

THE CASTLE CONNECT

The monthly newsletter for Castle Connections Travel



Epcot's International Food and Wine Festival

It's almost time to eat and drink your way around the World! That's right, Epcot's International Food and Wine Festival is just around the corner, starting on August 30th with the fun going on until November 12th. This year will continue many fan favorite events like 'Eat to the Beat', but will also include a few new events like 'Mix It, Shake It, Celebrate It' - a workshop that gives guests the opportunity to learn from professional chefs in garnishing, cocktail mixing, cake decorating, and other culinary activities. Some events, like seminars at the Food and Wine festival, are low cost or free but just know that the premium special events can get on the expensive side. Eat to the Beat will also be back for 2018, this concert series is included with theme park admission and takes place three times a day at the American Gardens Theater, across from the American Adventure in Epcot's World Showcase. This year artists that are scheduled to perform include Boyz II Men, Sugar Ray, Smash Mouth, 98 Degrees, Hanson, and many others! During the Food and Wine Festival you are able to experience several different food options including several food booths that are only available during the festival. If you are taking advantage of the Disney Dining Plan then you are able to use your snack credits for many of the food options located throughout Epcot. New this year are more things geared towards families, including a new playground and a Junior Chef Experience, where kiddos can learn cooking basics and food preparation. Who knows you might just have the next MasterChef Junior living in your house! If you are looking to enjoy this festival while on vacation, we recommend trying to visit Epcot a weekday as it is significantly less crowded. For more information on this can't miss event, contact Castle Connections Travel or visit our Facebook page! -@LindsayCastleConnectionsTravel

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- **INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL** : This can't miss festival in Epcot starts on August 30th.
- **AULANI** : Find out information on Disney's newest travel destination located in Hawaii.
- **DESSERT PARTY** : Exploring the new VIP way to experience the nighttime firework displays.

Parents Planning Disney

On our Disney Planning Facebook page we asked members, 'What's your favorite Disney Mountain?' Here are the results:

- Expedition Everest - 35%
- Space Mountain - 25%
- Splash Mountain - 25%
- Thunder Mountain - 15%

Join our facebook page ([facebook.com/groups/parentsplanningdisney](https://www.facebook.com/groups/parentsplanningdisney)) to get all your Disney questions answered and to take part in our poll next month!

Disney Fun Fact:

The size of the entire Walt Disney World resort is 40 Square miles (thats more than 27,000 acres), or the size of San Francisco. But only 35% of this land has actually been developed so far! In comparison, Disneyland resort in Anaheim, CA is only 510 acres. Just for perspective, you could fit 53 Disneyland Resorts inside Walt Disney World!



Unleash your Inner Wizard in Diagon Alley at Universal Studios

Have you ever dreamed of casting magical spells, or riding on the back of a fire breathing dragon? Universal Studios Orlando sets the scene where you can do just that! Come and explore Diagon Alley and unleash your inner wizard! Imagine standing at Kings Cross on platform 9 3/4, and stepping through the brick wall right into the magic of the Wizarding World. The first stop for any respectable witch or wizard is Ollivanders. Upon stepping inside you will be greeted by towering walls with thousands of wands to choose from. If you are among the lucky, Ollivander himself will help your wand choose you! If you're really getting into the spirit of this magical venue, pop into Madam Malkin's Robes for all Occasions, where any fashion forward witch or wizard can purchase the newest fashions. Which house do you represent?

To continue reading this blog by @KarenCCT, head to www.thecastleconnection.blog

Have you ever considered taking a Disney cruise?

If you haven't before, maybe you should. They offer a wide variety of ports and destinations, including Alaska, the Bahamas/ Caribbean, Baja and the Mexican Riviera, and Europe. They even offer Panama Canal and trans-Atlantic crossings! With different cruise lengths available, from short 3 or 4 night cruises all the way up to extravagant 14 night sailings, and with sailings from different ports, the possibilities are endless! And even more exciting- Disney is expanding their current four ship fleet to seven, with the addition of 3 new luxurious ships by 2023. There has never been a better time to cruise Disney. What are you waiting for?



Remaining Event for 2018:

August 17 - October 31 – Mickey's Not So Scary

Halloween Party: This Halloween, join Mickey and his friends at the Magic Kingdom for 34 nights of "not so scary" fun at Mickey's Not-So-Scary Halloween Party. During this separate ticketed event, the Magic Kingdom is transformed into a kid-friendly "Spooky" Party including a special parade, fireworks, and even unlimited candy stations. To make this party even better this is one of the only times the ENTIRE family can dress up and go trick or treating throughout the Magic Kingdom!

