

Disney Parks Revises Some Pricing

(Courtesy of Laurie Baratti, TravelPulse)

This week, Disney resorts in California and Florida did something that patrons may witness only once in a lifetime — they reversed certain recent theme-park pricing hikes and fee additions.

You heard it right, Disney Parks has just announced it's eliminating certain surcharges and even lowering theme-park ticket pricing on select dates. It's also expanding the availability of select benefits to park-hopper guests and annual passholders (now called 'Magic Key' holders).

Okay, maybe costs aren't being lowered by much, but it's not often you'll see the corporate giant make concessions to an increasingly bitter and disillusioned public.

When Disney World's hotel parking fee was introduced back in March 2018, it was arguably the harbinger of an era in which the entertainment empire's habit of nickel-and-diming park visitors would reach new heights, with guests' perception of their treasured "Disney magic" in the parks steadily declining.

While some Magic Key holder benefits were also announced (which aren't relevant for the average guest visiting with a regular ticket), the most significant cost-related concessions revealed by Disney Parks this past Tuesday include the following.

Walt Disney World Resort

On January 10, Walt Disney World in Florida [announced](#) a few policy changes that the resort said are intended to "bring more value and flexibility" to guest visits.

— With immediate effect, Disney World's Disney-run hotels will **cease to charge guests staying overnight for self-parking**, which can translate to a savings of \$175 over the course of a week's vacation. Disney hotel guests also enjoy complimentary parking at the theme parks, which otherwise charge standard vehicles \$25 for daily parking.

The hotel rates will, of course, still be priced exorbitantly compared to non-Disney accommodations just a few miles down the road, but at least guests are extended the courtesy of free parking.

Note that this fee reversal doesn't apply to California's Disneyland Resort hotels' policies, where self-parking for registered hotel guests costs \$35 per night, and the price of theme-park parking remains \$30 for a regular car or motorcycle.

Disney World's announcement contained an acknowledgment of guests' gripes about the surcharge, and probably the **closest thing to an apology** that the company will ever offer regarding unwelcome added fees, saying, "This is a Disney difference many of you have asked us to bring back, and we're happy to reintroduce it to make your vacation a little easier and more affordable."

— Soon, Disney World guests who purchase the [Disney Genie + service](#) (launched in [late 2021](#) and reviled by parkgoers) via the app will be able to digitally download their Disney PhotoPass photos taken on attractions **at no additional charge**. At Disneyland Resort, the Genie + add-on service, charged per day per person, already includes free PhotoPass digital downloads.

The Disneyland Resort

Disneyland Resort in California released its own [announcement](#) on January 10, detailing a few changes aimed at offering guests “more value and flexibility”.

— Starting February 4 and continuing throughout this year’s [‘Disney100’ celebration](#), Disneyland Resort will provide **free digital downloads** of Disney PhotoPass pictures captured on attractions for all ticketed park guests via the Disneyland app (without having to purchase Genie +).

— The resort also revealed that it’s effectively **lowering park admission prices on many days in 2023**. According to the announcement, it’s offering “nearly two months” worth of calendar dates set at \$104 for one-day, one-park tickets, which represents its lowest available pricing tier.

One might reasonably speculate that Disney Parks’ backpedaling on its increased pricing policies is linked to the [recent dismissal](#) of former CEO Bob Chapek and the reinstallation of his predecessor, Bob Iger, who stepped down during the pandemic.

According to [Frommer’s](#), the current chairman of Disney Parks, Experiences and Products, Josh D’Amaro, said the pricing revisions were “not necessarily about a change in leadership,” although that still leaves open the possibility that they were prompted by a broader change in the company’s corporate approach.