

Gluten Free at Disney World

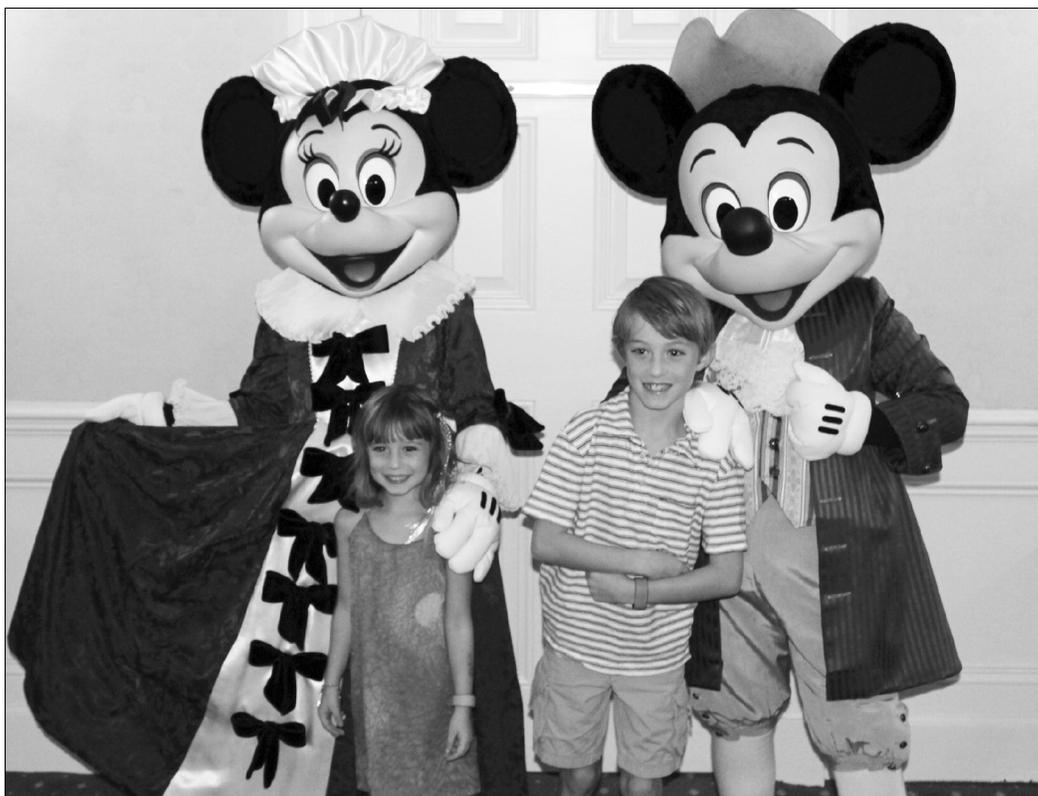
CHRISTINE WANTMAN

They say it is the most magical place on Earth, and when it comes to eating gluten free, they may be right! Our family traveled to Disney World in Florida this past October, and we had a wonderful vacation enjoying the rides, pool, fireworks, parades and the food! Our 6-year old daughter Chloe, who has celiac disease, wanted to share some of her gluten-free finds with all of you (in case you are planning a trip to Disney World)!

As we all know, the key is to plan ahead! Disney Dining allows you to make dining reservations up to 6 months prior to your stay at the sit down/formal dining restaurants. When making online reservations, there is a drop-down menu to identify Special Dietary Requests, including gluten free, kosher, nut free and more. If you are not able or do not want to make reservations ahead of time, all of the sit-down formal dining restaurants can accommodate your special request upon arrival at the restaurant. The chef and/or manager will review the menu options and prepare the meal separately.

Chloe enjoyed gluten-free pasta in Italy, gluten-free tacos in Mexico at EPCOT and gluten-free burgers at ESPN Club at The Boardwalk. The best was seeing our little princess devour gluten-free waffles at Cinderella's Royal Table at the Castle in Magic Kingdom.

On the Disney website and mobile app, there is a list of the casual and quick service restaurants in all of the parks and resorts that can accommodate a special request, although it is not possible to pre-order or make reservations. We simply asked for a manager, who presented us with a



special menu from which to choose. Items were prepared by the chef and served by the manager.

Chloe enjoyed gluten-free pizza at Pizza Planet at Hollywood Studios, gluten-free chicken nuggets and fries at Restaurantaurus in Animal Kingdom and a turkey sandwich on gluten-free bread at Liberty Tavern in Magic Kingdom. One of her favorite treats was BabyCakes (from New York City) gluten-free cupcakes at Downtown Disney!

This year, Disney launched a new program to offer better access to guests with dietary requests. A pilot kiosk in Animal Kingdom called the Garden Kiosk is offering healthy and allergy-friendly snacks in addition to brochures to help guests locate allergy-friendly dining options in the park. Chloe could chose from carrots and bananas to hummus with rice chips! A Disney staff member said that if the kiosk is successful in Animal Kingdom, more will be available at the other parks.

It was also helpful that the sundries shop at our resort was stocked with gluten-free snacks, like Kind bars, Chex cereal, Lays chips and fresh fruit.

Needless to say, Chloe had a full and happy belly at Disney!