August 30 - November 12 – Epcot's International Food and Wine Festival:

Fall has a special meaning in Orlando, it means its Food and Wine time! Epcot International Food & Wine Festival will return to Walt Disney World this fall with 75 days of entertainment, events, and, of course, an endless variety of wonderful food and tasty beverages to try. Extra food booths are brought out just for this event and this year's festival will continue its tradition of fine dining events, appearances by favorite Disney culinary experts and top celebrity chefs.

August 30 - November 12 – Eat to the Beat:

Each night during the Epcot International Food & Wine Festival, the America Gardens Theatre serves up free performances from major recording artists. This year, musical guests include 32 incredible performers—the biggest line up yet.

November 1 - November 4 – Wine and Dine Half

Marathon: This marathon weekend includes: Disney Fall Feast 5K, Disney Wine & Dine 10K, runDisney Kids Races and the Disney Wine & Dine Half Marathon finishes off the weekend. Plus, runners can take on the Disney Two Course Challenge, combining the 10K and Half Marathon, to earn the coveted Challenge medal. You won't want to miss this event where there will be plenty of surprises, Disney entertainment and an exclusive Post-Race Party for runners and their guests! Registration for this race is still open!

November 8 - December 21 – Mickey's Very Merry

Christmas Party: Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party takes place on select evenings at Magic Kingdom during November and December. This separate ticketed event features exclusive holiday entertainment, complimentary treats, and even snow falling on Main St. (snow in Florida.. WHAT?!) This can't miss party is fun for the whole family, and even includes a special Holiday parade and firework show!

November 22 - December 30 – Epcot's Festival of the Holidays and Candlelight Processional:

The Epcot International Festival of the Holidays invites park guests to discover holiday cheer throughout the park and across all 11 World Showcase pavilions. Special entertainment, storytellers, seasonal favorites at Holiday Kitchens, and unique holiday decor are all part of the fun. The Candlelight Processional, a holiday must-do for many Epcot guests, is a retelling of the traditional Christmas story read by a celebrity narrator, accompanied by a massed choir and live orchestra. If you are looking to get into the Holiday spirit, the Candlelight Processional is a can't miss event!

Tip from an agent:

Do you have little ones that can't or don't want to ride? Have one parent & non-riding child wait outside while the rest of the party walks through the queue as normal. Then let a cast member know you are doing Rider Switch. They will give you a Rider Switch Pass (like a Fast Pass). You simply enjoy the attraction as normal and exit. Then, you hand the person waiting with the child outside the Rider Switch Pass and they go through the fast pass line with up to 2 additional riders. This way everyone gets to ride and you DON'T have to wait in line twice!!

-@LindsayCastleConnectionsTravel



Who hasn't thought about a beautiful Hawaiian vacation?

If you were considering a trip to paradise, why not consider Disney's Aulani Resort and Spa located on the western shore of O'ahu on the beautiful beaches of Ko Olina. Room or villas are available that boast stunning views of the gardens or the ocean. You can swim or work on your tan at the Keiko Cove splash zone; zero-entry Waikolohe Pool; infinity-edge family pool Ka Maka Groto; a protected cove perfect for young swimmers called Ko Olina or the adults only Wailana Pool. You can get a close-up look at beautiful fish at Rainbow Reef which is the only private snorkeling lagoon on O'ahu. There are activities for every age group, including Auntie's Beach House for guests ages 3 to 12. Right now we have a fantastic offer: Book 3 nights and get the 4th night free for travel dates 8/20-12/21/18. If you are ready for your trip to paradise and want a great deal please contact us for additional information.



The Beck family (Joel, Jenny, Zach and Anna) has Disney connections to some of their best family vacation memories. Everyone loves going to WDW and always enjoys checking out new additions to the parks and the different hotels, says Joel. Their favorite time for a WDW getaway is anytime but summer. Their recent trips have been during Thanksgiving week and during the Christmas season when the parks are decorated and the weather is great. Joel has also completed two half-marathons at WDW including one this past January during the RunDisney Marathon Weekend, and several years ago the whole family did the Family 5K during Marathon Weekend.

"Whenever we think about planning a trip to Disney, I call Ruby Anne at Castle Connections Travel first," said Joel. "She's helped us with advice on vacation planning, reservations, and of course, saving money," he said. Now, the Beck family is planning a getaway to WDW for later this year and looking forward to making more great memories.

What is...A Galactic Spectacular Dessert Party?

The Star Wars: A Galactic Spectacular Dessert Party takes place in the Launch Bay in Hollywood Studios. The party we attended started at 7:30pm, but times vary depending on the time of year. The tables inside the event do not have chairs, so you will be standing the entire time.

