

BUDGET GUIDE 2025

Orlando

FLORIDA





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WELCOME / INTRODUCTION



I understand the struggle to find holidays as a large family. As a mum of four, I'm always looking for great, affordable family holidays. We love to travel, with Florida being a firm favourite; I like to consider myself a bit of a Disney and Universal pro. I tend to book everything separately: flights, hotel, car hire or transfers. Finding the best price for not only myself, but also my family and friends is something I am passionate about.

We have been to Florida a number of times, we set a budget, create spreadsheets to track our spending and look for ways to save money, enabling us to maximise the enjoyment, without breaking into a hot sweat every time we checked our bank balance.

You may think that a holiday to Florida and Orlando in particular is out of your reach, but I'm here to share some invaluable tips to help save you money and I hope help you to make a dream trip actually become reality.

I hope that you find this guide useful, with tips and tricks to save money. But also offering invaluable knowledge from personal experience.

TIP 1

DO IT YOURSELF

- Find flights
- Book a hotel or villa
- Hire a car or transfers
- Find hotels that offers a shuttle service

Don't get sucked into package holidays and what you think is a good price, it is ultimately overpriced and you will be able to find it cheaper booking it yourself.



virgin atlantic 

BRITISH AIRWAYS 

FLIGHTS

This without doubt is one of most expensive elements to a Florida holiday.

- Watch flights months before you intend to buy them, booking earlier tends to mean cheaper
- Make sure you go incognito to stop dynamic pricing, as your search engine will be watching your every move.
- Booking mid week is often cheaper
- Flying just before the school holidays begin, by a day or two, can save you significantly.
(but we aware of any fines you may incur)
- Look for Flight Sales, they normally happen during Christmas and around Easter (depending on the airline)
- Look at alternative airports; They often offer cheaper flight prices when compared to Orlando.



TIP 2

Save Tesco's points from your weekly food shop, petrol, mobiles etc to convert into Virgin points, then book reward seats to reduce cost. You can also do this with Avois and Sainsbury's.

TESCO

Sainsbury's

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FLIGHTS

- Tampa is a much smaller airport, about 1hr 25 hour from Orlando.
- Miami is often the cheapest alternative, but factor in car hire or transportation and a hotel.
- You can get a train to Orlando called The Brightline tickets cost approx £62 per person, per journey.
- We flew into Miami with Virgin in July 2024 as the flight prices for 6 of us, including 4 adults, was £2000 less than flights to Orlando and also cheaper than Tampa.
- I found Miami airport easier to get through when compared to Orlando.
- Our hotel was £126 for a family room, our car hire was the same price from Orlando or Miami approx £800 for a 7 seater Jeep wagoner, with car seat.
- Look at economy light prices, 10KG luggage is included
- Classic economy tickets 23kg included were £800 more
- 1x 23kg is £120 return
- DO YOU NEED 23kg bags each??
- You do the maths
- Take a look at our website www.kean4travel.co.uk/book/flights for up to date live prices and competitive comparisons all in one place.



SELF CATERED VILLAS



- Self catered accommodation allow better bedroom options, also a washer dryer, games room and pool, often with pushchairs to borrow.
- Eat breakfast at the villa, make packed lunches to take to the parks and snacks.
- Have a mixture of takeaways, eating out and cooking in, after all you are on holiday!
- YOU DO NOT NEED TO PAY HUGE AMOUNTS FOR A THEMED PRINCESS BEDROOM YOUR CHILDREN WILL APPRECIATE EVERYTHING ANYWAY!
- There are plenty of areas around Orlando, We've stayed in Davenport twice, 20-30 mins from Disney and 45 mins from Universal, it offers more cost effective self-catering solutions.
- Many are on secure gated communities, some have shared pools with slides.
- I often use air b&b as I really like their customer favourite feature and their payment plan using Klarna is helpful to spread the cost, which is great for budget planning.
- We also book via VRBO from our own site - **www.kean4travel.co.uk/book/hotels**

Here's a link to where we stayed in 2017, a 4 bedroomed townhouse on a resort with a pool, lazy river, near supermarket (Publix) and restaurants / takeaway (the best chinese).

View accommodation - **[Click here](#)**



ORLANDO HOTELS

America is brilliant for large family rooms, offering two queen beds per room and often a sofa bed in the lounge area to accommodate a large family like ours. Some even offer two bedrooms with two queens beds and a kitchen/ lounge/ sofa bed.

