

Florida's Theme Parks Spell Student Tour F-U-N

When the competitions are over the students can relax and enjoy the exciting rides and exhibits offered throughout the parks. There's no magic quite like Mouse magic at Walt Disney World Resorts captivating parks. The most famous park, Magic Kingdom, is easily recognizable as the "Happiest Place on Earth" with its Cinderella Castle and Main Street U.S.A. Student group travelers can experience everything from quintessential Disney rides to space age activities, topped off by the Magic Kingdom's fireworks extravaganza every evening.

At Epcot, students enter the world's wonders through interactive experiences and dazzling shows. They can explore the world in a day and journey into the future. In 2008, MGM Studios will become Disney's Hollywood Studios, celebrating the best Hollywood has to offer. From High School Musical 2: School's Out to the Rock - Roller Coaster Starring Aerosmith, visiting students will be immersed in their own adventure. Disney's Animal Kingdom is home to the colossal new attraction, Expedition Everest, where visitors face off with the fearsome Yeti. Finally, students can cool down at two water theme parks - Blizzard Beach and Typhoon Lagoon.

Universal Orlando Resort creates an entire universe of action and thrills for students with two very different theme parks. At Islands of Adventure famous comic book heroes, cartoons, and stories come to life on rides such as the Jurassic Park River Adventure and The Amazing Adventures of Spiderman.

At Universal Studios Florida, students go beyond the screen into a world of movie action in the Revenge of the Mummy, where they are plunged into total darkness on a psychological thrill ride. Or they may join the cast of Shrek for a 4-D experience that includes special effects felt right from their seats. Students can then cool off at Wet n Wild water park, featuring a variety of multi-passenger tube rides.

When the sun sets, student travelers head to Orlando's hottest spot for entertainment - Universal CityWalk. The 30-acre entertainment complex presents the finest in live music, casual dining, dancing, shopping and movies. Student dining favorites are the NASCAR Sports Grille, Hard Rock Cafe, Bubba Gump Shrimp Co., and NBA City. For entertainment, students won't want to miss one of the most popular shows in the country - Blue Man Group, now showing exclusively at Universal CityWalk. Or, they can catch the biggest names in music and comedy at Hard Rock Live Orlando. For the shoppers in the group, CityWalk features an array of memorabilia and souvenirs to the latest teen apparel and trendy gifts. Special dates are available at The Groove to teens to dance in one of the areas hottest dance clubs, equipped with the latest sound system and special effects. CityWalk's movie complex features 20 theaters with stadium-style seating and digital sound showcasing the newest releases.

SeaWorld Adventure Park in Orlando takes student travelers into wonders that exist beyond the ocean's door. Here, students experience up-close encounters that immerse them in the mysterious world of sea inhabitants. Shows such as "Mystify" encompass both sea and sky in an underwater adventure, while "Believe" combines advanced killer whale behaviors with an elaborate set and expert trainers in a stunning show. Other highlights include Shamu Underwater Viewing, Dolphin Cove, Shark Encounter, and Manatee Rescue. In Discovery Cove, located across the street from SeaWorld, students may swim with dolphins, snorkel with tropical fish, and hand-feed exotic birds.

In Tampa Bay, Busch Gardens Africa combines some of the world's best roller coasters with exotic animal encounters and fun shows. Students may start with Gwazi, the Southeast's largest and fastest double wooden roller coaster, followed by a ride on the stomach-lurching Sheikra. Sheikra features floorless cars that allow riders an unobstructed view of the 70 mph rush.

After these two roller coasters, students can experience a wild encounter at Edge of Africa, where self-guided tours reveal the scenic habitats of hippos, hyenas, meerkats, and a Nile crocodile. In the Serengeti Plain, hundreds of exotic African animals can be seen from the Serengeti Express Railway, Skyride, and Safari, or from the various walkways that twist and turn throughout the rolling landscapes and elevated terrain. In Rhino Valley, student travelers experience a blend of close-up animal encounters and off-road adventure.

About the Author

[Travel Adventures](#) Travel Adventures is a student tour provider staffed by educators who understand the needs of teachers. It has served over one half million students since 1987 and its mission is to "empower teachers to create change by expanding the classroom to the world."

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