one parent opens My Disney Experience to confirm everything you booked a week ago is in place: the three Multi Pass windows (Big Thunder 10 to 11, Tiana's 11 to 12, Jungle Cruise 12 to 1) and the TRON Individual Lightning Lane (Single Pass) evening return for the two thrill riders. As an on-site resort guest you set all of this seven days out, so there is nothing to race for this morning, just a quick check that the windows are showing. TRON has no free virtual queue anymore, so that pre-bought Single Pass is the plan; a rope-drop or late-evening standby is the free fallback if you chose to skip it.

- No 7:00 AM scramble: on-site guests book Lightning Lanes, Multi Pass and Single Pass alike, up to seven days ahead
- The TRON Single Pass ran roughly 20 to 30 dollars per person as an estimate; you bought it for just Marcus and Ellie, with an evening return window
- Screenshot your Lightning Lane return times so you are not digging through the app in line all day

Plan B. If you skipped the paid Single Pass and the standby never dips, TRON drops off the day and the PeopleMover plus Astro Orbiter fill the evening slot.

Breakfast 7:10 AM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Gasparilla Island Grill

Grand Floridian, ground floor near the marina • American quick service • $ (roughly 8 to 14 dollars per person, estimate)

The rope-drop-correct choice: 25 minutes door to door, mobile order from the room, and it puts the family 2 minutes from the walking path at 7:50. Speed today is worth more than any buffet.

ORDER Mickey waffles with fresh fruit, Croissant breakfast sandwich with egg and cheese, Oatmeal with bananas and brown sugar

None needed; mobile order in the app at 7:05 to skip the register

2 to 4 minutes from the room, inside the resort

In-room grab-and-go

Your Grand Floridian room • Continental, self-assembled • $ (whatever the pre-bought supplies cost)

The absolute fastest option and it buys Theo 15 more minutes of sleep: pastries and fruit bought at Gasparilla the night before, in-room coffee, bananas in the day bag. Choose this if the 6:45 wake goes badly.

ORDER Bagels with cream cheese from Gasparilla's grab-and-go case, Whole fruit and yogurt cups, In-room coffee for the adults

None; buy the supplies the evening before

Zero, it is the room

1900 Park Fare character breakfast

Grand Floridian, second floor of the main building • American buffet with Disney characters • $$$ (roughly 45 dollars adult, 29 child, estimate)

The trade-off option, chosen only with eyes open: a full character buffet inside your own hotel is magical, but a seated breakfast means surrendering Early Entry and hitting Fantasyland an hour late. Better saved for a non-rope-drop morning later in the week; listed so the choice is deliberate.

ORDER Mickey waffles from the buffet line, Made-to-order omelets, Pastry and fruit spread; check the current character lineup in the app

Book at your 60-day window; earliest seating only if you choose this, and accept the later park arrival

1 to 3 minutes, inside the resort

7:10 AM
to 7:40 AM

Breakfast at Gasparilla Island Grill MEAL

Quick-service breakfast downstairs at Gasparilla Island Grill, the Grand Floridian's 24-hour counter near the marina. Mobile order at 7:05 while walking down so the food is ready on arrival. Mickey waffles for the kids is the trip's first real Disney moment; eat efficiently, the family needs to be walking out the resort's front path by 7:50.

- Mobile order through the app skips the register line entirely
- Grab two extra bananas and a pastry for the day bag, mid-morning fuel before the 10:35 coaster block
- Refill all water bottles at the drink station on the way out
- Restrooms are just off the Gasparilla seating area, easier than going back up to the room

→ **Next.** The marina dock and the walking path to Magic Kingdom are both about two minutes from Gasparilla's door, so breakfast here puts you on the departure line.

7:40 AM
to 7:50 AM

Sunscreen, day bag, final gear check LOGISTICS

Full sunscreen application on everyone before leaving the building; it is far easier here than at a crowded park bench. Day bag check: four filled water bottles, portable charger and cable, sunscreen stick for reapplication, two ponchos, hats, snacks, and Theo's small Star Wars figure for queue entertainment.

- Sunscreen the tops of ears and back of necks, the March sun angle gets exactly those spots
- MagicBands or tickets on wrists or in one parent's pocket, decided now, not at the tap point

7:50 AM to 8:05 AM

Walk from the Grand Floridian to Magic Kingdom TRANSIT

Take the paved waterfront walking path from the Grand Floridian toward the Polynesian side, then along the seven seas lagoon to the Magic Kingdom entrance plaza; it is about a 10 to 12 minute flat stroll and it is the most reliable option at this hour because you are never waiting on a vehicle. The kids get their first across-the-water look at the castle on the way.

Walk (waterfront path) — 10 to 12 minutes (estimate)

7:50 AM ○ Board, Grand Floridian main building exit toward the wedding pavilion path

8:02 AM ● Arrive, Magic Kingdom security plaza

Or: Resort monorail: board at the Grand Floridian station about 7:45, one stop, arrive Magic Kingdom about 7:53; or the resort boat launch from the Grand Floridian dock about 7:45, arriving about 8:00. Both are fine but a missed vehicle costs 10 minutes; the walk cannot be missed.

- Bag-carriers go through the bag-check lane, everyone else uses the no-bag lanes which move faster
- Restrooms are available just inside the park under the Main Street train station if anyone needs them at tap-in

8:05 AM to 8:15 AM

Security and tap-in LOGISTICS

Through security, then tap in at the touchpoints; Early Entry guests are admitted well before 8:30 and held inside the park. Have all four MagicBands or tickets ready, and keep the party together through the tunnel under the train station: this is where families get separated on day one.

- If a band will not tap, the cast member with the tablet at the end of the row resolves it fastest
- First aid and the Baby Care Center are at the far end of Main Street next to The Crystal Palace, worth knowing all day

8:15 AM
to 8:30 AM

Main Street photo and the Fantasyland rope PHOTO

Walk up an uncrowded Main Street U.S.A. with the castle straight ahead: this 10-minute window is the best family castle photo of the entire week, before the crowds fill the frame. Ask a PhotoPass photographer near the Partners-side of the hub for a set, then position at the rope on the right side of the hub toward Fantasyland (via the Mad Tea Party side path or straight through the castle if it is open).

- PhotoPass photographers line Main Street at this hour with no wait
- Restrooms on the right side of Main Street near the Plaza Restaurant if needed before the rope drops
- Position matters: the right-of-castle rope feeds Seven Dwarfs Mine Train most directly
- Both kids do a quick shoe-tie and water sip now, the next 90 minutes are nonstop

→ **Next.** During Early Entry only Fantasyland and Tomorrowland are open, which is exactly where the plan goes.

8:30 AM
to 8:55 AM

Seven Dwarfs Mine Train (Early Entry standby) RIDE

Walk briskly (do not run, cast members will stop you) with the rope-drop flow to Seven Dwarfs Mine Train and go straight into standby; at Early Entry the posted wait is typically 20 to 30 minutes and it only grows all day (estimate). The 38 inch height requirement means both kids ride, all four together, no switch needed. It is a smooth family coaster and the perfect warm-up for Ellie.

Seven Dwarfs Mine Train, Fantasyland

- No rider switch needed: 38 inch requirement, Theo clears it
- Nearest restrooms at exit: Storybook Circus, about 2 minutes toward Dumbo, big and rarely crowded
- Loose hats in the bag before boarding, the swing of the mine cars ejects them
- On-ride photo AND video are captured automatically, they attach to your account via the band
- Nearest water: fountain outside the Storybook Circus restrooms; or ask for free ice water at Gaston's Tavern, 1 minute away

→ **Next.** Peter Pan's Flight is a 3 minute walk back through the Fantasyland courtyard, and during Early Entry its line is the shortest it will be all day: go directly.

Plan B. If Seven Dwarfs posts over 45 minutes at rope drop (rare at Early Entry), pivot immediately to Peter Pan then Winnie the Pooh, and take Seven Dwarfs at 6:50 PM after dinner when waits sag, or buy its Single Pass in the app.

8:55 AM
to 9:20 AM

Peter Pan's Flight (Early Entry standby) RIDE

Peter Pan's Flight is a slow-loading dark ride whose line hits 60 minutes by mid-morning, which is why it is ride two of the day; during Early Entry expect roughly 10 to 20 minutes (estimate). No height requirement, everyone rides. The queue itself, through the Darling nursery, is half the fun, point Theo at Tinker Bell's shadow work.

Peter Pan's Flight, Fantasyland

- No height requirement, no rider switch needed
- Charging: the Tangled courtyard has USB ports built into the stump seats, top up a phone while anyone uses the restroom
- Best photo: the flying galleon over London inside is too dark for phones, buy the ride's PhotoPass moment instead of using flash
- Nearest restrooms at exit: the Tangled courtyard restrooms, 60 seconds toward Liberty Square, the nicest in the park
- Water fountain beside the Tangled restrooms, refill bottles here

→ **Next.** it's a small world is directly across the walkway (a 30 second walk) if the family wants it now; the plan holds it for 2:05 PM when the heat makes its air conditioning valuable.

Plan B. If Peter Pan posts over 30 minutes already, swap it with Winnie the Pooh now and make Peter Pan the 9:20 slot.

9:20 AM
to 9:40 AM

The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh RIDE

Cross the Fantasyland courtyard to Winnie the Pooh, usually 10 to 15 minutes at this hour (estimate). The queue has interactive honey walls and spinning vegetables that Theo can play with, so even a short wait entertains. Everyone rides, gentle bouncing dark ride.