- Some offer transportation to the parks or uber may work out cheaper than car hire and airport shuttle
- Unless you want a full Disney experience choose a non Disney hotel, there are plenty within 5 to 10 minutes from the parks, hotels on the 192 offer the best options budget hotel with lots of options for eating out.
- Look for rooms with microwaves and fridges

We always compare prices using Expedia, and hotels.com on our own website

www.kean4travel.co.uk/book/hotels

They search a host of sites to compare prices, create a login to get the best rates. Often offering book now pay later and free cancellation options

- The voco Kissimmee Orlando by IHG on the 192 is very well priced and offers a shuttle bus to Disney an airport shuttle, microwave and fridge. I know people who have stayed here and given it great reviews.

Take a look **here**



DISNEY HOTELS

- Disney's Value Resorts these are classed as Most Affordable....
- Price example- Family of 4 in April 2026 for 14 nts-
- All-Star Music Resort: Celebrates music with themed areas. £3018
- All-Star Sports Resort: Showcases sports-themed decorations. £3018
- All-Star Movie Resort: Features larger-than-life movie-themed decor. £3018
- Pop Century Resort: Takes guests on a nostalgic trip through different decades. £3802
- Art of Animation Resort: Immerses guests in the worlds of Finding Nemo, Cars, The Lion King, and The Little Mermaid. £4187
- Benefits of Staying at Disney Value Resorts
- These resorts offer the most budget-friendly accommodations within the Disney World Resort.
- Early theme park entry, Disney transportation, Disney dining reservations. No meals included, pick Lightning Lanes 7 day prior to arriving (if purchasing).





DISNEY PARK TICKETS

This is a huge cost, try to go when your kids are under 10 so you don't pay adult prices for everyone.

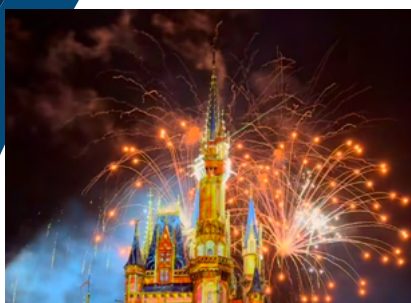
There are 4 parks -

- Magic Kingdom Known for its classic Disney fairytale experience with iconic landmarks like Cinderella Castle, meet your favourite characters, ride Tron and the runaway mine train.
- Epcot Is known for its diverse food area "eating around the world", Moana's journey of water and its 4 festivals.
- Disney Hollywood studios is where Star Wars fans will find iconic characters from the films, Build a drone in Galaxy's edge and ride Slinky Dog Coaster from Toy Story.
- Animal Kingdom is where you'll find Pandora from Avatar, experience Expedition Everest and go on a safari in Kilimanjaro.
- There are also two waterparks - Blizzard Beach and Typhoon Lagoon.





Disney



TIP 3

Go to the Polynesian resort to WATCH THE MAGIC KINGDOM FIREWORKS from their beach and beat the crowds!

There are lots of options and it really depends on your time frame and what else you want to do as to what tickets you purchase.

- You can purchase 7/14 day park hopper tickets with water parks included. Book your tickets here <https://tidd.ly/3UYm7Zy>
- Spend half a day in the parks and half the day at a waterpark.
- I book using attraction tickets or Florida tix and pay in instalments, with a small deposit.
- Most offer 14 days for the price of 7, but check the offer on at the time you book.
- If you are on a tight budget you might want to choose to spend just a few days in the Disney parks.
- Book direct from the USA Disney site, we used a VPN to be able to access their servers.
- We use VPN super unlimited proxy- with ads for free
- You will need to factor in parking costs at Disney, in 2024 it was \$30 per day
- We purchased a 3 day one park per day ticket, it was the most cost effective option with 5 adult tickets to buy. Unfortunately we couldn't go to Magic kingdom with this particular option, but we had already been.



GETTING AROUND DISNEY

- If you plan to Drive you can park at each park for a daily fee, in 2024 it was \$30 Waterparks were free to park.
- Alternatively Book a hotel with a Disney shuttle offered
- Take Ubers or Lyft (this may work out very expensive)
- Once in the parks you can use the Monorail, bus or ferry to park hop.
- Magic Kingdom to Epcot: Take the express monorail or ferry to the TTC, then transfer to the Epcot monorail.
- Magic Kingdom to Hollywood Studios: Take a bus from Magic Kingdom's bus depot.
- Magic Kingdom to Animal Kingdom: Take a bus from Magic Kingdom's bus depot.
- Epcot and Hollywood Studios are the closest Disney parks, take the Skyliner, boats or a bus.



