

Destination Disney - Balancing Fun and Food Allergies

Gina Clowes, AllergyMoms ~ Disney has a well-earned reputation for accommodating special dietary needs. But there is still a little extra leg work needed on the part of Disney and the guests themselves. So we asked Joel Schaefer, Disney's Special Dietary Needs Manager, how to plan to dine safely at Walt Disney world. Here's what Joel shared with us this month ...

When planning a Disney vacation with a food allergic child, how far in advance do I need to contact Walt Disney World?

If your child has multiple allergies, it is best to contact us three months ahead of time or before you book your trip. We will supply you with the most current information for you to make an informed decision.

If your child has a single food allergy, when you make your dining reservations, indicate their allergy. Most restaurants and counter service locations can accommodate single allergy requests. Simply ask to speak to a chef or manager upon arrival.

Do you still have a form for guests with special dietary needs?

Yes. We can send the form to the Guest by email so the Guest can fill it out and return to us. This form contains information on specific allergies, food that can be eaten or not eaten, and reservations. The form is then sent to the chefs in the indicated dining locations.

I'd like to get a feel for what types of meals and snacks are available at the different parks. How can I do this?

We have a variety of specialty snacks that are available at most locations. Please contact us ahead of time for the most updated list of products and where they are located. Menus, vendors and products may change.

I'm uncomfortable with buffets but I don't want my son to miss some of the fun character breakfasts. Could we make special arrangements so that my child's meal is prepared separately?

Depending on your child's allergies, buffets may not be the best options for you. Foods are prepared in a central kitchen and we cannot guarantee that the chef's will be able to prepare food separately. [See below for tips on dining at table service locations.]

My child has celiac's disease. Are there kid-friendly options for her? I would love for my child to be able to experience Mickey Mouse waffles and a safe cookie or brownie.

We have a variety of options for Guests with celiac disease and most locations have gluten-free pancake and waffle mix. You will need to contact us ahead of time to see what locations can accommodate your request.

Do you use peanut oil in the parks?

Our current fryer oil is made from High oleic canola oil.

Do you offer Kosher meals?

Yes! Kosher Meals are available at the following Walt Disney World® Resort quick service locations with no advance notice needed:

- World Premiere Food Court at Disney's All- Star Movies Resort
- Intermission Food Court at Disney's All- Star Music Resort
- Riverside Mill Food Court at Disney's Port Orleans Resort - Riverside
- End Zone Food Court at Disney's All-Star Sports Resort
- Pizzafari at Disney's Animal Kingdom® Theme Park
- Old Port Royale Food Court at Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort
- ABC Commissary at Disney-MGM Studios
- Everything Pop Shopping and Dining at Disney's Pop Century Resort
- Cosmic Ray's Starlight Cafe at Magic Kingdom® Park
- Liberty Inn at Epcot®
- Electric Umbrella at Epcot
- Artist's Palette at Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort & Spa
- Gasparilla's at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa

- The Mara at Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge

What is the procedure for making a special dietary request at table service locations?

1. Call the Dining Reservation Center at 407-WDW-DINE or (407) 939-3463.
2. Indicate to the Cast Member your special dietary requests.
3. Your special dietary request will be noted by the Cast Member on your reservation.
4. Write down the dining location phone number that the Cast Member provides you, as well as your reservation number and the day and time of your reservation.
5. Contact your dining location at least 72 hours in advance to discuss your special dietary request with the chef, manager or food and beverage representative.
6. Please feel welcome to speak to the chef or manager on duty when you arrive at your dining location.

What about when you don't want to make a reservation and just want a quick bite to eat? Are there counter service locations within each park that can accommodate special dietary requests?

Yes, for counter service at Disney's Animal Kingdom® Park, you might try:

- Restaurantosaurus (located in DinoLand U.S.A.®)
- Flame Tree Barbecue (located between Asia and DinoLand U.S.A.®)
- Harambe Fruit Market

For additional information, contact Disney's Animal Kingdom® Special Diet line at 407-938-3288 or by e-mail at wdwkspecialdiets@email.disney.com.

For counter service at Disney's Hollywood Studios, you might try:

- Sunset Ranch Market
- Backlot Express
- Studio Catering Company
- ABC Commissary
- Toy Story Pizza Planet

For additional information contact the Disney's Hollywood Studios Special Diet line at 407-560- 3551 or by e-mail at wdwstspecialdiets@email.disney.com.

For counter service Epcot®, you might try:

- Liberty Inn (located at The American Adventure in World Showcase)
- Sunshine Seasons (located in The Land Presented by Nestlé®)

For additional information, contact Epcot Special Diet line at 407-560-6395 or by e-mail at wdwecspecialdiets@email.disney.com.

For counter service at the Magic Kingdom, you might try:

- Cosmic Ray's Starlight Café (located in Tomorrowland®)
- Pecos Bill Tall Tale Inn and Café (located in Frontierland®)
- Main Street Bakery
- Toontown Farmer's Market
- Liberty Square Market
- Pinocchio's Village House

For additional information, contact Magic Kingdom® Park Special Diet Line at 407-824-5967 or by e-mail at wdwmkspecialdiets@email.disney.com.

The DISNEY CRUISE LINE special dietary request information is located at www.disneycruise.com or phone Disney Cruise Vacations at 1-800-951- 3532

For more information, see Disney's Special Dietary Requests, Disney Dining FAQ's, and Disney Magic.

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