- No height requirement, no rider switch
- The interactive queue is on the standby side only, one silver lining of skipping the Lightning Lane here
- Exit dumps into Hundred Acre Goods, a small shop: set the no-buying-until-tonight rule now and it holds all day
- Nearest restrooms: beside the Mad Tea Party toward Tomorrowland, or back at the Tangled courtyard
- Nearest water: fountain by the Mad Tea Party restrooms

→ **Next.** Right after this, Mickey's PhilharMagic is 80 seconds to your left and a near walk-on all morning; the plan saves it for the 1:35 PM cool-down, but if anyone is flagging, it is a 12 minute seated reset right now.

9:40 AM
to 9:55 AM

Water, restroom, and sunscreen stop at the Tangled courtyard BREAK

Deliberate 15 minute pit stop at the Tangled courtyard between Fantasyland and Liberty Square: restrooms, bottle refills at the fountain, sunscreen reapplication on faces and necks, and a banana from the bag for each kid. Marcus uses the pause to confirm the 10:00 to 11:00 Big Thunder window is live and to plan his first rebook.

- USB charging in the stump seats, plug in the most-drained phone for 10 minutes
- This courtyard is the prettiest restroom stop in the park, lanterns and Rapunzel's tower for a quick photo
- Shade here is real, take it while you have it

9:55 AM
to 10:30 AM

Haunted Mansion (standby) RIDE

Walk 3 minutes into Liberty Square to the Haunted Mansion; late morning standby here typically runs 20 to 35 minutes (estimate), acceptable while waiting for the Big Thunder window. It is spooky-funny, not scary-scary; brief Theo that the stretching room is a dark elevator with a joke ending, and he will love the ballroom ghosts. No height requirement.

Walk (Fantasyland to Liberty Square) — 3 minutes

9:55 AM ○ Board, Tangled courtyard

9:58 AM ● Arrive, Haunted Mansion entrance, Liberty Square

Or: The Walt Disney World Railroad from the Fantasyland (Storybook Circus) station also reaches Frontierland if it is running, about 10 minutes with the loop, but walking is faster for this hop.

- No height requirement; if Theo gets nervous, ask a cast member for the chicken exit before the stretching room
- Nearest water: free ice water at any Columbia Harbour House register, better than a warm fountain
- Stroller parking is to the right of the entrance, not needed for this crew but the signposts confuse people
- Nearest restrooms at exit: Liberty Square restrooms next to Columbia Harbour House, 2 minutes
- Best photo: the hearse with the invisible horse out front, and the interactive crypt queue on the standby path

→ **Next.** The Liberty Square Market cart and Columbia Harbour House are both under 2 minutes from the Mansion exit, which is why the water-and-snack stop is next.

Plan B. If the Mansion posts over 40 minutes, ride the people mover… no, wrong land: instead browse Memento Mori and the Liberty Square shops for 15 minutes and tap Big Thunder the minute the window opens at 10:00, then catch the Mansion at 8:30 PM when it drops under 20.

10:30 AM
to 10:35 AM

Liberty Square water stop and Lightning Lane rebook SNACK

Two minute detour past the Liberty Square Market cart for fresh fruit if the bananas are gone, plus free ice waters from Columbia Harbour House. While the kids drink, Marcus taps into the app: as soon as Big Thunder is tapped at 10:40 he will book Space Mountain for a 7:00 to 8:00 PM window, so he pre-loads the screen now.

- The Market cart sells whole fruit and drinks, cheapest snack in the park
- Restrooms beside Columbia Harbour House if anyone skipped the 9:40 stop

10:35 AM
to 11:00 AM

Big Thunder Mountain Railroad (Lightning Lane, 10:00 to 11:00 window)

RIDE

Walk the waterfront 4 minutes from Liberty Square into Frontierland and tap into the Big Thunder Lightning Lane; the LL line typically moves in under 10 minutes. The 40 inch requirement clears both kids, so all four ride the runaway train together; seat the kids on the inside, rear cars run wilder, front cars are gentler for Theo. THE MOMENT the band taps green, Marcus books Space Mountain's evening Lightning Lane.

Big Thunder Mountain Railroad, Frontierland

Walk (Liberty Square to Frontierland) — 4 minutes along the Rivers of America waterfront

10:35 AM ○ Board, Columbia Harbour House corner

10:39 AM ● Arrive, Big Thunder Mountain entrance

Or: The Walt Disney World Railroad Frontierland station sits beside Big Thunder if you happened to board at Main Street, about 8 minutes by train.

- 40 inch requirement: both kids ride, no switch needed
- Nearest restrooms at exit: beside the Frontierland train station, 1 minute from the Big Thunder exit
- Hats and glasses secured, this one whips
- On-ride photo on the final helix, smile left
- Nearest water: fountain at those same restrooms; Westward Ho cart across the walkway sells bottled water
- Best photo spot: the wooden fence across from the entrance frames the whole mountain

→ **Next.** Tiana's Bayou Adventure is literally next door, 2 minutes on foot, and its 11:00 window opens as you walk off Big Thunder: perfect chaining.

Plan B. If the family arrives before the window and the tap refuses early entry, cast members generally allow 5 minutes early; otherwise ride the railroad one loop or browse the Frontierland Trading Post for 10 minutes.

11:05 AM
to 11:40 AM

Tiana's Bayou Adventure (Lightning Lane, 11:00 to 12:00 window) RIDE

Tap into Tiana's Bayou Adventure, the flume ride through Tiana's Mardi Gras bayou that replaced Splash Mountain, with a 50 foot drop at the end; 40 inch requirement, so both kids are in. Expect to get lightly to moderately splashed, which at 11 AM in March is a feature, not a bug. After tapping in, Marcus books the next Lightning Lane: Buzz Lightyear or Winnie the Pooh for the 7:45 to 8:45 PM window.

Tiana's Bayou Adventure, Frontierland

- 40 inches: both kids clear it, no rider switch needed
- On-ride photo triggers on the big drop, everyone look up not down
- Nearest water: fountain at the Frontierland breezeway; or free ice water at Pecos Bill 1 minute away
- Phones in the zip pocket or the bag, the drop throws real spray
- Nearest restrooms at exit: Frontierland breezeway restrooms toward Adventureland, 2 minutes
- Best photo: the water-side path gives a full view of riders hitting the splashdown, shoot Ellie's second ride from here someday

→ **Next.** Pirates of the Caribbean is a 3 minute walk through the Adventureland breezeway, and its standby dips before noon as the parade-and-lunch crowd forms.

Plan B. If the drop worries Theo after seeing it, invoke rider switch here too: it is offered at any height-requirement attraction, and Dana can take him to the Country Bear Musical Jamboree next door (seated, air conditioned, walk-on) while Marcus and Ellie ride.

11:40 AM
to 12:10 PM

Pirates of the Caribbean (standby) RIDE

Through the Frontierland-Adventureland breezeway to Pirates of the Caribbean, typically 20 to 30 minutes standby at this hour (estimate). It is a slow boat with one small dip in the dark, fine for Theo, and the queue through the stone fortress is blessedly cool. This is the family's shaded rest disguised as a ride before the Jungle Cruise window.

Pirates of the Caribbean, Adventureland

Walk (Frontierland to Adventureland) 3 minutes

11:40 AM ○ Board, Tiana's exit, through the breezeway

11:43 AM ● Arrive, Pirates of the Caribbean entrance

Or: The long way around via the hub is 8 minutes and pointless; breezeway every time.

- No height requirement, one small drop in the dark, warn Theo so it is a laugh not a shock
- Nearest water: fountain by those restrooms; Aloha Isle 2 minutes away for drinks
- Best photo: the courtyard arches outside make a great pirate-pose backdrop
- Nearest restrooms at exit: in the Caribbean plaza just left of the Pirates gift shop exit
- The ride exits through a shop, walk the kids straight down the middle aisle

→ **Next.** Jungle Cruise is 2 minutes from the Pirates exit and your 12:00 to 1:00 window is open when you walk off: chain it immediately.

Plan B. If Pirates posts over 40, flip it with lunch: mobile-order Pecos Bill now, eat at 11:45, ride Pirates at 12:30 when the lunch dip empties the line, then Jungle Cruise at 12:55 inside the window.

12:10 PM
to 12:40 PM

Jungle Cruise (Lightning Lane, 12:00 to 1:00 window) RIDE

Tap the Jungle Cruise Lightning Lane, cutting a line that regularly posts 60 plus minutes at midday down to about 10. The skipper's pun-heavy spiel is peak dad humor and Marcus will be insufferable at lunch, which is the point. After tapping in, book the NEXT Lightning Lane: whatever evening Fantasyland or Tomorrowland slot is available (Winnie the Pooh, Buzz, or the people mover-adjacent Monsters Inc Laugh Floor has no LL, so Buzz is the target if not already booked).

Jungle Cruise, Adventureland

- No height requirement, whole family in one boat
- Nearest restrooms at exit: Adventureland breezeway restrooms near the Magic Carpets, 1 minute
- Charging: the shaded seating around Aloha Isle is a good 10 minute battery-and-Dole-Whip stop if needed
- Ask the loading cast member for the front row, better skipper sightlines for the kids
- Nearest water: Sunshine Tree Terrace or Aloha Isle registers for free ice water, both under 2 minutes

→ **Next.** All three lunch options are within 6 minutes of the Jungle Cruise exit; mobile-order Columbia Harbour House from the queue so the food is ready on arrival.

Plan B. If the LL return line itself stacks past 20 minutes (parade staging can clog Adventureland), do lunch first at Skipper Canteen next door and use the window's back half.

Lunch 12:45 PM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Columbia Harbour House

Liberty Square, across from the Haunted Mansion • Seafood and American quick service • $$ (roughly 12 to 20 dollars per person, estimate)

The plan's pick: 6 minutes from the Jungle Cruise exit, and the upstairs dining room is the calmest air-conditioned quick-service space in the park, a genuine midday reset without a reservation. Free ice water refills the bottles.