TIP 4

Buy a refillable popcorn bucket at Disney and take it with you every day you return you can refill for a few dollars and its a quick, yummy snack, take water bottles to refill for free at most vendors.

Take mini squash bottles from the UK to add to the water if you want some flavour.

• Eating in the parks can be pricey, You need to pre book restaurants on the my Disney experience app and you can order food from quick service outlets via the app too.

LIGHTNING LANE MULTI PASS

- Choose up to three Multi Pass experiences and arrival windows in a theme park each day of your trip in advance.
- Once in the park and have used your first Multi Pass reservation, you can make an additional selection (subject to availability).
- You can hold up to three at a time, making one new pass at a time throughout the day until park close.
- If you're park hopping, you can use Lightning Lane in multiple parks.
- Expect to pay \$15 to \$39 per person, per day for Lightning Lane Multipass,
- Guests of Disney Resort hotels and other select hotels can purchase and select their Lightning Lane passes up to seven days in advance for the entire length of their stay (up to 14 days)
- All other guests can purchase and select their passes up to three days in advance of their stay.

Hotels that offer 7 days in advance are -

- All Disney resort hotels
- Walt Disney world Dolphin Hotel
- Walt Disney Swan Hotel
- Shades of green

- Alternatively you can also buy individual lighting lanes for high demand attractions ranging from \$10 - \$25 per person per ride.



UNIVERSAL

Until Jan 2026 14 day unlimited tickets only include 1 day at Epic universe, from Jan 26 onwards, Epic will be included in the park hopper 14 days entry. Meaning all 4 parks are included in the park hopper and you can visit Epic as many times as you want over the 14 days.

On October 20th 2026 Volcano Bay is shut for routine maintenance, so the tickets reduce dramatically in price. You will still have 3 parks included to park hop, Universal, Islands of Adventure and Epic included to visit every day of your 14 day tickets.

- Buying on the USA site using a VPN will work work out cheaper if you only want 1 or 2 days and not a full 14.
- You can also buy them through Attraction fixs and Florida fix, but I highly recommend thinking about your itinerary and if it's actually worthwhile paying for 14 days.

Book your tickets here

<https://fidd.ly/4mAHGep>





Personally we like to mix and match our Florida holidays and booking 1 or 2 days means you can experience more. Unless you want 14 days full on at both theme parks IT REALLY IS NOT WORTH THAT HUGE COST!

- don't want to queue? maybe think about purchasing express passes separately.

You can book express passes here-
<https://gyg.me/Asm7EZr3>





UNIVERSAL HOTELS

Staying in a Universal hotel will offer you some perks,

- Value hotels are Endless summer Surfside and Dockside and Cabana Bay.
- All offer early park admission and a complimentary shuttle bus.
- Cabana Bay is also accessible to Universal and Islands of adventure via a pathway.
- All offer family rooms for up to 6 people.
- Prime hotel - Adventura universal, it is also the closest to Volcano bay with direct access and walkable to both universal and Islands of adventure.
- Signature collection hotels, Hardrock, Lowes Royal pacific resort, Loews Portofino Bay Hotel, Loews Sapphire Falls Resort.

Perk-express passes to Universal and Islands of adventure for every day you stay on select attractions.

Note- Lowes Sapphire falls resort is a more affordable signature hotel, BUT DOES NOT COME WITH EXPRESS PASSES

Checking dates out of season via comparison sites could save you pounds

www.kean4travel.co.uk/book/hotels

We stayed at the Lowes Royal pacific resort for one night and had express passes for both days, at both Universal and Islands of adventure.

For a family of up to 5 in July 2026 this would cost you £646 per night.

Express passes unlimited for 1 day and one park for a family of 4 would cost about the same.

Note - You will still need valid park tickets

TIP 5

Stay in a self catered villa for your trip, but book 1 night at Universal in a signature hotel to gain express passes for both days at Universal and Islands of Adventure.



NEW EPIC UNIVERSE HOTELS

- Prime value resorts - Stella Nova Resort and Terra Luna Resort, both offer early access and complimentary shuttle bus.
- Signature collection Universal Helios Grand Hotel at present does not offer express passes, but does have a Dedicated Entrance to Epic Universe.