Stormtroopers and Jawas walk around randomly and you can still stand in line to get your photo with some of the Star Wars characters located in the Launch Bay. The desserts station have a huge range of delicious options which include themed cupcakes, cookies, rice crispies and a blue milk panna cotta. There is also a freeze dried Nutella station. They take a scoop of Nutella and dip into a pool of liquid nitrogen, in seconds you receive a frozen dessert (think chocolate mousse) that you can then add toppings or sauces to. When the sweets get a bit overwhelming, they also have a station with hummus, cheeses and fruits. Alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks are available (and unlimited). The alcoholic drink menu consisted of Galactic Punch, Cosmic Citrus Twist, Light Speed Margarita and Swamp Milk (the only one I didn't try). About 15 minutes before the start of the Galactic Spectacular Fireworks show, you are escorted by Stormtroopers to a roped off viewing area right in the front of the Chinese Theatre. You receive a bottle of water and a special commemorative stein (used to be Chewbacca, now it is Captain Phasma). Cost is \$79 for Adults and \$45 for Children (ages 3-9), park admission is required. I would definitely like to do this again....maybe next year after Stars Wars Lands opens in Fall 2018! Dessert parties are also offered on select nights at the Magic Kingdom, Epcot, and now Animal Kingdom.



Military Discounts:

Here at CCT, we are very thankful for our troops; and so is Disney! Disney offers some pretty awesome deals for our active duty and retired military. The biggest discount offered is their Stars and Stripes promotional ticket. Disney offers a 5 day hopper pass for \$246 dollars (That's a \$226 savings!). Contact your favorite CCT agent for more information on these deeply discounted tickets. If that wasn't enough, Disney offers a 30% to 40% off rack room rates. There is only a select number of rooms reserved at each resort, so make sure you reserve your room well in advance. 2019 Military rates are expected to be released this fall!



Who is Castle Connections Travel?

Castle Connections Travel is owned by 2 sisters who decided to turn a love for Disney into a business. Our 12 agents are located all across the United States and have a first-hand experience and knowledge of all things Walt Disney World, Disneyland, Disney Cruise Line, Adventures By Disney, Aulani (a Disney Resort and Spa in Ko Olina, Hawaii), Universal Studios Orlando, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, and Norwegian Cruise Line. Castle Connections Travel is an EarMarked Agency meaning we are recognized by Disney for our extensive knowledge of the Disney company and the value our agency provides to our clients. When planning your vacation with Castle Connections Travel you will work one-on-one with the same agent during the entire booking process, which ensures the best care is given to your vacation experience. In addition we constantly monitor your reservation for possible discounts, we do all we can to save you money AND do our very best to make sure you have a memorable vacation. And the VERY best part about booking your vacation with Castle Connections... **our services are ALWAYS 100% FREE!** - Ruby Anne and Lisa

Hidden Mickey Caramel Apple Slices

DIRECTIONS:

1. Slice apples about 1/2" thick.
2. Cut out a Mickey shape from the middle of each slice using a 3/4" round pastry cutter for the head and the back of a round pastry tip for the ears.
3. Melt light cocoa candy melts.
4. Place apples onto parchment paper and using a silicon pastry brush, spread melted chocolate on outer edge of the apple slices.
5. Coat with chopped almonds.
6. Melt caramel.
7. Place in a disposable bag, cut tip, and pipe caramel into Mickey cavity.
8. Chill for 15 minutes, or until the caramel is set.



INGREDIENTS:

- Apples
- 3/4" round pastry cutter
- Round pastry tip
- Light cocoa candy melts
- Chopped almonds
- Caramel
- Pastry bag

Current Promotion

Have you heard about the **ULTIMATE DISNEY FALL INTO MAGIC PACKAGE?**

This unique 4 day /5 night package is offered only from September 3 to 8, 2018 at select Disney Resort hotels. Guests will enjoy a 5-night stay at select Walt Disney World Moderate, Deluxe or Deluxe Villa Resorts and will also receive 4-day Magic Your Way theme park tickets with Park Hopper Option. This offer also includes the following:

- 9/4 - exclusive "Welcome to Fall" dinner at Epcot
- 9/5 - Nighttime Kilimanjaro Safari
- 9/6 - Two hours of access to Toy Story Land
- 9/7 - Tickets to Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party

For more information on additional promotions for a Disney vacation, please visit our Facebook page (facebook.com/CastleConnectionsTravel)

For a FREE no obligation quote on your next dream vacation, call

(678) 957-7500

or visit us at www.castleconnectionstravel.com



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CastleConnections TRAVEL
 740 Brand South Tr
 Lawrenceville, GA 30046