ORDER Battered fish and chips, Lobster roll when in season, check the mobile order menu, Kids' meal with mac and cheese for Theo

None; mobile order from the Jungle Cruise queue at 12:15 and pick up on arrival

6 minutes from Jungle Cruise through the Adventureland-Frontierland breezeway

Jungle Navigation Co. Ltd. Skipper Canteen

Adventureland, next to the Jungle Cruise • Global flavors (Asian, Latin, African inspired), table service • $$ (roughly 20 to 34 dollar entrees, estimate)

The sit-down upgrade 1 minute from where the family already stands, run by off-duty Jungle Cruise skippers who keep the jokes going tableside. Adventurous-ish menu with safe landings for kids; adds about 30 minutes versus quick service.

ORDER "Tastes Like Chicken" Because It Is, Char siu pork, Kungaloosh chocolate cake for the table

Often has same-day availability: check the app at breakfast, or join the walk-up list from the queue at 12:00

1 minute from the Jungle Cruise exit

Pecos Bill Tall Tale Inn and Cafe

Frontierland, near the Adventureland breezeway • Tex-Mex quick service • $ (roughly 11 to 15 dollars per person, estimate)

The fast-and-filling option with the biggest indoor seating hall in the area, easy for a party of four to find a table even at peak. Best pick if the morning ran late and you want lunch done in 30 minutes.

ORDER Fajita rice bowl with chicken, Beef nachos to share, Churros for dessert

None; mobile order by 12:20 for a 12:45 pickup window

3 minutes from the Jungle Cruise exit via the breezeway

12:45 PM to 1:30 PM

Lunch: Columbia Harbour House (or Skipper Canteen or Pecos Bill)

MEAL

Walk back through the breezeway to Columbia Harbour House in Liberty Square and take the food upstairs: the second-floor dining room is the quietest air-conditioned quick-service room in the park and almost nobody realizes it is there. Mobile order was placed from the Jungle Cruise queue, so pickup is immediate. Forty-five unhurried minutes, everyone off their feet, bottles refilled with free ice water.

- Upstairs seating: take the interior staircase by the order pickup, window tables overlook Liberty Square
- Restrooms directly next door in Liberty Square
- Free ice water for all four bottles at the register
- This is the moment to review the afternoon: parade spot at 2:40, boat home at 3:50

→ **Next.** Mickey's PhilharMagic, the post-lunch cool-down show, is a 4 minute walk back toward Fantasyland from the Harbour House door.

1:35 PM to 2:00 PM

Mickey's PhilharMagic

SHOW

A 4 minute walk to Fantasyland for Mickey's PhilharMagic, the 12 minute 3D concert film with Donald chasing the sorcerer's hat through Disney songs; it is seated, dark, air conditioned, and effectively walk-on all afternoon. This is digestion time disguised as an attraction, the first beat of the afternoon slow-down.

Walk (Liberty Square to Fantasyland) — 4 minutes past the Tangled courtyard

1:35 PM ○ Board, Columbia Harbour House door

1:39 PM ● Arrive, PhilharMagic entrance, Fantasyland courtyard

Or: No sensible alternative, it is one continuous walkway.

- Theater seats several hundred, the next show is never more than about 15 minutes away
- Nearest restrooms: Tangled courtyard, passed on the walk in, send anyone who needs it before the doors
- Sit center-back, the 3D reads better from depth
- Cool air plus a seat equals the afternoon reset starting now

2:05 PM to 2:30 PM

it's a small world RIDE

Directly across the courtyard to it's a small world: a 10 to 15 minute wait feeding a 11 minute slow air-conditioned boat ride (estimate). It is the correct 2 PM ride: zero adrenaline, maximum shade, and the song will haunt the family group chat for years. Everyone rides.

- No height requirement
- The queue is mostly indoors and fans keep it moving
- Nearest restrooms at exit: Tangled courtyard, 90 seconds right
- Nearest water: Tangled courtyard fountain, refill before the parade
- Best photo: the clock face facade at the top of the hour does a little parade of its own

→ **Next.** The parade route runs right past this corner of Liberty Square, so the family is already within 3 minutes of the 2:40 spot claim.

2:30 PM to 2:40 PM

Restroom, sunscreen, water round before the parade BREAK

Ten minute maintenance window at the Tangled courtyard: everyone through the restroom whether they think they need it or not (the parade plus exit takes an hour), sunscreen reapplied for the 3 PM sun, bottles topped up. Marcus plugs the weakest phone into the stump-seat USB for ten minutes.

- This is the last easy restroom before the 3:50 boat
- Afternoon shower check: if radar shows the 30 percent storm, ponchos move to jacket pockets now

2:40 PM to 3:00 PM

Claim a parade spot in Liberty Square LOGISTICS

Claim curb in Liberty Square near the riverboat landing: the Festival of Fantasy Parade starts in Frontierland and reaches Liberty Square within the first few minutes, so this spot sees the parade early AND releases the family ahead of the Main Street crush for the 3:50 boat. Twenty minutes early is enough here in mid-March; Main Street would need 45.

- Kids sit on the curb, parents stand behind, the float line of sight is high
- The Liberty Square Market cart behind you sells cold drinks without losing the spot
- Shade check: the west side of the street gets afternoon shade first

→ **Next.** You are 4 minutes from the park exit via the Liberty Square bridge when the parade passes, which is the whole trick of this spot.

Plan B. If the curb is fully claimed, the elevated porch rail by the Hall of Presidents still has sightlines 10 minutes before step-off.

3:00 PM
to 3:25 PM

Festival of Fantasy Parade SHOW

Festival of Fantasy is Magic Kingdom's flagship daytime parade: the Maleficent dragon float that breathes actual fire, Anna and Elsa, Peter Pan's pirate ship, and a soundtrack the kids will recognize instantly. From the Liberty Square curb the whole parade passes in about 12 to 15 minutes once it reaches you. Let Theo stand on the curb for the dragon.

The Festival of Fantasy Parade

- The fire-breathing dragon is loud and hot for a second, brief Theo so it is awesome not alarming
- Do not chase the parade toward Main Street after, you are going the other way, to the dock

- Best photo: floats turn the Liberty Square corner slowly, shoot as they pivot

Snack 3:30 PM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Aloha Isle

Adventureland, near the Magic Carpets • Soft-serve stand • $ (roughly 6 to 8 dollars each, estimate)

The Dole Whip is the single most iconic snack in the park and the pineapple soft-serve is genuinely refreshing at the 3 PM heat peak; timed right after the parade on the way to the exit.

ORDER Pineapple Dole Whip cup, Dole Whip float with pineapple juice, Swirl cup for the undecided

Mobile order at 3:20 from the parade spot to skip the post-parade line

4 minutes from the Liberty Square parade curb

Westward Ho

Frontierland walkway • Snack cart • $ (roughly 5 to 7 dollars, estimate)

The cream cheese-stuffed pretzel is a cult favorite and this cart is directly on the walking line from the parade toward the hub, zero detour.

ORDER Cream cheese pretzel, Chocolate chip cookie, Bottled water for the bag

None, walk up

2 minutes from the parade spot

Main Street Confectionery

Main Street U.S.A., right side heading toward the exit • Candy kitchen • $ to $$ (roughly 6 to 14 dollars, estimate)

On the exact exit path at 3:40, and a hand-dipped caramel apple or fresh popcorn travels well: buy now, eat at the resort pool, which doubles the break's morale value. The candy-making window is a free 3 minute show.

ORDER Hand-dipped caramel apple, Fresh fudge by the slice, Character-themed crispy treat

None

On the exit walk down Main Street, zero detour

3:30 PM to 3:50 PM

Snack and amble to the boat dock SNACK

As the parade tail passes, cut across to Aloha Isle for the classic afternoon snack: Dole Whip for the kids (pineapple soft-serve), and a float for the adults to split. Eat while walking back through the hub and down Main Street toward the exit; the parade has just cleared so Main Street is briefly walkable. Tap out and turn left to the Ferry and resort boat docks.

- Mobile order Aloha Isle at 3:20 from the parade spot to skip the post-parade rush
- Alternative snacks en route: the cream cheese pretzel at Westward Ho, or a Main Street Confectionery caramel apple to save for the resort

†† Restrooms under the train station on the way out if anyone needs them before the boat

3:50 PM
to 4:10 PM

Resort boat back to the Grand Floridian TRANSIT

Board the resort launch at the Magic Kingdom dock (the small boat marked for the Grand Floridian and Polynesian, not the big ferry) and ride the lagoon home; it is the most pleasant sit-down of the day and the breeze on the water is the start of the break. Boats run continuously on roughly a 15 to 20 minute cycle (estimate).

Resort boat launch — About 15 minutes including the loading wait

- 3:50 PM ○ Board, Magic Kingdom marina dock, left of the park exit
- 4:05 PM ● Arrive, Grand Floridian boat dock

Or: Resort monorail runs Magic Kingdom to the Grand Floridian the LONG way (Contemporary, TTC, Polynesian first), about 20 to 25 minutes; the 10 to 12 minute walk beats it if the dock line looks long.

- Sit on the right side outbound for the castle-over-the-water photo
- This is a phone-charging window: the portable battery comes out on the boat

4:10 PM
to 5:25 PM

Pool and rest break at the Grand Floridian REST

The non-negotiable break: 75 minutes at the Grand Floridian. Kids into swimsuits and into the Beach Pool with the waterslide, Dana claims a shaded lounger, Marcus orders a cold drink and does exactly ten minutes of app housekeeping (confirm the evening Lightning Lanes: Space Mountain about 7:00 to 8:00, Buzz about 7:45 to 8:45, and check the current TRON standby wait and any Single Pass return times). Theo gets a true sit-down; if he wants to nap on a lounger instead of swim, protect that choice, tonight runs to 10 PM.

