

Picniq



Picniq's Disneyland® Paris guide:

Claire's ultimate Disneyland® Paris guide for **first-timers!**

A bit from Claire:

I can still remember the excitement of booking our first family trip to Disneyland® Paris – it really is the most magical place, and if you've booked or you're thinking of booking, you're in for a holiday of a lifetime. However, I also remember how much there was to do and see, so it really does pay to plan in advance. So, to help you get started and make sure you have the very best experience, I've pulled together my top tips for Disneyland® Paris if you're going for the first time.

Let's go!



#1: Don't underestimate the size of the **parks**

With two parks to explore, there is so much to see and do. You've got Disneyland® Park and its five magical themed lands, and Walt Disney Studios® Park, home to four action-packed zones. If you really want the full Disney experience, I'll always recommend purchasing tickets for both parks – it gives you more options and can help you get the most out of your day. Now that we've been multiple times, we would never just buy 1 park tickets, but it does depend on your budget. And don't forget to pay a visit to Disney Village® too – it's a shopping, dining, and entertainment complex just a few steps from the Disney® Parks.

It's important to note that all Disney® Hotels are around a 10 – 20-minute walk from the main gate, excluding Disney Davy Crockett Ranch, which is a 15-minute drive by car or public transport. There are free shuttle buses, but there's still a fair bit of walking involved, so bear this in mind.

#2: Download the free Disneyland® Paris Mobile **App**

If there is one thing to make sure you do before your trip to Disneyland® Paris, it's to download the free official Disneyland® Paris mobile app via the App Store or Google Play. So many people we speak to forget to do this, and it contains everything you could possibly need to know and so much more – from opening hours of all the parks, to interactive maps and live waiting and show times!

The app also has information about restaurants, entertainment, toilets, and everything else you need to know

#3: Parking & park **entry**

Parking is currently 30 euros a day unless you stay in a Disney® Hotel, in which case you park for free. The car park is pretty big, so be prepared for a bit of walking. Depending on where you park, the walk to the entrance takes about 15-minutes. But don't worry, there are some travelators to help you along the way!

You will walk past Disney Village®, and the Marne-la-Vallée – Chessy train station is on your right. The first stage of entry is via security where bags are scanned, and you walk through metal detectors (think of airport security style). Once you're through, Walt Disney Studios® Park is directly ahead, and Disneyland® Park is to the right. Each park has its own entry gates where your tickets are scanned in order to gain entry to the magic.



Top tip: Take a photo of your parking **spot**

Even if you're not like me and you can generally remember where you park, if you're not staying in a Disney® Hotel and you're driving to the park, we recommend taking a picture of your parking spot. Because, let's be honest, after a full-on, fun-packed day you may not remember exactly where you left the car!

#4: The best time to **arrive**

As with everything, the earlier in the day you arrive the more options you have to maximise your time. And if you stay at a Disney® Hotel, you'll be able to enjoy extra magic each day of your stay with exclusive access before anyone else is allowed in. However, if you aren't an early bird, then I'd still suggest arriving by around mid-morning. We find that once we arrive at the parks, we never want to leave – so usually stay until park closing time. This can be as late as 11pm during peak periods, so bear in mind that you may have a long day ahead.

If it's your first Disney experience, nothing beats the feeling of walking up Main Street, U.S.A.® in the Disneyland® Park, so head there for a magical 'wake up'.

#5: Disney Restaurants & Character **Dining**

Making reservations for your favourite restaurants before you arrive at Disneyland® Paris is highly recommended as tables can get booked up super quickly! You can book within 2 months before you arrive if you have a ticket only booking, or up to 12 months if you stay in a Disney® Hotel.

The official Disneyland® Paris app is the easiest and quickest way to do this. Alternatively, you can contact Disneyland® Paris direct on +33 1 60 30 40 50 but remember international call rates apply and costs may vary according to your network.

I always use the app to book ours, as at the time of booking, with the exception of Character Dining, no payment is taken.

If you've left things a bit last minute don't panic! You can check the app throughout the day as restaurant spaces frequently become available or you can also speak to concierge or guest reception at your hotel or visit City Hall on Main Street, U.S.A.®, which is the main information point in Disneyland® Park.

If all else fails, there are loads of dining options at Disneyland® Paris, and tables are also held back for 'walk-up's, again the only exception to this is the Character Dining.

#6: Meals with Disney **Characters**

Disneyland® Paris Character Dining is an amazing way to meet some of your favourites, whilst eating lots of yummy food! During your meal, Disney Characters will come and say hello and sign your autograph book – it's great fun and will leave your little ones smiling from ear to ear. In fact, even as our children have got older, they still really love to eat and meet the Characters.

Our favourite Character Dining experience is at Plaza Gardens Restaurant on Main Street, U.S.A.®. The food is great and the whole family love meeting 'classic' Disney characters such as Winnie the Pooh, Goofy and Donald Duck. Once again, the official Disneyland® Paris app is the quickest and easiest way to book this, but if you have booked a hotel package with Picniq we can add a Character Dining experience for you.

#7: Character meet and **greet**s

Each day, via the 'Characters' section of the app, you can find the schedule for Character meet and greet's including locations and times. Queues start to build for this around 30-40 minutes before a Character appears.

We've often been lucky and spotted a Character meet and greet in progress in some of the slightly more 'hidden' locations, such as in Adventureland with only a 10-15-minute wait.



