

Best Insiders Tips to Universal Islands of Adventure!

From Laurie with TipJunkie.com



What is Universal's Islands of Adventure?

Islands of Adventure is one of two theme parks at Universal Orlando Resort. [Universal's Islands of Adventure theme park](#) offers some of the most technologically advanced attractions and thrill rides ever created as well as something for every member of the family and every age. It has seven individually themed islands, each with its own attractions, restaurants and shops. All the rides and attractions are based after books, Marvel comics, or mythology. Toon Lagoon is based after the Sunday comic strips.

- Explore The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™
- Marvel Super Hero Island®
- Toon Lagoon®
- Jurassic Park®
- The Lost Continent®
- Seuss Landing™

The Best Insider Tips & Tricks

How To Avoid The Lines

1. **When is the best time of year to visit the Universal Orlando Resort?** September is generally a good time of year to visit. The parks will be busier around holidays and school break times.

2. **Do you have an Express Pass Line to avoid hour waiting times?** Yep, get express ride access and SKIP THE REGULAR LINES at each of your favorite participating rides and attractions in both theme parks. These are FREE for each person in your family if you stay at one of the three Universal Orlando Resort hotels. It's just one of the many hidden values, you can see all of my [Top 5 Perks of a Hotel Key in my quick video here](#).

3. **Do you have any insiders scoop on traffic trends for the different islands?** Most guest generally arrive to the park in the morning, so a good strategy is to start in the back of the park and make your way to the front. It's best to hit Harry Potter World either at 8am {if you have early park admission by staying at an on-site hotel} or after 4pm when the park clears out a bit.

The areas of the park for younger children are going to be less busy when younger children are less active, e.g. nap time and closer to their earlier bed times. For instance, I noticed that Seuss Landing is packed during lunch, but not so much in late afternoon.

Also, most people tend to travel on Sunday, therefore Sunday's are not as crowded and a great day to play at the parks.

4. **I was told that the park tends to less crowded between the hours of 2-4pm. Is that right?** Late afternoon tends to be a quieter time in the park, but again that can change from day to day. That is why staying on-site helps – you can come and go easily back and forth depending on the day and the weather (and the mood of your children).

5. **What island would you suggest hitting between 2-4pm if you could only pick one?** Well, picking an Island, that is like picking which child is your favorite. So, pick the Island that your family is the most interested in – for example, if you have preschoolers, go to Seuss Landing. Tweens and teenagers? Marvel Super Hero Island or The Wizarding World of Harry Potter are perfect. You want to cool off? Visit Toon Lagoon or Jurassic Park.

6. **My entire family LOVED the Spiderman ride, when is the best time to ride it? There always seems to be a long line there.** Overall, ride wait times are always different at different times of year and fluctuate from minute to minute, so there is no specific time we can provide detailing when the rides are less busy. But here are **two tricks to plan around the waits**:

- Stay on-site and get [Universal Express Access](#) to most rides and attractions, which allows you to skip to the front of the line. If not staying on-site, you can also buy a Universal Express Access upgrade to your ticket when you arrive at the park.
- Go to the back of the park first to try and miss the rush; guests tend to work around the park in a circle, making it to the back of the park later in the day.
- Insiders Scoop: The Spiderman ride will be completely overhauled with new cutting-edge technology in 2013! The reason I think that's so incredible is because I just can't imagine it getting any better. That was my favorite ride!

7. **Do you know what time(s) of day the main superheros are out for fun photo ops?** There are meet and greets with various characters throughout the day – including Seuss characters, Marvel Super Heroes and Spider-Man. You can find meet-and-greet times in our park maps. Park maps are available at the front of the park and in various retail and restaurant locations. There is also “Oh! The Stories You’ll Hear” inside Circus McGurkus Café Stoo-pendous in Seuss Landing at various times throughout the day – this includes many Seuss characters in a re-telling of beloved Seuss stories.

8. **Can my 5 year old go through Poseidon’s Fury?** I would say that that show is for ages 7 and older due to the intensity of the show. Poseidon’s Fury features four types of lasers and over 200 individual flame effects, as well as special effects including water and mist screens, water cannons and mortars. It is best for each parent to determine what their child can take, but generally it is more appropriate for older children.

Harry Potter World ~ Insiders Secrets

Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey is the most popular ride at the park and lines can last up to 75 minutes! Ride this ride at 8am or after 4pm.

9. **We were told that Harry Potter World is best at 8am or after 4pm. Is that true?** It is generally recommended to visit The Wizarding World of Harry Potter later in the day – mid to late afternoon. Reservations are not available for Ollivander’s in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter {to watch the wand-choosing ceremony} and lines fluctuate based on time of year and weather.

