

This Florida television and movie-based theme park offers behind-the-scenes access, including tours of working studios and lots of action. Take this **Inside Scoop** with you to navigate the path to travel stardom.

travel: delighting in the spirit of adventure • a vacation from home to explore places that are not your home • knowing life is different, knowing this is a joy of travel • enjoying the journey, not just the destination • a privilege best used with patience, humour and curiosity • fun • coming home with great tales •

Minimum Heights

Many rides have minimum heights of 40" (102cm). Some are 42", 48" or 51" with children up to 48" (122cm) needing an accompanying rider who is 14 years or older. Rides specifically for kids also have minimums; often 34" or 35", so reduce tears, measure beforehand. Also see the **Rider's Guide** for and at each theme park.

Your Counsellor

Our knowledge and experience help turn dreams into first-rate vacations. Ask your counsellor about any details, including:

- advance information/tickets
- the benefits of VIP bookings
- getting there;
- car rentals
- airport security screening (don't panic!, be prepared).

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Inside Scoop: Universal Orlando

Know before you go: travel isn't just your destination, it's also the journey

With so many area sites, planning ahead will save your budget and be kinder to your feet and sanity.

Plan ahead for benefits such as seat selection, park entrance discounts and customized maps.

- Be realistic: we know you want value for money balancing choices and amenities with your budget. No matter what, relax and enjoy.
- Special requests are only requests for such upgrades as room type. For families, a suite is worth it—it gives everyone some privacy.
- There are *numerous* combinations of ticket prices and packages ranging from 1-day at one park to multi-day tickets that include all three parks, as well as combo-tickets at other area parks. You can also buy different dining plans in advance. Do ask your counsellor.
- For cell phone use, get a package with your provider. You might not all need data but you will find the texting options helpful. Internet access is widely available.
- The parks accept credit and debit cards (be aware of withdrawal fees). Log the dates you'll be away with your credit card company.
- We strongly suggest LeGrow's Travel medical and cancellation/interruption insurance to cover all sorts of unanticipated issues.

Above all, travel with a positive attitude—with extra security, patience and a spirit of adventure will carry you through any experience.

BIG Tip: No matter how dorky you (or your kids) think you all look, wear comfy walking shoes!

Know Where You're Going

Universal Orlando (formerly Universal Studios) is officially the Universal Orlando Resort with three theme parks: **Universal's Islands of Adventure**; **Universal Studios Florida**; and Universal's **Volcano Bay** and **Universal's CityWalk**. Since you'll be near, ask your counsellor about combo tickets to **SeaWorld**, **Aquatica** and/or **Discovery Cove**.

Pack Strategically

The world is overrun with black bags: put coloured tape or ribbon on luggage to spot it quickly. Put your name outside and inside, remove old tags. In carry-on, pack valuables (jewellery, over-the-counter/prescriptions in original containers with a list, dosage and doctor's tel number. Pack liquids/lotions/gels in checked bags (inside plastic bags).

Carry-on restrictions: the maximum size container is 100ml (3.4oz); all must fit in 1 resealable/clear plastic bag no more than 1 litre (often available at airport screening). Items regular travellers pack include: notebook/pen, hand wipes, munchies (no fruit, meat or veg over borders). Permitted in carry-on: cell phones, laptops, disposable razors, umbrellas, canes and nail clippers. Items you can't take on include knives, corkscrews and sports gear such as golf clubs, baseball bats and racquets. Check with your airline for their restrictions. (Most hotels provide hair dryers; save that room for stuffies...)

You may take baby formula/milk and food if a child 2 years and under (0-24 months) travels with you. **Note:** Transport Canada requires one adult to travel for every child under 2.

THE Best Tips EVER

Our counsellors have a *lot* of experience helping clients with the fine details in booking trips to theme parks. We've collected some of their best and favourite all time tips. **Before going:**

- Save time and money by purchasing date-specific tickets with your counsellor. It's cheaper to book tickets in advance because parks like to estimate when people are coming as it helps them plan. A single-day pass is often the most expensive. Children under 2 years old get in free.
- Booking an onsite hotel package gets you Early Park Admission to certain attractions an hour before the park opens. Universal Express passes let you skip lines on most rides and attractions.
- *Never* buy "discounted tickets" or coupons online from resellers—we've heard unhappy stories of people scoring a "great deal" but at the park, surprise! Besides the time you'll spend looking, there might be service or mailing charges for scam tickets. Parks will refuse entry. You pay, again, at more than you could have booked with your counsellor.
- Talk with kids about limits on souvenir purchases; what's desperately wanted now might be in next month's yard sale. Give them a budget and stick to it. You can get park gift cards at grocery stores or give them cash—get them used to US bills' similarity, so very different from Canadian.
- Consider a personalized VIP Experience. Ask your counsellor as there's limited availability and restrictions for children under 3 years old. Front of the Line tickets give priority access to rides and shows. Go over transportation options with your counsellor. If you drive, make sure everyone in your group knows (or snaps a cell photo) where you park. (*continued over*)

Your Airline

Sign up online for your airline's email or text flight notifications as your flight could be delayed (the plane might be flying in). Transport Canada can prohibit items as security risks *Travellers should arrive at the airport earlier than usual, exercise patience and contact their airline for further information on their flight(s).* Airline staff are on duty some 2 to 3hrs prior: due to staffing/security, check-in (and bag-check) closes 1hr before departure. If late, you're not entitled to board (or a refund). Unless booked ahead, seats are first-come first-served. **Baggage:** Size/weight restrictions for checked and carry-on varies: check with your airline. **Entry & Departure:** Everyone must have a valid passport www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport. Keep a copy of ID pages with other records or snap a cell picture. Know the limits of what you can bring back, www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/bgb-rmf-eng.html.



