

## Indulge./Travel/

## **Family**

## **Double the Pleasure**

Disney World Orlando's latest expansion

BY KIMBERLY BUTTON

Ho would have thought it? At Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Fla., corks are now popping for the first time at Magic Kingdom, the resort's original theme park. An ongoing expansion project is nearly doubling the size of the New Fantasyland and has already brought a slew of improvements and changes, including alcohol on the menu.

French wines and beer (Kronenbourg 1664) now complement the cuisine at the **Be Our Guest** restaurant inside the new Beast's Castle in the *Beauty and the Beast* themed area.



Iconic rooms from the animated classic come to life at the 550-seat restaurant, which transforms from quick-service during the day to an elegant table-service facility at night. Think 20-foot ceilings, majestic chandeliers, a nearly 7-foot rotating music box, and 18-foot windows with views of falling "snow." The Frenchinspired menu pays homage to a 1400s castle feast with dishes such as salmon with a leek fondue and saffron potatoes.

Fantasyland's expansion also introduces two firsts for any Disney park. **Enchanted Tales With Belle** now offers an interactive experience with Beauty and the Beast characters — an experience made even more special with innovative technology that magically transforms a mirror on a seemingly solid wall into an open portal through which guests encounter the princess.

In Storybook Circus, the reimagined **Dumbo the Flying Elephant ride** has doubled in size, with two squadrons of pachyderms rotating side by side. Disney's new wait-time technology helps the park better accommodate the crowds at this popular attraction. You're given a pager and invited to relax with the family in a fanciful, airconditioned circus-themed tent with an indoor playground for the kiddos. When your family's turn to ride rolls around, you get beeped.

Lots of changes, lots to toast with that French wine or beer. 407-934-7639; disneyworld.com



## More good-to-know news for you globe-trotters...

SLEEP After a \$20 million face-lift, the 31-room Weekapaug Inn in Weekapaug, R.I., has reopened, with sweeping views of Quonochontaug Pond, and the Atlantic Ocean just beyond. The sister property to the iconic Ocean House in Watch Hill, R.I., closed in 2007, From \$147, 888-813-7862, weekapauginn.com

- → You can again overnight at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park on Hawaiis Big Island. Its Namakanipaio Campground (with 10 rustic cabins) and Volcano House Hotel closed in 2009, but the refurbished campground recently reopened and the renovated 33-room hotel should be operating soon, perhaps by spring. Cabins from \$55, 866-536-7972; hawaiivolcanohouse.com
- → Two hours north of Sao Paulo, escape into the mountains of Brazil at the **Botanique Hotel & Spa** near the resort town of Campos do Jordão. The hotel's 17 villas and suites are surrounded by 700 acres of forests and botanical gardens. From \$1.200 (meals and gratuities included), botanique.com.br

EAT in Where Chefs Eat, a new book from Phaldon, more than 400 of the world's best chefs reveal their favorite dining spots, from cheap eats to gourmet. Talk about a must-read before your next sojourn. \$1995

SAIL Explore the Mediterranean or Panama Canal aboard Variety Cruises' 223-foot Variety Voyager. The 36-cabin megayacht comes with ample deck space and unobstructed

views of the ocean and ports. It's the first ship accepted into the Preferred Hotels & Resorts' Preferred Boutique Collection. From \$2,990, 800-319-7776; varietycruises.com

SAVE Through its Connections by Abercrombie & Kent, the luxury adventure travel company now offers 17 itineral spanning six continents with average prices 30 percent lower than its Luxury Small Group journeys. Same expertise, same support. In Croatia, a local fisherman teaches how to harvest oysters and a Dubrovnik resident relates her experiences during the Balkan War. 800-5547016; ak-connections.com

EXPLORE The Venice Simplon-Orient-

Express (right) ventures into Scandinavia's heart this year on a six-or eight-day excursion to Stockholm, a first in its storied history on the tracks. Departs Venice on April 8. From \$5,970. 800-524-2420, vsoe.com

→ On Butterfield & Robinson's Morocco Family Biking trip, spend six days seeing all the sights with the kiddos: Marrakech, Berber villages, the High Atlas Mountains, and more. Departs Marrakech March 24. From \$3.995 per person. 866-551-9090; butterfield.com



**DRINK** In the Mill Avenue District in Tempe, Ariz, beer takes top billing at **Handlebar Tempe**. Head to this new drinking hole for a wide selection of tempting European, local, and American craft beers, 680 Mill Ave; 480-474-4888; handlebarazcom — *DON NICHOLS* 

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