

NHShorty and BuffaloBill's April 21 – 25, 2013 Trip Report

Day 4, April 24th

Today started out earlier than usual because we were going take exercise path from the WL to one of our favorite breakfast places, The Trail's End Restaurant in Fort Wilderness. The only thing missing from this little plan was the potential to set off a door alarm and get caught in a "backstage" area.

Below are the views from our villa porch. Since we were nearly at the extreme end of the villa building, the bottom picture shows excellent view of the driveway used by laundry and trash vehicles. At the far end of the driveway is the service road that goes between the WL and FW. To me all of this spells one thing...S-H-O-R-T-C-U-T.



Across the hall from our studio was the door to the stairway. With NHShorty keeping an eye out for CM's, I push opened the door and found this...



I know, it's anti-climactic, but it was what I was hoping to find. Like the Beatles escape scene in a Hard Day's Night, we zipped down the stairs into an area with filled with laundry carts, recycling bins, and a couple of startled mouse-keeping CM's. Right in front of us was an exit door and a sign that said something about an alarm. Luckily, the CM's had propped open the door to get some fresh air. So, with a smile and a wave to the CM's, we were outside. Here's NHShorty next to a backup generator (note the theming detail of the faux rusty exhaust muffler on top).



To the left of the generator was this lovely view.



From the area near the generator I was able to take a picture of our porch (top floor on the left).



We walked down the driveway, crossed the WL/FW service road, and traipsed through 10 feet of wild Florida vegetation and we were on our way to FW via the exercise path. Not a bad way to start the day.



We were enjoying our walk until we heard a rustling in the foliage and out came another furry gecko!



We made a quick getaway and arrived at FW near the horse barn and black smith shop.



Along the way NShorty picked a flower from this Hibiscus tree. And here's a shot of Pioneer Hall with the Trails End further on down the way.



Breakfast was great in terms of food quality, attentive service, and price. We really recommend the Trails End. This is a hidden Mickey I found in the whipped cream on the buffet.



After breakfast we headed down to the FW marina. Here's a picture of the Trails End from the marina area and the world famous Lawnmower Tree that should be re-named the Lawnmower Stump. The Lawnmower Tree sign is gone; will the stump be far behind?



We didn't walk back to the WL, we took a boat. Along the way, we captured the Grand 1 from the GFR and some of the external work going on at the California Grill.



Feeling the need for even more adventure, we rented a Boston Whaler Montauk from the WL marina. Look at the size of that engine and the full throttle wake it is churning up.



The CM at the marina went over the rules of Bay Lake and the Seven Seas Lagoon, but he said the most important thing to remember is to avoid the big ferries running between the TTC and the MK. Basically, they go when and where they want to go and they have the right-of-way even if they really don't. Here are some self-explanatory pictures.



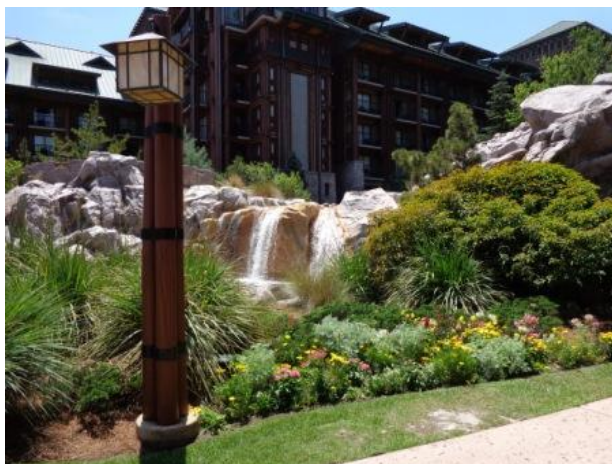






We thoroughly enjoyed puttering and we only had 1 run-in with the authorities (nothing too serious).

After giving the boat back to the marina CM, we took some pictures of the WL.



Yes, the ugly tall chairs and the chevron rug are still there. Will this madness ever end? Oh, the humanity.

And now some pictures of the WL Villas. Pictured below is the covered walkway between the WL and the villas, Walt memorabilia in the reading room, some of the cars from Walt's backyard train, and some artsy shots of the villa lobby.



After our boating experience and WL picture taking, we loaded up the White Streak and headed to HS. Parking and park entry went very smoothly and the crowd level was pretty low. Nevertheless, when we tried to get on Tower o'Terror we were stopped in our tracks by this group a tough looking CMs.



The Tower was down for repair and these ruffians and thugs were turning away guests with stern looks, blue shirts and khaki pants. Frankly, I was so terrified I had to go ride RRC by myself to calm down.

About half an hour later, we again tried to ride Tower of Terror. Fortunately the khaki pants gang had left the area and we were able to just about walk on.

In addition to RRC and Tower of Terror, we also rode Star Tours 3 times and the Great Movie Ride once. Along the way we met a genuine rock star, Morris Mulch. It was good to see Morris and his family again.



After running into Morris and the guys from Mulch, Sweat and Shears, it was time for our combination ADR at the Brown Derby followed by Fantasmic.

The Brown Derby was quite good. We both had the Bibb Lettuce Salad and Char Grilled Filet of Beef.



For dessert, NHShorty had the Citrus Honey Nest - Filled with Candied Ginger Blueberries over a lemon Cheesecake and I continued my quest to taste all the different versions of Crème Brulee served at WDW by having the Double Vanilla Bean Creme Brulee served with a dark chocolate dipped biscotti.



Following dessert we headed over to the *special* seating area at Fantasmic that was reserved for the *special* people who had booked the *special* combination dinner and Fantasmic package. Be sure to note the *special* view we had of a *special* pole. It was truly *special*, indeed.



Seriously, in spite of the obstructed view, Fantasmic was good show. We've seen it multiple times, so it felt a little dated, but the presentation and execution was flawless.

After Fantasmic, we did a bit of light shopping and headed back to the WL. Like all the previous nights of this trip, we fell back into our villa exhausted.

Stay tuned for our last day in WDW where we will disclose some exciting news about the PDA couple in the gazebo!