

Capturing Disney Parks presents **DISNEY ICON SPOTLIGHT**

Episode 08 | Jim VanOstenbridge from vanomedia | February 20, 2019

In this series of Q&A's, Capturing Disney Parks introduces you to some of the biggest and most iconic Disney Parks fans sharing the magic on their social media, video platform, blog, vlog, podcast, or website. Questions by Niels van Eijkelenburg.

Q 01 | THE ICON

Please introduce yourself to our readers.

Hi! I'm Jim. Like many others, memories of Disney Parks for me started as a kid. During my first visit to Walt Disney World, I was excited to ride aboard a monorail through the stunning Contemporary Resort Hotel and on toward the beckoning spires of Cinderella Castle at the Magic Kingdom. It wasn't until years later, during the Millennium Celebration, when my wife got involved in pin trading, that I stumbled my way into digital photography. Today, the skills I learned in the parks have been immensely valuable in capturing moments with family and friends, and when visiting destinations around the world. And I'll always have an interest in capturing a new perspective or taking on a new photographic challenge in the parks where I learned the craft.



Picture provided by Jim VanOstenbridge

Q 02 | THE PARKS

Which Disney Parks have you experienced, and which one do you consider your 'home' Park?

I've been to the Walt Disney World and Disneyland Resorts frequently enough that I consider both my 'home' park. Each is welcoming and inspiring in its own way and even though going into the parks is somewhat 'routine', I find time and again that these places are made special by the people in them (both cast and guests).

Q 03 | THE PLATFORM(S)

Where can we find your Disney fan platforms?

On Instagram, you'll find my photos under [@vanomedia](#).

Q 04 | THE FORMAT

Tell us something about the format of your online platform(s), how it all started, which Disney Parks you cover, and why you love to put such a lot of effort in those activities.

I established my account on Instagram several years ago because I wanted a social media presence for my photography that emphasized the practice of photography itself and where I could learn from and be inspired by the work of other photographers with similar interests. Along the way, I've enjoyed the privilege of the interactions with so many fantastic people on Instagram. I'm genuinely grateful for all the enthusiastic support I've received from those who have followed or found my work there. It's been a great experience!

Q 05 | THE LOVE

How and when did your love for Disney Parks start?

That initial spark of interest started with my first visit to Walt Disney World. The place just felt special. Over the years, there has always been some manner of encouragement to take Disney Parks experiences to 'the next level' which encouraged a broader exploration of the parks, their history and design, the stories, the details, and the people who made and make them real for guests every day.

Q 06 | THE TRIPS

How many times/days a year do you visit Disney Parks (estimate)? And how many days are most of your trips?

It's a lot for a guy who doesn't live in Florida or California. Walt Disney World trips tend to be a couple days to a week or more where visits to Disneyland are usually between 1 and 4 days.

Q 07 | THE FAVORITS

Please name your favorite Disney attractions, parades, or shows.

“Peter Pan’s Flight” will always be my favorite attraction. I knew that ride before I knew the animated feature and the view of London from above was something that resonated with me as a kid. For parades, I’m really enjoying “Paint The Night” lately though there have been a number of great ones. There are too many great nighttime spectaculars to list as my favorites on both coasts.

Q 08 | THE MEMORY

What’s your most memorable Disney Parks moment? Tell us all about it please!

My most memorable moment in a Disney park is my wife accepting my proposal of Marriage at “Cinderella’s Royal Table” (then “King Stefan’s Banquet Hall”).

Q 09 | THE TIP

Do you have a tip or advise - about anything Disney Parks related - to share with our readers?

First, know the parks and the way they work. Plan your visit so you have options and choices when interest in spontaneity arises. Next, get to know your camera equipment before you visit and look up common settings for the most challenging photos you’d like to capture (then practice). Look for experiences beyond the parks themselves. Resorts and retail districts (Disney Springs, Downtown Disney etc.) offer a lot too! And finally, be mindful of the meaningful moments and memories that you’ll be creating in the parks. It’s easy to get caught up in the mechanics of going from attraction to attraction, so take pause every now and then to put your experience in and around the parks into the context that’s most valuable for you.

Q 10 | THE CHOICES

Make your choice! You have to choose one...

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mickey | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Donald |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Characters | or | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attractions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Star Wars | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Marvel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parades | or | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nighttime spectaculars |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-site hotel | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Off-site hotel |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual Pass | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Ticket |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Animation | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Live-action |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pins | or | <input type="checkbox"/> TsumTsums |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Early morning visits | or | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evening visits |

- PhotoPass or FastPass
 Jack Sparrow or Captain Hook

Note: It was impossible for Jim to make a choice for early morning or evening visits.

Q 11 | THE QUESTION

Do you have a question for me?

How did your interest in Disney Parks start and how does it continue to grow and evolve today?

Niels: *I have always been a fan of Disney and watching films in general. Storytelling, audiovisual details, and an emotional and/or powerful soundtrack are really important for me. I made my first couple of trips to Disneyland Paris when I was in University (around 2000-2003). I came back to Disneyland Paris in March 2013 together with friends and their kids, my wife, and our daughter, who was only 1 year and about 9 months old that time. At that moment I really discovered the magic Disney offers in their parks and we started to visit multiple times a year. In October 2016 we decided to get ourselves Annual Passes and still have them. Being at Disneyland Paris is like entering their animated and live action movies through rides, parades, shows, meet & greets, nighttime spectaculars, dining experiences, and theming in general. I especially love the detailed way Disney incorporates stories or story elements in their parks. This is not just storytelling but true 'story doing'. For me it's really like being in a different world, in a different reality. Last Summer (2018) we've made our first trip from The Netherlands to Orlando for a 14 nights on-site Walt Disney World experience, which was an unforgettable experience. The full resort including theme parks, waterparks, Disney Springs, the hotel resorts, and transportation options is much bigger compared to Disneyland Paris. It was pretty overwhelming to live in a 'Disney city' for a while. We definitely want to go back there but also explore more Disney Parks worldwide in the coming years, if possible. It's especially fun to see different versions of lands, parades and rides, and discover cultural differences within the Disney environment. And of course, I will keep taking pictures of the Disney magic to share the magic and provide inspiration and tips or tricks where possible.*

THE END

I would like to thank Jim for participating in this Q&A series. Hope you've enjoyed this episode. Until next time and have a magical day!



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