Top tip: Hero Training Centre

If you're a MARVEL fan, don't forget to visit the Hero Training Centre in Marvel Avengers Campus where you get to meet a real MARVEL Super Hero! Join a virtual queue on the app as soon as you enter the parks. When you do this, you will be given a time slot and virtual countdown to your experience leaving you free to enjoy other attractions in the meantime.

#8: Turbo-charge your day with Disney Premiere **Access**

Disney Premiere Access at Disneyland® Paris allows quick access to some of the most popular attractions in the parks thanks to a dedicated fast lane! Choose from two ways to overtake the queue, go for maximum flexibility with Disney Premiere Access Ultimate which enables you to enjoy the most popular rides over and over via a quick access lane or pick the specific attractions you want to ride with Disney Premiere Access One which is a 'pay as you go' queue jump option available via the app – I find this a good way to manage spending through a trip depending on queue length and of course the kids ride preferences on any given day!

If you've purchased a hotel and tickets package through Picniq and are looking to purchase Disney Premiere Access, just call our friendly customer service team on 0800 193 1000 who will be able to sort this for you!



Top tip: Rides we always upgrade on

We're guaranteed to always use Disney Premiere Access for Big Thunder Mountain as it's the kids favourite, Spider-Man W.E.B. Adventure, which is a super popular, super fun attraction for all ages. Crush's Coaster is another popular ride that it might be worth considering this upgrade for.

#9: The best rides for younger **children**

Aside from the awesome shows throughout both parks, Fantasyland in the Disneyland® Park is the perfect place to spend time with younger ones. From Peter Pan's Flight to Lancelot Carousel and Dumbo the Flying Elephant, there's plenty to keep them busy.

Many people forget that under Sleeping Beauty Castle (on the left-hand side as you walk up Main Street, U.S.A.®) is a dragon... don't make too much noise, or he'll wake up!

#10: Things to keep the teens **entertained**

No one is too old or too cool for the Disney® Parks! The playful atmosphere means teenagers get caught up in the magic just as quickly as the rest of us. If yours are thrill seekers, then when you won't want to miss Star Wars™ Hyperspace Mountain in Discoveryland in the Disneyland® Park, or head toward the back of the park to Indiana Jones™ and the Temple of Peril – a hidden gem of a rollercoaster with a loop-the-loop and often shorter queue times.

In the Walt Disney Studios® Park, the brand-new Avengers Assemble: Flight Force rollercoaster is also not to be missed, and of course the one that will make the bravest of teens scream is The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror™.

#11: Secure your spot an hour before an **event**

Want to make sure you don't miss the magical shows and parades such as Disney Stars on Parade? We always find our spot at least 30-minutes and sometimes even an hour before these events begin to beat the rush and make sure we get an excellent viewing spot.

Just remember to pack snacks and something to keep the little ones occupied while you wait.

#12: Make the most of Rider **Switch**

There are loads of great services available at Disneyland® Paris to help young families have a truly unforgettable time!

Rider Switch allows parents to take turns on adult rides without having to wait in line a second time – how good is that?

#13: Check the weather **forecast**

It's really important to take a good look at the weather forecast a few days before visiting the park. That way you get can a good idea of what to expect weather-wise and dress accordingly. Layering up has always been a tactic that's worked for us if it looks like it's going to be cold, especially with the kids – the last thing you want is a hot and irritable child in a big coat that's a pain to get on and off.

And of course, don't forget to take a pack-a-mac or poncho for any rain showers!

#14: Bring a pushchair or rent one at the **parks**

You may not think your little ones require a pushchair anymore, but as we've already mentioned this is Disneyland® Paris and there will be a lot of walking as you explore the two magnificent parks. There's been several times when we've visited as a family that the pushchairs you can rent for a fee have come to the rescue of our youngest – these can be found at Town Square Terrace near the Disneyland® Park entrance or from Studio Services at the Walt Disney Studios® Park entrance. Even if you park it in the morning and grab it after lunch ready for an exciting afternoon ahead full of magical shows, parades, and rides, it's really handy to make sure you all make the most of the day.

Plus, no need to worry about the pushchair stopping you from being an adrenaline junkie, as there are designated areas all around the park where you can leave them whilst enjoying the fantastic rides.

#15: Wear comfortable **shoes**

With so much to experience at Disneyland® Paris, you are likely to spend a lot of time walking – so be sure to wear comfortable shoes to avoid getting any nasty blisters.

Stable, comfortable shoes that you have preferably worn before are your best bet.

#16: Bring a portable **charger**

You are going to be wanting to take picture after picture – I mean, you are in Disneyland® Paris after all! So, to avoid your phone running out of battery (I learnt this the hard way), it's worth taking a portable charger with you.

That way you can continue to capture endless special moments without the worry of it draining your battery.



Top tip: Book with **Picniq**

Of course I'm biased, but there are a number of reasons why you should buy your tickets with us:

- 01** We offer a **price promise**, and will always strive to offer the very best deal on your tickets.
- 02** We offer **extra goodies** with your purchase that other providers don't.
- 03** We're an **ABTA member**, so you can book with confidence.
- 04** We have a **friendly team** at the end of a phone, email or WhatsApp if you ever need help.

This should give you a great head start, but if you have any questions that are more specific to your needs then please don't hesitate to get in touch and ask our friendly and knowledgeable customer service team.

And all that's left for me to say is that I hope you have the most magical time ever!

Love Claire x

Picniq

Contact us:

 hello@picniq.co.uk

 [01202 830838](tel:01202830838)

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