Get Packing Checklist and General Planning & Packing Tips

at www.legrowstravel.ca/inside-scoops

- Your sense of adventure & humour!

Food Facts

There are hundreds of food choices so whether you stick with favourites, desire sushi or a margarita, parks offer vegan, vegetarian, gluten/dairy/peanut-free food. For allergies or intolerances, inform your server. Kosher meals are at six restaurants; quantities are limited and must be booked ahead at Guest Services. Avoid disappointment—for restaurants you must go to, make reservations. A great aspect—if going for a special occasion, make a reservation up to 180 days in advance. **Tip:** while it saves cash and sanity to pack favourite snacks (crackers, juice boxes, carrot sticks), part of the fun is trying food you don't try at home.

Note: parks regularly make repairs, retire attractions and plan new activities. We have no control or responsibility if a park cancels an event, suspends a ride, closes due to weather or raining meteorites or suffers any possible lack of must-have churros or that essential stuffed animal.

List Your PRIORITY Attractions

Universal's Islands of Adventure feature dozens of rides, shows, play areas and attractions:

- **Fear Factor Live** is that...if you're a fan of bugs and "mayhem". **Animal Actors** is the most "aw cute" you're going to say per acre (nope you can't take them home).
- See the **Superstar Parade** and catch the **Cinematic Spectacular** with classic movie clips (some the kids will even recognize) projected onto waterfall screens.
- Popular: **Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey**, **Jurassic Park River Adventure** (see the dinosaur egg nursery), Dr. Seuss' **Caro-Seuss-el**, **The High in the Sky Seuss Trolley Train Ride**. One neat spot—watching the talented cartoonists at **Toon Lagoon**. Keep your camera out; the parks are full of famous characters—you never know when Spiderman might swing through **Marvel Super Hero Island**.

Universal Studios Orlando hosts **Despicable Me Minion Mayhem**, **The Transformers**, **Shrek** as well as **Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts** at the end of **Diagon Alley**. You'll need Park-to-Park tickets to ride Hogwarts Express to Universal's Islands of Adventure to visit Hogwarts Castle and Hogsmeade. Book ahead with your counsellor for a Wizarding World of Harry Potter Exclusive Vacation package.

On select nights, enjoy a new experience—**The Nighttime Lights at Hogwarts**. As night falls, using state of the art projection and techniques, special effects and lights wrap the castle. Each of the four houses come to life in a dazzling display set to music.

GO EARLY to **Universal's Volcano Bay**. With four waterpark areas, it's a great antidote to other action. Take a true screamer of a ride on the **Krakatau Aqua Coaster** or in body slides and tubes. Relax in the **Kopiko Wai Winding River**, at **Waturi Beach** or **Tot Tiki Reef**. Wear a TapuTapu™ wristband for easy access. Open until 8pm daily.

Universal CityWalk: THE spot for food, nightclubs, shops, films and dancing...where you can boogie to old hits and best of all, embarrass your kids! Be the headliner at **Rising Star** karaoke (check age restrictions). Down yummy milkshakes and sundaes (you can share); Chocolate Brownie Bark or Bacon Brittle at The **Toothsome Chocolate Emporium & Savory Feast Kitchen**. Rest your feet; catch a **Blue Man Group** show or movie (20 theatres!). Free parking after 6pm. Open until 2am every day.

When There (yay!)

- Go early or after 3pm especially in summer as parks have maximum capacities and will deny entry when full. In high seasons (summer and Christmas) parks quickly reach capacity. Staying at an onsite hotel? You're guaranteed access.
- Check the park's calendar for special events and hours: usual opening time is 9am.
- While you *could* see one or two parks in in a day, take breaks. There's so much action, noise and sights; take an afternoon off at your hotel's pool or nap, come back at night.
- Bring, buy, or at the park, rent (not at Volcano Bay) a single or double umbrella stroller.
- All day lockers can be rented (wet swim gear?), handy if you're not at a hotel onsite.
- People get separated so get text plans from your cell provider, pick spots to meet or tell your kid(s) to find an employee with a nametag. Make sure your child knows your name (other than "mom"), hotel, cell number or pin all that inside their clothing (tell them it's there). Have pictures of them on hand and they of you.
- A terrific (free) option is the child "swap" for many rides that allows one adult to stay with a child while another adult rides. After, those adults switch so the adult who waited can ride. Just inform the first attendant you see that you'll be switching.

To Your Health

- All three parks have **first aid stations** but be prepared—take refillable water bottles and get everyone to drink water often, use sunscreen and wear hats when not on rides.
- If you have a **hearing impairment**, TTDs are available from Guest Services. The park provides signing for certain shows. **Sign language** interpreting is free with one week's notice—for both, inquire about availability at SignLanguageServices@universalorlando.com.
- **If you smoke**, vape or use ecigarettes, use *only* in the designated area. Medical marijuana (or otherwise) is strictly prohibited.



Websites and emails in blue are hyperlinked; just click!

Canadian citizens: Emergency? see <http://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-info>, contact Global Affairs 1-800-387-3124 or 1-613-996-8885 (collect if needed), sos@international.gc.ca.

Our 24/7 Emergency Service

We constantly survey airlines, local tour companies and hotels to ensure they meet our customer service standards, so don't let a problem ruin your holiday. Nearly all issues can be handled quickly on site—first seek help from the venue's local staff. Otherwise, call our Emergency Travel Service at **1-888-551-1181**. Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable. Schedule changes can occur and airlines and tour operators have the right to change flight and/or tour times, alter, combine services or substitute accommodations. Your counsellor will work with you to ensure you receive information as soon as possible and ensure satisfaction. See your brochure and ticket terms and conditions.

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