Note - You will still need valid park tickets

OTHER THEME PARKS

- Seaworld Take a look- <https://gyg.me/QLFgm9iT>
You can buy combination tickets to include aquatic waterpark and Busch gardens in Tampa



- Legoland - <https://tidd.ly/3HWRXmv>



CAR HIRE



Now I get that not everyone would want to drive in the US, but for us it offers freedom, the ability to explore, not only Orlando, but the whole of Florida too.

- Always compare prices using our website **www.kean4travel.co.uk/book/car-rental**
- Look for not only the best price, but also what the car hire company offers in terms of insurance coverage, excess damage, credit card excess, additional extra costs, like car seats and sat navs.
- It's worth noting that car seats in the UK will not meet standards in US so its not worth taking your own, rather than risking your insurance becoming invalid.
- Sat navs are also an unnecessary extra, google maps and maps on your phone work perfectly well, just buy a suction holder to attach your phone to the car from amazon and hey-presto you have a sat nav.
- If flying into an alternative airport to Orlando, check car pick up and drop off destinations and the price difference. It might be worth a round trip- Hey why not make it a road trip!
- Our car round trip from Miami cost us approx £800 for a 7 seater Jeep wagoner, with car seat.





ESIMS

- It is unlikely that your phone will have free data roaming in the USA
- There are lots of easy to install esim's you can purchase via an app.
- We use Yesim, they are affordable (we've found them to be the cheapest), offer unlimited data and are very reliable.



Take a look here [eSIM Service - Prepaid Virtual SIM Cards for Travelers - Yesim](#)



OTHER THINGS TO DO IN AND AROUND ORLANDO



There are so many alternatives to save pennies without spoiling the fun.

- Discovery cove - An all inclusive paradise, take a dolphin experience, swim under water falls to see tropical birds, snorkel in the grand reef. Book direct with discovery cove to save money.

Buy here - <https://tidd.ly/45TnAW3>

Or

- Book a great deal with 1 other park included Take a look here - <https://gyg.me/lzUYfZBG>
- You can buy reasonable day tickets to water parks in Orlando.
- Aquatica was a great day out, lots of big slides, brilliant wave pool and fantastic play areas for little ones.
- Take a look here <https://gyg.me/B4EXPpa9>

TIP 6

You can't take food and drinks in to Aquatica, but instead of paying for their all you can eat package, buy snacks or share a panini and purchase a refillable cup from the shop to get unlimited drinks (beware of the wasps).



- Go for a walk around the Lake at celebration, grab a coffee and watch the world go by.
- Visit Dezerland Park - a giant arcade with cinema, bowling, go karting, top up a recharge card to watch those pennies.
- Go on an airboat ride -Take a look here <https://gyg.me/aYZ6eGno>
- Manatee swim crystal river - <https://tidd.ly/45JdwQl>
- Fun spot Orlando- pay £44 for a day ticket each, enjoy roller coasters a splash park and gator spot.
- Go back in time at old town Kissimmee on a Saturday night to see the Classic Car Cruise (the longest-running car show and cruise in America) Take a look here <https://gyg.me/o9oNuRYA>
- Visit ICON Park for hours of fun for the whole family. Attractions including SEA LIFE Aquarium, Madame Tussauds and the Wheel! Enjoy free parking and park admission. <https://tidd.ly/41RlaX5>
- Take a trip to the Kennedy Space centre - buy tickets here <https://tidd.ly/3USAA9u>
- Do day trip to Clearwater beach and go on a dolphin cruise- Take a look <https://gyg.me/if58lGaD>



If you are on a tight budget purchase a city explorer pass and visit between 2 and 5 attractions from this list below.