- The waterslide at the Beach Pool is Ellie's speed while Theo wades
- Phones on chargers in the room OR the battery pack poolside, tonight needs 50 percent minimum
- If you bought the TRON Single Pass, its evening return window slots neatly into the flexible 7:30 to 8:30 block
- Towels are at the pool, nothing to carry from the room
- Everyone changes back into park clothes at 5:15 sharp, fresh socks are a genuine mid-day luxury

Plan B. If an afternoon shower rolls through, the break simply becomes a room break: same recharge, dry version, and the park will have dried out by the time you return at 5:50.

5:35 PM
to 5:45 PM

Monorail back to Magic Kingdom TRANSIT

Evening return by resort monorail: from the Grand Floridian station, Magic Kingdom is the very next stop, so this direction the monorail is the fast option, about 4 minutes in the air once boarded. The kids get the monorail-through-the-sky moment with the castle lit ahead.

Resort monorail — About 8 minutes including platform wait (estimate)

5:35 PM ○ Board, Grand Floridian monorail station (second floor of the main building)

5:43 PM ● Arrive, Magic Kingdom station

Or: The resort boat from the Grand Floridian dock, about 5:30 departure, arrives about 5:45; or the 10 to 12 minute walk if either queue looks long.

Ask the platform cast member about riding up front... no longer offered, but the front car window is still the kids' seat of choice

5:50 PM
to 6:00 PM

Security re-entry and evening tap-in LOGISTICS

Back through security and tap-in (re-entry is unlimited on a park ticket for the same park). The evening crowd flowing IN for fireworks is real but the no-bag lanes still move fast. Walk up Main Street as the lights come on, one of the quiet best moments of the day.

Golden hour hits Main Street around now, the casual photos here beat the morning ones

Confirm the dinner reservation in the app while walking, Liberty Tree wants check-in 15 minutes early

Dinner 6:10 PM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Liberty Tree Tavern

Liberty Square • American colonial, all-you-care-to-enjoy family style • $$$ (roughly 42 dollars adult, 25 child, estimate)

The plan's pick: a hearty seated feast that refuels a nine-hour day, in quiet colonial dining rooms that calm everyone down before the evening push, and it releases the family 8 minutes from Space Mountain right as the Lightning Lane window opens.

ORDER Patriot's Platter: roast turkey, pot roast, stuffing, mashed potatoes, Kids' Patriot's Platter portion, Ooey Gooey Toffee Cake

Book at the 60-day mark for 6:00 to 6:15 PM; check in by 5:55 in the app

10 minutes from the evening tap-in up Main Street and left through Liberty Square

The Crystal Palace

End of Main Street at the hub, by the Adventureland bridge • American buffet with Winnie the Pooh and friends • $$$ (roughly 45 to 60 dollars adult, estimate)

The character-dinner option: Pooh, Tigger, and friends visit every table in a bright Victorian conservatory, which is huge for Theo and painless for the adults; closest of the three to the tap-in point, and dinner ends near the fireworks hub.

ORDER Carved meats from the buffet, Kids' buffet section Theo can self-serve, Dessert bar with a sundae station

Book at 60 days; character meals go fast, aim 5:45 to 6:00 PM

5 minutes from the evening tap-in, straight up Main Street

Cosmic Ray's Starlight Cafe

Tomorrowland • American quick service (burgers, chicken) • $ to $$ (roughly 12 to 18 dollars per person, estimate)

The no-reservation budget option that is also tactically placed: eating in Tomorrowland means the family is standing 2 minutes from Space Mountain when the 7:00 Lightning Lane window opens, and Sonny Eclipse, the animatronic lounge singer, plays the dinner show for free.

ORDER Bacon cheeseburger with the toppings bar, Chicken strips for the kids, Chocolate cake slice

None; mobile order at 5:40 for a 6:10 pickup

8 minutes from the evening tap-in, bearing right at the hub into Tomorrowland

6:10 PM to 7:15 PM

Dinner: Liberty Tree Tavern (or Crystal Palace or Cosmic Ray's) MEAL

The reserved sit-down: Liberty Tree Tavern in Liberty Square, colonial-inn dining rooms and the all-you-care-to-enjoy Patriot's Platter, which is a Thanksgiving dinner in March: roast turkey, pot roast, stuffing, mashed potatoes. It is exactly the hearty reset a nine-hour park day calls for, and the kids' version means nobody negotiates a menu. Out by 7:15 for the Tomorrowland block.

- Check in at 5:55 in the app or at the podium
- Restrooms inside the restaurant, everyone goes before leaving, the next stop is a coaster
- Ask for the Washington or Jefferson room, the small rooms are quieter
- The Ooey Gooey Toffee Cake is the one dessert order that matters here

→ **Next.** The walk from Liberty Tree to Space Mountain crosses the hub, about 8 minutes, timed against the 7:00 to 8:00 Lightning Lane window with room to spare.

7:15 PM
to 7:25 PM

Cross the park to Tomorrowland TRANSIT

Walk from Liberty Square across the hub into Tomorrowland as the sky goes full dusk; the castle is lit and the hub is filling for fireworks already. Stay on the outer hub path (the inner garden fills first) and bear left under the Tomorrowland arch.

Walk (Liberty Square to Tomorrowland) — About 8 minutes

7:15 PM ○ Board, Liberty Tree Tavern door

7:23 PM ● Arrive, Space Mountain entrance

Or: The Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover does not connect from Liberty Square; no faster route exists, but the hub's right-side path avoids the thickest fireworks staging.

- Note tonight's fireworks staging as you cross: ropes go up on the hub grass, remember where the Plaza Garden East entrance is for 8:35

7:30 PM to 8:00 PM

Space Mountain with Rider Switch (Lightning Lane, 7:00 to 8:00 window)

RIDE

Tap the Space Mountain Lightning Lane booked this morning. The requirement is 44 inches: measure Theo at the entrance; if he clears it and wants it, all four ride, but the plan assumes Rider Switch: Dana and Theo take the pass and go next door, Marcus and Ellie ride the dark coaster first, then Dana rides with Ellie AGAIN via the switch pass while Marcus and Theo compare notes. Ellie riding Space Mountain twice in the dark is her headline of the trip.

Space Mountain, Tomorrowland

- Rider Switch: ask the greeting cast member BEFORE entering, they issue the return entitlement to the waiting party
- During the switch wait, Dana and Theo ride the Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover next door, a 10 minute elevated tour with zero wait and a peek inside Space Mountain's dark
- Nearest water: Cosmic Ray's registers for free ice water, or the fountain by those restrooms
- 44 inch requirement, dark indoor coaster, rougher than Seven Dwarfs, brief Ellie honestly
- Nearest restrooms: in the Tomorrowland concourse near Cosmic Ray's, 2 minutes from the exit
- On-ride photo in the final tunnel, it is too dark for phones, buy the flash photo

→ **Next.** Buzz Lightyear's Space Ranger Spin is 60 seconds from the Space Mountain exit and the 7:45 window is open when the switch round finishes.

Plan B. If the LL return stacks behind a breakdown, take Buzz first and swing Space Mountain to 8:05; the window is honored for a while after a downtime, and the fireworks spot claim at 8:35 is the only hard wall.

8:05 PM
to 8:30 PM

Buzz Lightyear's Space Ranger Spin, with a TRON split if the timing works

RIDE

Family reunites at Buzz Lightyear's Space Ranger Spin (Lightning Lane if booked, or a 15 to 20 minute evening standby, estimate): spinning shooter cars where Theo finally gets to beat everyone at a Star-Wars-adjacent laser battle, the score screens settle all arguments. IF a TRON Single Pass return or a short standby lines up with this window, split instead: Marcus and Ellie report to TRON (48 inch requirement, lockers provided for loose items, the launch is the fastest thing Ellie will ride all trip), while Dana and Theo do Buzz, and everyone meets at the Plaza Garden East gate at 8:35.

Buzz Lightyear's Space Ranger Spin, Tomorrowland

- Buzz: no height requirement; aim for the round Z targets, they are worth the most
- TRON photo: the lightcycle canopy load is the photo, plus an on-ride capture on the launch
- Charging: the seating around Cosmic Ray's has usable outlets along some walls, a 10 minute top-up before fireworks if a phone is critical
- TRON: 48 inches, Rider Switch applies if Theo measures and dares; free lockers at the queue for hats and bags
- Nearest restrooms: Tomorrowland concourse by Cosmic Ray's

Plan B. If TRON never lines up tonight, it converts to a rope-drop standby another morning or a purchased Single Pass later in the week; do not trade the fireworks spot for it.

8:35 PM to 9:00 PM

Claim the fireworks spot and dessert from the bag LOGISTICS

Walk 5 minutes from Tomorrowland to the hub and claim the fireworks spot: the plan's pick is the east side of the hub near the Plaza Garden, castle-forward with projection sightlines, claimed 25 minutes early which is enough in mid-March (estimate; holiday-level crowds need 45 plus). Kids sit, shoes half-off, and the saved Main Street Confectionery treat or a bag snack comes out. Happily Ever After's projections need a mostly head-on castle view, so resist the temptation of far-side shortcuts.

- †† Restroom run NOW in shifts, one parent at a time, using the Main Street restrooms by the Plaza Restaurant, 3 minutes each way
- ◦ Phones to 3x zoom for the castle, but watch the first minute with eyes, not screens
- ◦ The show is loud: if Theo is sound-sensitive after a long day, stand a step back from the speakers by the garden rail

Plan B. If the hub is already packed at 8:35, fall back to mid-Main-Street between the Confectionery and Casey's: you lose some projection detail, gain an easy exit.