10. **Can you give me an estimated range of what the Harry Potter wands cost so that I can plan accordingly?** You can purchase Hero Wands (replica wands of those owned by Harry and his friends), collectible wand sets and “practice” wands for younger wizards. These hero wands are \$29.95 each. Also, we have some [Harry Potter merchandise available online](#).

11. **When and Where is the best place to get butterbeer the lines can get really long?** Hogs Head Pub is a perfect place to get Butterbeer — swing in and grab a frozen or regular Butterbeer right at the bar. {frozen is my favorite!}

12. **What is Butterbeer?** Butterbeer is the drink of choice for younger wizards. At the park is is a “cream soda” like drink with a creamy froth on top. It was somewhat thick, really sweet, and then it gets salty as you swallowed it like butterscotch. It comes cold or frozen. I prefer it frozen! I case you’re wondering, it is a non-alcoholic drink and perfect treat for kiddos on a hot day. {wink}

Where To Eat Without a Wait

13. **Where and when is the best time to each lunch to avoid the lines?** Most guest generally arrive to the park in the morning, so those restaurants further back in the park will be busier at lunch as guests make their way around the park. Also, any restaurant appealing to children will be busier right around those times of the day that they generally eat lunch at home or school.

For instance, we ate lunch on Friday at 12:30 at the restaurant in the front of the park and we only had to wait 10 minutes for a lovely air conditioned table. Whereas we tried to eat at Seuss Landing and that place was packed!

14. **For those that want to eat at your award winning restaurant Mythos, when would be the best time?** Mythos {located in the Lost Continent} is a sit down experience and planning for an hour and a half is a good idea in order to really enjoy it.

15. **When is the best time to eat at the Three Broomsticks at Harry Potter World?** Wait times are always different at different times of the year. Generally most restaurants will be busy right at lunch and right at dinner, try eating off hours (2-5 pm generally) for a quieter experience.

Where Can We Cool Down At The Park?

16. I LOVED that there was misting or a water element in each of the islands. I thought that was so well thought out and the perfect “cool down” and “happy toddler place”. Do you have a listing somewhere that has them all?

- There is a cool down misting station right across from The Incredible Hulk Coaster in Marvel Super Hero Island.
- The best places for toddlers to run around and get wet are If I Ran the Zoo in Seuss Landing and Me Ship The Olive in Toon Lagoon.
- Camp Jurassic in Jurassic Park is a fun place to climb and explore in the shade.

Make Life Easy With These Insider Tips

17. **Both Parks offer package pickup at the front gate.** This means that you no longer need to carry any souvenirs or merchandise you pick up along the way. Also, if you are staying at one of the on-site hotels then you get an added perk of free package delivery to your hotel room! {squeal} We used this service several times and it’s heavenly. It just makes the day so much easier.

18. Both parks have **family restrooms** ~ so enjoy that little convenience with youngsters and babies.

19. **The entire resort is baby-friendly!** So don’t fret if you’ve forgotten something. You’ll be able to buy towels, shoes, diapers, etc in Toon Lagoon or the gift shops.

20. **If you are planning on eating at least 2 meals at the park, then consider [purchasing a Meal Plan](#).** You’ll save some cash as long as you eat two meals. One of the things that really impressed me about the park {besides how clean it was} is how yummy and diverse the food is! There’s something for every age and it’s gooood food!

21. If you’ve got some extra cash and want to give your family a VIP experience of the parks, **you can [purchase a VIP tour for your family or group](#).** I swear you’ll LOVE it. {snicker}

Ask for Deana! She's amazing and has escorted celebrities around the park like Celine Dion and John Travolta's families. Plus she's just as sweet as can be!

22. If you want some fun ideas or traditions to make your family vacation extra memorable, [check out our discussion on the Tip Junkie Facebook page](#). 58 of you responded with some really fun ideas.

Here are several planning guides and fact sheets to get the most out of your trip. These printables have some really cool insight to the resort and will make planning your trip so much easier. Don't forget to print them out and take them with you on your tip!

 **Print Free Files:**

- [UOR Family Travel Tips](#)
- [Universal Orlando Resort Fact Sheet](#)
- [Universal Islands of Adventure Fact Sheet](#)
- [Universal Studios Florida Fact Sheet](#)
- [Universal Studios Vacation Count Down Calendar](#)

I hope these insider tips help you to plan a really memorable vacation for your family to Universal Orlando Resort!

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