- Wonderworks Orlando All-Access Pass
- SEA LIFE Aquarium Orlando
- Gatorland - The Alligator Capital of the World
- Fun Spot America Theme Park - 4 Ride Sampler
- Boggy Creek Airboat Tour with Butterfly Nectar
- Madame Tussauds Orlando - ICON Park
- The Orlando Eye (formerly The Wheel at ICON Park)
- Museum of Illusions Orlando (reservations required)
- The Outta Control Magic Comedy Dinner Show (reservations required)
- Island H2O Water Park - Weekday Admission
- Congo River Adventure Golf
- The Mall of Millenia & \$25 Cheesecake Factory Credit
- Chocolate Kingdom Factory Adventure Tour
- Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition
- In the Game: 7-D Dark Rides and Games
- Visit link for more info and prices-

<https://gyg.me/7bqHMQ48>



DISNEY
SPRINGS

ORLANDO VINELAND
PREMIUM OUTLETS
A SIMON CENTER

Walmart 

OUR FAVOURITE SHOPPING

- Disney Springs - visit the Christmas shop in July, Sephora or
- Have a ring made in a shack near the Christmas shop.
- Vineland premium outlet malls - grab some designer bargains
- Orlando Premium outlets - grab some more designer bargains
- Or even just a trip to Target, TJ max, and Walmart
- Five below - tons of cheap things
- Bath and body works - says what it is on tin

co. BUBBA GUMP SHRIMP CO.



EATING OUT/ TAKE AWAY - MY KIDS FAVOURITES

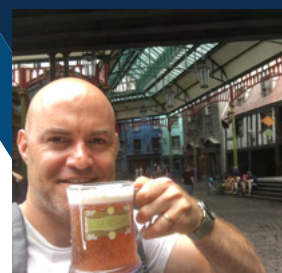
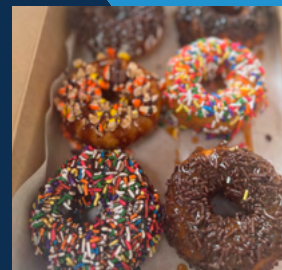
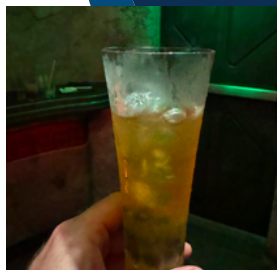
- Raising canes- Fried chicken with a special sauce, comes with a type of fried bread and waffle fries
- Chick fil A - Similar to KFC or Burger King
- Taco Bell - Tacos and Burritos
- Chipotle - Burrito bowls- healthier option
- Applebees - Restaurant, ribs, burgers...
- Panda Express - Chinese
- There is also an amazing chinese at Berry town off the I27 in Davenport, if you want more authentic.
- Bubba gumps - Universal - Fried shrimp
- Cheesecake Factory, it's not just desserts, huge portion sizes
- Olive Garden- Italian
- 7/11 - for big gulp drinks and snacks



MORE FOOD IDEAS

Disney springs - has lots of nice places:

- Polite Pig - BBQ
- Swirls on the water - frozen Dole Whip
- Gideons Bake house - amazing cookies
- Sprinkles - Cupcake ATM
- Blaze Pizza - insane pizzas



**TIP
7**

American portions are huge, try sharing a main meal or get a kids portion size to save pennies.

- Race trac - for FROYO and pizzas
- Kekes for breakfast
- You could also visit world food trucks in Kissimmee.

**Walmart** 

SUPERMARKETS

- Walmart or Publix - cheaper (but be prepared for groceries to cost more than the UK)
- Aldi
- Trader joes and Target - If you want slightly better quality or less additives, but you'll pay more

MEDICAL AND EMERGENCIES

- CVS pharmacy and medical centre-



We had first hand experience of this when our son had strep throat, they swabbed him and gave him antibiotics. It was easy to make an appointment online (I did it in Epcot). We paid \$200 and it was the same as our insurance excess so we didn't claim.

BUT PLEASE BUY INSURANCE!!



ESSENTIALS TO PACK

- (especially in JULY & August)
- Cooling towels- <https://amzn.to/4mov365>
- Sun shade for push chairs- <https://amzn.to/4orMQel>
- A push chair for younger kids- long hot days in the parks a hard on little legs. Buy one in Walmart or some villas provide them.
- Water spray fan (buying them in the parks with set you back \$20)- <https://amzn.to/4flke2q>
- Electrolyte tablets these were essential last year- <https://amzn.to/4le8gcs>
- Fan for push chair for babies and toddlers- <https://amzn.to/46E9B8N>
- You might also want to hire or invest in a sleep flight aid- (check with you airline first)
- We have used both a plane pal and a stoke kids jet bed box- <https://amzn.to/3Hbpc51>
- If visiting Disney pre buy ears, autograph books, pens and lanyards from Walmart before you enter a park, it will save you \$\$\$\$



TRAVEL GUIDE

Enjoy your holiday



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READY FOR AN ADVENTURE



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