9:00 PM to 9:20 PM

Happily Ever After fireworks SHOW

Happily Ever After, the castle fireworks and projection spectacular, at its typical mid-March 9:00 PM showtime (estimate: confirm the exact showtime in the app that morning, it moves with sunset and hours). Eighteen minutes of projections wrapping the castle, perimeter launch shells, and the score doing exactly what it was engineered to do to parents on a first family trip. This is the moment the whole day was aimed at; put the phone down for the finale.

- ◦ Theo on shoulders is legal and traditional for the finale
- ◦ The crying is normal, Marcus

9:20 PM to 9:40 PM

Let the crowd drain: Emporium browse SHOP

Do not race 20,000 people to the exits. Duck into the Emporium, the department store running half the length of Main Street, and let the kids finally spend the souvenir budget that was deferred all day: Ellie has been eyeing coaster merch since 8:30 AM and Theo's Star Wars pick may take negotiating toward anything castle-related. Twenty minutes here erases thirty minutes of exit crush.

- ◦ Enter mid-Main-Street and drift toward the exit-end doors as you shop, so the store itself walks you out
- †† Restrooms under the train station one last time before the walk
- ◦ Purchases can be carried tonight, the walk home is short

9:45 PM
to 10:00 PM

Walk home along the lagoon TRANSIT

Exit and take the waterfront path back to the Grand Floridian on foot: at close, the walk beats both the monorail (which runs the long way to the Grand Floridian and stacks 20 minute platform lines) and the boat queue. Twelve quiet minutes along the water with the castle glowing behind you, and the kids are asleep on their feet in the best possible way.

Walk (waterfront path) 10 to 12 minutes

9:45 PM ○ Board, Magic Kingdom exit plaza, left toward the Grand Floridian path

9:57 PM ● Arrive, Grand Floridian lobby

Or: Resort boat from the marina dock, roughly 15 to 25 minutes including the post-fireworks queue; or the monorail's long loop, 25 to 35 minutes at close (estimates). The walk wins tonight.

- The path is lit and stroller-flat the whole way
- Look back once from the halfway point: castle, water, done

10:05 PM
to 10:20 PM

Wind-down and tomorrow prep LOGISTICS

Everything on chargers: phones, battery pack, MagicBands if applicable. Two minute family debrief for the playbook: each person names their single best moment of the day (predicted answers: Ellie, Space Mountain twice; Theo, the Buzz high score or the dragon; Dana, the boat at 3:50; Marcus, the lines he never stood in).

- Refill and refrigerate the water bottles tonight, future-you says thanks
- Check tomorrow's plan and confirm your pre-booked Lightning Lanes before lights out

DAY 3 · MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2026 · EPCOT

Around the World in One Day: Space, Sea, and a Global Feast

EPCOT is the food park, so today is built as an eat-around-the-world with the thrill rides banked early and the whole afternoon and evening spent grazing the World Showcase promenade. You rope-drop the space-and-speed side of the park for Ellie and Theo before the heat, anchor midday with a cool sit-down lunch, and end on the France, UK, and Canada shore perfectly placed for dinner and the Luminous fireworks. The 2026 Flower and Garden Festival is in full bloom, so festival Outdoor Kitchens and topiaries thread through the entire back half of the day.

PARK HOURS

Early Theme Park Entry 8:30 AM for Disney resort guests. Regular open 9:00 AM. Estimated close 9:00 PM with Luminous at approximately 9:00 PM. Confirm exact hours in My Disney Experience.

WEATHER

Warm and sunny, high near 80F. Cool after sunset, dropping into the low 60s by evening. Roughly a 20 to 30 percent chance of a brief afternoon shower. Pack light layers and ponchos.

SUNSET

approximately 7:35 PM

FIREWORKS

Luminous The Symphony of Us, approximately 9:00 PM over World Showcase Lagoon

DAY ESTIMATE

Rough estimate for the family of four, excluding park tickets and hotel: Lightning Lane Multi Pass about 15 to 35 dollars per person, Guardians Single Pass about 17 dollars per person, Space 220 prix fixe lunch about 55 dollars per adult and 35 per child, a World Showcase table-service dinner about 150 to 300 dollars for four, plus festival snacks and drinks about 60 to 100 dollars. All in, plan on roughly 550 to 900 dollars for the day. Treat every number as a planning estimate and confirm current prices in the app.

The plan for today

- Use Early Theme Park Entry at 8:30 and go straight to Test Track, the number-one Lightning Lane at EPCOT and nearly a walk-on at rope drop, then knock out the rest of World Discovery before the crowds build.
- Lightning Lane plan: a week out, as an on-site guest, you booked Multi Pass for Test Track, Frozen Ever After, and Remy's and bought the Guardians Lightning Lane Single Pass as a separate purchase, all in one sitting. Guardians has no free virtual queue anymore, so that pre-bought Single Pass is the plan; this morning you just confirm the return window.
- Marcus hates lines, so every major ride is either rope-dropped or pre-booked Lightning Lane; you should not stand in a standby line over about 20 minutes all day.
- Heat plan: bank all the thrill rides before 11, hydrate free at Club Cool, and use The American Adventure show as Theo's 30-minute air-conditioned afternoon breather.
- Walk World Showcase clockwise from Mexico so you finish near France, UK, and Canada, right where dinner and the best Luminous viewing are.
- Stake a lagoon-side Luminous spot by about 8:20; the show wraps all the way around the water, so any open view works and you do not need the front row.

In the day bag

- Two refillable water bottles per adult, filled at the resort before you leave
- Sunscreen for the morning plus a midday reapplication, and after-sun for the kids
- Hats and sunglasses for all four
- Portable battery pack and two charging cables
- A light jacket or layer each for the low-60s evening
- Ponchos for the chance of an afternoon shower
- Autograph card and a fat Sharpie for Kidcot stops and Anna and Elsa
- Flower and Garden festival passport, grab it at the first booth
- A little cash or a card for the festival Outdoor Kitchen booths
- A collapsible seat mat for the Luminous wait
- MagicBands charged and linked in the app
- Blister bandages and a small first-aid pouch

6:45 AM to 7:00 AM

Gentle wake-up and the Guardians game plan LOGISTICS

Theo is a slow riser, so start the wake at 6:45 with low lights and a warm shower to ease him into the day. This is an Early Entry morning at EPCOT, so the goal is simply to be dressed, fed, and on the 8:05 bus. Your Guardians Lightning Lane Single Pass is already booked, you bought it a week out with the rest of your Lightning Lanes, so there is no 7:00 AM scramble. Put sunscreen on the kids before you leave the room so you are not fighting it at the turnstiles.

- Charge both phones to 100 percent overnight
- No 7:00 AM scramble: on-site guests book Lightning Lanes, Multi Pass and Single Pass, up to seven days out
- Pre-link MagicBands and park passes in the app the night before

7:00 AM

Confirm your EPCOT Lightning Lanes LOGISTICS

Guardians of the Galaxy Cosmic Rewind runs as standby plus a paid Lightning Lane Single Pass, with no free virtual queue anymore. You already bought that Single Pass a week ago, at the same time you set your Multi Pass windows, so this morning is just a quick check: open My Disney Experience and confirm the Guardians Single Pass return time and today's Multi Pass windows (Test Track, Frozen Ever After, and Remy's) are all showing. Screenshot the times so you are not digging through the app in line.

- Nothing to race for this morning, it was all booked seven days out
- Guardians standby runs long by mid-morning, so the pre-bought Single Pass return is what keeps the wait short
- Single Pass is a separate paid purchase from the Multi Pass

Plan B. If you decided against the paid Single Pass, ride Guardians standby early or late when the posted wait is lowest, and use Rider Swap so Ellie can re-ride.

Breakfast 7:25 AM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Gasparilla Island Grill

Grand Floridian, poolside near the marina • Quick-service American • $

The fast play before the bus; mobile order and eat in ten minutes so you make early entry.

ORDER Mickey waffles, breakfast flatbread, fruit and yogurt parfait

None, mobile order 15 minutes ahead

Two minutes from your room and the bus depot

Grand Floridian Cafe

Grand Floridian main building • Table-service American • $$

A calmer sit-down start if Dana wants to ease into the day; budget 45 minutes.

ORDER eggs Benedict, Floridian French toast, three-cheese omelet

Book 60 days out, allow 45 minutes

Inside the resort, 3 to 5 minutes from your room

Connections Eatery and Starbucks

EPCOT, World Celebration • Quick-service and coffee • $

Skip resort breakfast, rope-drop first, and eat in-park mid-morning instead.

ORDER breakfast flatbread, egg bites, Starbucks pastries and coffee

None

Just inside the EPCOT front entrance

7:25 AM to 7:55 AM

Breakfast at the Grand Floridian MEAL

Fuel up before the bus. Gasparilla Island Grill is the fast play: mobile-order a Mickey waffle, a breakfast flatbread, and fruit, and eat by the marina in ten minutes. If Dana wants a calmer start, Grand Floridian Cafe does a sit-down eggs Benedict, but budget 45 minutes and reserve ahead.

- Mobile order Gasparilla 15 minutes ahead to skip the counter
- Fill your refillable water bottles at the resort before you leave
- Grab an extra pastry to stash for a mid-morning Theo snack

→ **Next.** Gasparilla Island Grill is a two-minute walk from both the resort monorail platform and the bus depot, so you can eat and go.

8:00 AM

Sunscreen check, day bag, and out the door LOGISTICS

Reapply or apply sunscreen to both kids now; the mid-March sun near 80F is stronger than a Chicago March morning suggests. Pack the day bag with two full water bottles, ponchos, the portable charger, a light layer each for the low-60s evening, and the autograph card and Sharpie for Kidcot and Anna and Elsa.

- Hats and sunglasses for all four
- Ponchos in case of the afternoon shower
- Portable battery and two cables in the bag

8:05 AM
to 8:23 AM

Transit: Grand Floridian to EPCOT TRANSIT

The Grand Floridian is on the Magic Kingdom monorail loop, not the EPCOT line, so there is no one-seat monorail ride to EPCOT. The direct resort bus is the simplest and usually fastest option and drops you right at the EPCOT front entrance. The monorail is scenic but needs a transfer at the Transportation and Ticket Center to the separate EPCOT monorail line, which adds time.

Direct resort bus to EPCOT — about 18 minutes

- 8:05 AM — Board, Grand Floridian bus depot near the Conch Key building
- 8:23 AM — Arrive, EPCOT front entrance bus loop

Or: Resort monorail from the Grand Floridian at 8:05 to the TTC, about 8 minutes, then transfer to the EPCOT monorail line, arriving the entrance about 8:35 AM. Scenic but roughly 10 minutes slower because of the transfer.

- The bus beats the monorail to EPCOT because the monorail needs a TTC transfer
- Buses run roughly every 20 minutes, so aim for the 8:05 to make early entry comfortably
- The boat and the walking path from the Grand Floridian only serve Magic Kingdom, not EPCOT

8:28 AM

Arrive EPCOT, security, and tap in LOGISTICS

Clear security at the front entrance, then tap your MagicBands at the turnstiles under the Spaceship Earth geosphere. You are inside during Early Theme Park Entry, which gives Disney resort guests a 30-minute head start on World Nature and World Discovery.

- Nearest restroom is just inside the entrance on the left, before Spaceship Earth
- Check the app for the day's ride status while you walk in
- Bottle refill and water fountains are at those entrance restrooms

Plan B. If the bus runs late you can still make rope drop; early-entry standby lines stay short for the first 20 minutes.

8:38 AM
to 9:00 AM

Early Entry rope drop: Test Track RIDE

Test Track 3.0 reopened in July 2025 and is the single most in-demand ride at EPCOT, so hit it first during early entry when it is nearly a walk-on. You design a virtual concept vehicle, then race it up to 65 mph on the outdoor loop; Ellie will love the speed and Theo clears the 40-inch minimum easily. It is the number-one Lightning Lane Multi Pass at EPCOT, so riding it now saves your Multi Pass slots for later.

Test Track, EPCOT

- Height minimum 40 inches; Theo at 7 clears it
- Closest restroom is between Test Track and Mission Space
- Single Rider line is a fast backup if you split up
- Rider Swap available if Theo decides at the gate to sit it out
- Nearest water refill is the Mission Space restroom corridor
- Best photo: the concept-car design wall at the entrance

→ **Next.** Mission Space is right next door, do it now while you are in World Discovery.

Plan B. If Test Track is down at open, the outdoor track occasionally pauses for weather or a technical reset, pivot to Guardians standby and circle back in 30 minutes.

9:05 AM
to 9:25 AM

Mission Space, Green side, with Theo the space fan RIDE

Theo loves anything space and Star Wars, and Mission Space is the astronaut fantasy of the day. Choose the Green, less intense, no-spin side for the family; it simulates a gentle orbit around Earth without the centrifuge forces of the Orange side. It is a quick capsule experience and rarely has a long early-morning wait.

Mission: SPACE, EPCOT

- Green side has no spinning, 40-inch minimum; Orange side spins and needs 44 inches
- Closest restroom is right at the Mission Space exit
- Best photo: the giant rotating planet in the queue
- Rider Swap available if anyone opts out
- The Advanced Training Lab play area at the exit is a good Theo energy-burn

→ **Next.** Guardians of the Galaxy Cosmic Rewind is a two-minute walk from here, your next stop.

9:35 AM
to 10:05 AM

Guardians of the Galaxy: Cosmic Rewind RIDE

This is a reverse-launch indoor coaster that spins to face the action, set to a classic rock soundtrack; it is smooth as coasters go, but it does launch. Fearless Ellie will want to re-ride. If Theo is unsure, use Rider Swap so one parent rides with Ellie while the other waits with Theo, then swaps without re-queuing.

Guardians of the Galaxy: Cosmic Rewind, EPCOT

- Height minimum 42 inches
- Enter with your Lightning Lane Single Pass; standby can hit 60 to 90 minutes by mid-morning
- Rider Swap is ideal here for Theo
- Closest restroom is in the Wonders of Xandar pavilion lobby
- Water refill at the pavilion lobby fountains
- Charging: benches in the pavilion lobby are a good spot for the waiting swap parent to top off a phone
- Best photo: the rotating galaxy globe in the pre-show gallery

Plan B. If your Single Pass return window has not opened yet, ride Spaceship Earth first and come back when it opens.

10:10 AM
to 10:30 AM

Spaceship Earth RIDE

The gentle, slow-moving dark ride inside the iconic geosphere traces the history of human communication; it is air-conditioned, has no real height concerns, and gives everyone a calm reset after the coasters. It sits right at the front of the park, so it fits perfectly as you transition from World Discovery back toward the center.

- No height minimum; good for the whole family
- Closest restroom is at the base of Spaceship Earth toward the entrance
- Best photo: looking straight up inside the geosphere, or the descent portrait scene
- Almost always a low wait, or use Multi Pass if the line surprises you
- Water refill at those entrance restrooms

→ **Next.** Club Cool and Connections Eatery are steps away in World Celebration, your next hydration and snack stop.

Snack 10:35 AM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Club Cool

EPCOT, World Celebration • Free international sodas • $

Free samples, free hydration, and the Beverly dare is a guaranteed family laugh.

ORDER Beverly from Italy, Bibo from South Africa, VegitaBeta from Japan

None

Steps from Spaceship Earth

Connections Eatery

EPCOT, World Celebration • Quick-service snacks and coffee • $

Pastries, coffee, restrooms, and bottle refills all in one air-conditioned stop.

ORDER croissant, warm cookie, iced coffee

None

Next door to Club Cool

Sunshine Seasons

EPCOT, The Land, World Nature • Quick-service bakery • $

A big bakery case and fresh fruit if you want a heartier mid-morning bite.

ORDER sticky bun, whoopie pie, fresh fruit cup

None

Four minutes into The Land pavilion

10:35 AM to 10:50 AM

Club Cool free samples and water refill SNACK

Club Cool in World Celebration pours free samples of Coca-Cola products from around the world; challenge the kids to try Beverly from Italy, which is famously bitter, for a great laugh-and-cringe family photo. Refill your water bottles here and at the adjacent Connections Eatery before heading into World Showcase.

- Free unlimited samples, no purchase needed
- Restroom and refill at Connections Eatery next door
- The Beverly dare is the classic bit; have the camera ready for the faces
- Ask any quick-service counter for free ice water to top off bottles

→ **Next.** Journey of Water in World Nature is a short walk to the left, a great next stop for Theo.

10:50 AM to 11:15 AM

Journey of Water, Inspired by Moana BREAK

This walk-through exploration trail in World Nature lets kids play with interactive water effects and cool off; it is open-air, shaded in spots, and a low-key breather between the morning rides and lunch. Theo can get a little wet and burn energy while Marcus and Dana slow the pace.

- No ride and no height minimum, walk at your own pace
- Closest restroom is at The Seas pavilion next door
- Best photo: the reunion moment under the tall water arch
- Kids may get lightly splashed, fine for a warm day
- Water refill at The Seas quick-service area

→ **Next.** The Seas with Nemo and Friends is right here if you want more air conditioning and Turtle Talk with Crush.

11:15 AM to 11:28 AM

Transit: walk to Space 220 for lunch TRANSIT

Walk from World Nature back across World Celebration to Space 220, which sits beside Mission Space in World Discovery. It is a short, flat, mostly shaded promenade walk.

Walking about 13 minutes

11:15 AM ○ Board, Journey of Water exit, World Nature

11:28 AM ● Arrive, Space 220 entrance, World Discovery

Or: If you booked Garden Grill instead, it is only a 3-minute walk back into The Land pavilion you just passed

- Flat, stroller-friendly path
- Restrooms at the Odyssey building on the way
- Duck into Creations Shop for a two-minute air-conditioned cool-down if you need it

Lunch 11:35 AM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Space 220 Restaurant

EPCOT, World Discovery, next to Mission Space • Contemporary American, prix fixe • $$$

A space-elevator ride to a station restaurant with Earth views; Theo the space fan will be wide-eyed, and it is a cool, calm midday anchor.

ORDER Blue Moon Cauliflower, slow-rotation short rib, chocolate cheesecake

Hard to get, book 60 days out

Three minutes from your morning rides in World Discovery

Garden Grill

EPCOT, The Land, World Nature • Character family-style American • $$$

A slowly rotating restaurant with Mickey and friends and farm-fresh food; ideal for first-timers who want characters at the table.

ORDER all-you-care-to-enjoy sliced turkey and beef, seasonal vegetables and mac and cheese, seasonal berry shortcake

Book 60 days out

In The Land pavilion, 5 minutes from the morning rides

Biergarten Restaurant

EPCOT, Germany, World Showcase • German buffet • $$

Communal tables and a live oompah band make a fun, filling stop right on your afternoon loop.

ORDER bratwurst and schnitzel, spaetzle, Black Forest cake

Recommended, book ahead

In the Germany pavilion on the World Showcase promenade

11:35 AM to 12:50 PM

Lunch: Space 220 Restaurant MEAL

Space 220 is an experience as much as a meal: a simulated space elevator lifts you 220 miles up to a station restaurant with floor-to-ceiling views of Earth and passing spacecraft. Theo the space fan will be wide-eyed. It is a prix fixe lunch, so reserve well ahead; this is your main sit-down of the day and a cool, calm midday anchor.

- Prix fixe lunch; book 60 days out, it fills fast
- Restroom inside the restaurant lobby
- Ask for a window-view table at check-in
- The Base 220 lounge is a walk-up alternative if you could not land a table

→ **Next.** You are perfectly placed to walk straight into World Showcase after lunch.

12:50 PM to 1:00 PM

Transit: into World Showcase at Mexico TRANSIT

Walk from World Discovery down to World Showcase Lagoon and enter the promenade on the left, at Mexico, to start a clockwise eat-around. Going clockwise means you finish on the France, UK, and Canada side, perfectly positioned for dinner and Luminous.

The Mexico pavilion, EPCOT World Showcase

Walking about 10 minutes

12:50 PM ○ Board, Space 220 exit, World Discovery

1:00 PM ● Arrive, Mexico pavilion, World Showcase

Or: Enter World Showcase to the right at Canada for a counter-clockwise loop if the Mexico side looks more crowded

- Grab a Flower and Garden festival passport and map at the first booth
- Restrooms are between the front and Mexico

1:00 PM to 1:20 PM

Mexico: Gran Fiesta Tour boat ride RIDE

Inside the Aztec-pyramid pavilion, the Gran Fiesta Tour is a gentle, air-conditioned boat ride with Donald, Jose, and Panchito, a lovely cool-down through the dim indoor marketplace. It almost never has a long wait, and the pyramid interior with its twinkling night-market sky is one of the prettiest hidden corners of EPCOT.

- No height minimum; calm and dark, great for all ages
- Kidcot Fun Stop is inside the pavilion, get the first card stamp here
- Closest restroom is just outside the pavilion toward Norway
- Best photo: the glowing volcano and market stalls inside the pyramid

→ **Next.** La Cava del Tequila and the outdoor margarita and guacamole stands are right here for a parents' treat.

1:20 PM to 1:40 PM

Mexico snack: guacamole, churro, and a margarita SNACK

Grab fresh guacamole and chips to share, a cinnamon churro for the kids, and, if the grown-ups want, a margarita from Choza de Margarita on the promenade. This is the first bite of the eat-around-the-world.

- Share plates so you can keep grazing all afternoon
- Restroom just outside toward Norway
- Choza de Margarita has shaded table seating
- Refill water at the nearby drink station

1:40 PM
to 2:05 PM

Norway: Frozen Ever After RIDE

This is the marquee World Showcase ride, a boat journey through Arendelle with Anna, Elsa, and Olaf and a big backward drop. Use your Lightning Lane Multi Pass return here, because standby routinely runs 60 minutes or more. Both kids will love it and Marcus skips the line.

The Norway pavilion, EPCOT World Showcase

- No height minimum; a family favorite
- Use your Multi Pass return window to walk on
- Closest restroom is behind the Norway pavilion near Kringla
- Water refill at the Kringla Bakeri quick-service
- Best photo: the Elsa ice-palace scene, or the Stave Church exterior

→ **Next.** The Royal Sommerhus meet with Anna and Elsa is a 90-second walk, and Kringla Bakeri is right there for School Bread.

Plan B. If your Multi Pass window has not opened yet, do Royal Sommerhus first, then come back and ride.

2:05 PM
to 2:25 PM

Norway: meet Anna and Elsa at Royal Sommerhus PHOTO

Royal Sommerhus is a beautifully themed indoor meet-and-greet cabin where the kids can hug Anna and Elsa and get autographs, and the queue is air-conditioned. Have the autograph card and Sharpie ready. This is a highlight for many first-time Disney kids.

- Indoor, air-conditioned queue, a nice cool break
- Have the autograph book and a fat Sharpie ready
- Closest restroom is right behind the pavilion
- This is also a Kidcot stop, add a stamp
- Best photo: both princesses together in the cabin

Snack 2:25 PM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Kringla Bakeri og Kafe

EPCOT, Norway, World Showcase • Norwegian bakery • $

Home of the beloved School Bread, the signature World Showcase snack.

ORDER School Bread, Troll Horn, lingonberry slush

None, mobile order available

Behind the Frozen ride in Norway

Karamell-Kuche

EPCOT, Germany, World Showcase • Caramel confections • $

Fresh, hand-made caramel treats you can smell from the promenade.

ORDER freshly made caramel corn, chocolate-caramel apple, caramel cookie

None

In the Germany pavilion shops

Kabuki Cafe

EPCOT, Japan, World Showcase • Japanese shaved ice • $

Kaki Gori shaved ice is the perfect way to cool the kids down in the afternoon heat.

ORDER strawberry Kaki Gori, tangerine Kaki Gori, edamame

None

In front of the Japan pavilion

2:25 PM to 2:45 PM

Norway snack: School Bread and a Troll Horn SNACK

Kringla Bakeri og Kafe serves the beloved School Bread, a sweet cardamom bun with custard and coconut, plus the cream-filled Troll Horn; both are easy to share. Grab a lingonberry slush for the kids.

- School Bread is the must-try, one shared is plenty
- Restroom and refill right here
- The seating out back by the water is shady and quiet
- Kringla takes mobile order to skip the counter

2:45 PM
to 3:05 PM

China: Mulan Kidcot and Reflections of China SHOW

Stroll the serene China pavilion, catch the Circle-Vision 360 film Reflections of China, which is air-conditioned and a nice standing sit, and do the Kidcot stop; Mulan sometimes meets here. The Tomb Warriors exhibit and the koi are quiet, low-energy wins.

The China pavilion, EPCOT World Showcase

- Circle-Vision is a standing 360 film, about 12 minutes, cool and shaded
- Kidcot stamp inside the pavilion
- Restroom near the Nine Dragons restaurant
- Lotus Blossom Cafe here has egg rolls if anyone is still snacky
- Best photo: the Temple of Heaven replica

→ **Next.** The Outpost between China and Germany has a cold-drink stand and a refreshment stop.

3:05 PM
to 3:25 PM

Germany: Karamell-Kuche and the miniature railway SNACK

Karamell-Kuche, a Werthers caramel shop, hand-makes caramel treats; the caramel corn and chocolate-caramel apples are crowd pleasers. Outside, the elaborate miniature train garden delights younger kids like Theo, and Snow White sometimes meets near the fountain.

The Germany pavilion, EPCOT World Showcase

- The freshly made caramel corn is the pick
- The miniature railway garden is a free, fun Theo stop
- Restroom at the back of the pavilion
- Kidcot stop inside the shops
- Best photo: the glockenspiel platz and the toy train garden

→ **Next.** Biergarten here is your fun lunch alternative if you skipped Space 220; Italy is next along the promenade.

3:25 PM
to 3:45 PM

Italy: gelato and a slow stroll SNACK

The Italy pavilion is all romantic plazas and a replica of St. Marks Campanile; grab gelato or a cannoli and let everyone slow down. This is a good spot to reapply sunscreen and top off water before the afternoon breather.

The Italy pavilion, EPCOT World Showcase

- Gelato and cannoli are the picks
- Reapply sunscreen now, it has been a few hours
- Kidcot stop in the pavilion shops
- Shaded seating around the fountain
- Restroom between Italy and the American Adventure

3:45 PM
to 4:20 PM

Theo's afternoon breather: The American Adventure show REST

Theo needs an afternoon breather, and The American Adventure is the perfect one: a 30-minute air-conditioned sit-down show with audio-animatronic storytelling in a grand theater. Everyone gets off their feet in the cool dark while Theo recharges. This is the calm your 7-year-old needs before the evening.

The American Adventure, EPCOT World Showcase

- Full 30-minute show, seated and air-conditioned, the day's best rest
- Water refill at the Fife and Drum stand outside
- Charging: benches in the shaded rotunda are a good phone top-off spot
- Restrooms are right in the American Adventure rotunda
- The a cappella Voices of Liberty sometimes sing in the rotunda before showtime

→ **Next.** Fife and Drum outside has funnel cake and a jumbo turkey leg; the Japan pavilion is next.

Plan B. If Theo is truly melting down, this is the natural point to weigh a bus-back pool break at the Grand Floridian; a round trip runs about 90 minutes, so only do it if you will still make Luminous.

4:20 PM
to 4:40 PM

American Adventure snack: funnel cake and festival bites SNACK

Grab a warm funnel cake at Fife and Drum to share, then hit the nearest Flower and Garden Festival Outdoor Kitchen for a couple of festival plates; the booths change each year but usually feature fresh, shareable small plates. This is peak eat-around-the-world territory.

- Split one funnel cake among the four of you
- Festival booths and Refreshment Port take mobile order at busy times
- Use the festival passport to track booth stamps, the kids love it
- Restroom in the American Adventure rotunda

4:40 PM
to 5:00 PM

Japan: Mitsukoshi, taiko drums, and shaved ice SHOW

The Japan pavilion has the huge Mitsukoshi department store with Pokemon, Kit Kats, and kimono, the striking torii gate over the lagoon, and often taiko drumming by Matsuriza on the pagoda steps. Grab Kaki Gori shaved ice from Kabuki Cafe. Theo will love hunting for toys and watching the koi.

The Japan pavilion, EPCOT World Showcase

- Kaki Gori shaved ice is the family snack pick
- †† Restroom near the pavilion
- Best photo: the red torii gate framed against World Showcase Lagoon
- Check the times board for the Matsuriza taiko drum performance
- Kidcot stop inside Mitsukoshi

→ **Next.** Teppan Edo upstairs is your hibachi dinner option if you want the knife show for the kids; Morocco is next.

5:00 PM
to 5:20 PM

Morocco: Aladdin and Jasmine and the bazaar SHOW

Morocco is the most intricately built pavilion, a real maze of tiled alleys; Aladdin and Jasmine often meet here and the kids can wander the bazaar. Grab baklava or a mint tea. It is a quieter, atmospheric stop as the light softens toward evening.

The Morocco pavilion, EPCOT World Showcase

- Aladdin and Jasmine meet times are in the app
- Restroom at the back of the pavilion
- Best photo: the Koutoubia Minaret and the tiled courtyard
- Baklava from the bakery is the snack pick
- Kidcot stop in the market

5:20 PM
to 5:28 PM

Transit: cross to France for the evening TRANSIT

Continue clockwise along the promenade from Morocco to France; it is a short, pretty, lagoon-side walk as the sun starts to drop.

The France pavilion, EPCOT World Showcase

Walking about 8 minutes

5:20 PM ○ Board, Morocco pavilion

5:28 PM ● Arrive, France pavilion

- Put light layers on soon, the evening drops toward the low 60s
- This stretch has lovely golden-hour photos over the water
- Restrooms between Morocco and France

5:30 PM
to 6:00 PM

France: Remy's Ratatouille Adventure RIDE

Remy is a trackless 4D dark ride that shrinks you to the size of a rat scurrying through Gusteau's kitchen; it is gentle, immersive, and a favorite for all ages. Use your Lightning Lane Multi Pass return here, since standby often runs long into the evening. This is your last big ride of the day.

- No height minimum; gentle for the whole family
- 3D glasses are provided at the door
- Water refill at Les Halles Boulangerie
- Use your Multi Pass return to skip a standby that can top 60 minutes
- Closest restroom is in the France pavilion near the boulangerie
- Best photo: the oversized Paris-alley facade of the ride building

→ **Next.** Les Halles Boulangerie Patisserie next door is the best bakery in World Showcase; Belle and Aurora meet nearby.

Plan B. If the Multi Pass window is tight against your dinner reservation, ride first and push dinner 15 minutes; Remy loads quickly with Lightning Lane.

Dinner 6:00 PM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Rose and Crown Dining Room

EPCOT, United Kingdom, World Showcase • British pub • $$

Lagoon-side tables mean a possible Luminous view; classic pub comfort food the whole family enjoys.

ORDER fish and chips, bangers and mash, sticky toffee pudding

Book 60 days out and request lagoon-side with a late seating

On the promenade right where your evening ends

Le Cellier Steakhouse

EPCOT, Canada, World Showcase • Canadian steakhouse • $$$

The celebrated splurge in a cozy chateau cellar; a memorable first-trip dinner.

ORDER cheddar cheese soup, filet mignon, pretzel bread

One of EPCOT's toughest tables, book 60 days out

In the Canada pavilion, a few minutes past the UK

Teppan Edo

EPCOT, Japan, World Showcase • Japanese hibachi • $$$

A table-side knife-and-flame show that both kids will love as dinner entertainment.

ORDER teppanyaki steak and shrimp, fried rice, green tea ice cream

Book 60 days out

Upstairs in the Japan pavilion on the loop

6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Dinner in World Showcase MEAL

Time for the family dinner. The three strong picks all sit on this back half of the loop: Rose and Crown in the UK for a lagoon-side table with a possible Luminous view, Le Cellier in Canada for a splurge steakhouse, or Teppan Edo in Japan for a hibachi knife-and-flame show the kids will love. Reserve ahead. Note this is the family dinner, not Dana's one calm grown-up dinner, which is better saved for another night this week.

- Reserve 60 days out; these are among the hardest EPCOT tables
- Restrooms at each pavilion near the restaurant
- For a Luminous view from your table, request Rose and Crown lagoon-side with a late seating
- Frame dinner for the kids as a sit-down rest before the fireworks

→ **Next.** You finish dinner within a short walk of a prime Luminous viewing spot on the UK or Canada shoreline.

7:30 PM to 7:45 PM

Canada: O Canada film and cheddar soup SHOW

After dinner, drift into Canada for the beautiful Circle-Vision film and the gardens; if anyone still has room, the cheddar cheese soup at Le Cellier or the Refreshment Port is a beloved bite. The Hotel du Canada and the waterfall gardens glow at dusk.

The Canada pavilion, EPCOT World Showcase

- O Canada is a standing 360 film, about 14 minutes, air-conditioned
- Restroom near the pavilion entrance
- Refreshment Port at the Canada corner has the croissant doughnut and poutine
- Best photo: the Victoria Gardens and the chateau at golden hour

Snack 7:45 PM

THREE WAYS TO DO IT

OUR PICK

Pineapple Promenade

EPCOT, festival booth near the promenade • Frozen pineapple treats • $

The classic DOLE Whip and frozen pineapple, a perfect cool evening treat before the show.

ORDER DOLE Whip, frozen pineapple, add rum for the grown-ups, pineapple soft serve

None

A festival booth on the World Showcase promenade

Refreshment Port

EPCOT, Canada corner, World Showcase • Quick-service snacks • $

The famous croissant doughnut and poutine, right by your Luminous viewing area.

ORDER croissant doughnut, poutine, soft serve

None

At the Canada corner near your fireworks spot

Les Halles Boulangerie Patisserie

EPCOT, France, World Showcase • French bakery • $

The best bakery in World Showcase for a sweet French finish to the eat-around.

ORDER crème brûlée, chocolate croissant, éclair

None

In the France pavilion

7:45 PM to 8:05 PM

Sunset and a final festival snack SNACK

The sun sets around 7:35, so take a beat to enjoy the light over the lagoon and grab one last festival treat: a DOLE Whip or frozen pineapple from Pineapple Promenade, a croissant doughnut at the Canada Refreshment Port, or crème brûlée from Les Halles. Layer up as it cools into the low 60s.

- Pineapple Promenade DOLE Whip is the classic evening treat
- Restroom before you stake your spot; lines grow after the show
- Put the kids' jackets on now before they get chilly at the show
- Top off water and phones now

8:05 PM to 8:20 PM

Restroom and charging before Luminous LOGISTICS

Do a final family restroom stop and top off phones on the portable charger before you claim your viewing spot; both get crowded right before and right after the show. Confirm the exact Luminous showtime in the app, typically 9:00 PM.

- Nearest restrooms are at the UK and Canada pavilions
- Double-check the showtime in My Disney Experience
- Charge phones now for photos and the walk home

8:20 PM to 9:00 PM

Claim a Luminous viewing spot LOGISTICS

Stake out a lagoon-side railing on the UK-to-Canada shoreline or near the front bridges; any open view across World Showcase Lagoon works because Luminous uses fireworks, fountains, lasers, and lights all the way around the water. Sitting on a curb keeps tired kids comfortable through the wait.

- Any open lagoon view works, you do not need the front row
- Keep the kids seated on a curb or the portable mat during the wait
- The UK and International Gateway side is smart for a faster exit afterward
- Have a snack and the charger ready for the roughly 40-minute hold

Plan B. If the kids are too tired to wait 40 minutes, watch from wherever you are standing; Luminous is visible from most of the promenade, and you can start walking out during the finale to beat the crush.

9:00 PM to 9:20 PM

Luminous The Symphony of Us SHOW

EPCOT's nighttime spectacular fills World Showcase Lagoon with fireworks, dancing fountains, lasers, and beloved Disney songs in a story about our shared humanity. It runs about 18 minutes and is the perfect capstone to a first Disney day. Ellie will track the fireworks arcing all the way around the lagoon while Theo locks onto the dancing fountains; hold the kids up at the railing and let them soak it in.

- Runs about 18 minutes
- Best photo: a wide shot of fireworks over the fountains, then lower your phone for the finale and just watch
- Fireworks launch around and over the lagoon, so a wide view beats a narrow one
- Cover Theo's ears if the fireworks are loud for him

9:20 PM to 9:35 PM

Exit EPCOT toward the bus loop LOGISTICS

As the finale fades, move with the crowd toward the front entrance and the bus loop; leaving a moment early or a moment late both beat the exact-end crush. Keep the family linked hand-in-hand through the dark, busy promenade.

- The front entrance bus loop is your Grand Floridian pickup, not the monorail for this trip
- Pick a meeting point in case anyone gets separated in the crowd
- Restroom at the entrance before the ride home if needed

9:35 PM
to 9:55 PM

Transit: EPCOT back to the Grand Floridian TRANSIT

Take the direct resort bus back from the EPCOT bus loop; it is the fastest way home late at night and avoids a monorail transfer at the TTC. Tired kids can zone out for the short ride.

Direct resort bus to the Grand Floridian about 20 minutes with post-show loading

9:35 PM ○ Board, EPCOT front entrance bus loop

9:55 PM ● Arrive, Grand Floridian bus depot

Or: The EPCOT monorail to the TTC then a transfer to the resort monorail also works, but the post-fireworks monorail line is long; the bus is the better late-night call

- Post-show bus lines look long but move fast with multiple buses cycling
- Be ready to carry Theo the last stretch if he is asleep on his feet
- Use the wait to hydrate and let phones charge

9:55 PM

Back at the Grand Floridian, wind down LOGISTICS

You are home. A warm shower washes off the sunscreen and the day, and everyone should hydrate before bed. Set a gentler alarm tomorrow since this was a long, full day, and let Theo the slow riser sleep in a bit.

- Rehydrate everyone before bed after a warm day of walking
- Lay out tomorrow's plan before lights-out
- Plug in all phones and MagicBands overnight