

Capturing Disney Parks presents **DISNEY ICON SPOTLIGHT**

Episode 69 | Bronwen from @bronwendy.darling | March 30, 2022

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.

My name is Bronwen, and I'm a Cast Member at Disneyland Paris. My husband and I have lived in France for just over 2 years. I love lots of things, including dancing, yoga, pizza, reading, and sitcoms.



Pictures provided by Bronwen

Q 02 | THE PARKS

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

I've been to Disneyland (Anaheim), Walt Disney World, Shanghai Disneyland, and Disneyland Paris. Despite Disneyland being the park I grew up attending, Walt Disney World is the one that feels most like home. WDW is where I first became a Cast Member, as a Disney College Program participant. My first visit to a WDW park was Magic Kingdom, during my Traditions class (the first official day of work for a Cast Member). I was a Lifeguard at Disney's Yacht and Beach Club + Disney's Boardwalk Resorts, where I worked for 8 months. This experience was my first experience living far from family. However, when my program ended and I returned to my home state, I felt like I'd left my home behind in WDW. The experiences I had on my DCP shaped me into the person that I am today.

Q 03 | THE PLATFORM(S)

Where can we find your Disney fan platforms?

My Instagram, @bronwendy.darling (<https://www.instagram.com/bronwendy.darling>), is the home of all my Disney based content.

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 started up my Disney Instagram account in January 2018. I was struggling with Seasonal Affective Disorder and desperately needed something happy, bright, colorful, and creative to help me through the winter months. I realized that many of my happiest memories were at Disney, and I was aching for a way to share them as much as possible without 'bothering' the people who were interested in what I was currently doing, not what I did on my Disney College Program in 2015. So, I created an account solely for sharing my Disney memories. I started out with a color block feed (I was heavily inspired by @dolewhipdani), and it evolved from there depending on who I was inspired by, if I'd had a recent Disney trip, or if the March #DisneyboundChallenge was in progress. Believe it or not, when I started my account I had absolutely no intentions of connecting with people or making friends. I just wanted a pretty, colorful Instagram feed to boost my mood. At first, any connections I had on the platform felt really fake to me. ('Follow for Follow' type of mentality--not something I've ever been a fan of.) But, over time, I found some really genuine people that I actually wanted to meet and be friends with. After my husband and I had both graduated from University, we moved to Florida and I became a Cast Member again. I realized, meeting these 'Instagram friends' of mine IRL could actually be a reality! It's been really cool to meet up with people and spend a day in the parks together.

Which Disney Parks do I cover? Well, I'll post just about anything from any of my Disney Parks experiences, but I wouldn't say that I'm actively trying to 'cover' any specific content. I simply post what I'm experiencing in life on my #DisneySide. That can be anything from my day at work, new experiences available in the parks, or my "Buzz Lightyear Laser Blast" high score. (I'm not quite a Galactic Hero yet, but I'll get there.) Why do I put effort into those activities? Simply put, I love the magic. I love how happy I am when I'm at Disney. And I like sharing what makes me happy.

Q 05 | THE LOVE

How and when did your love for Disney Parks start?

My first trip to Disneyland was before I was even a year old, and I've been hooked ever since. My family had annual passes to Disneyland when I was 5, and we were at Disney on every school break. We watched Disney movies at home. My dad would re-enact Disney attractions like "Splash Mountain" and "Big Thunder Mountain Railroad". I remember being so excited to turn 7 years old because that was how old I needed to be to ride on "Dumbo The Flying Elephant" all by myself. I've always loved it. I can't remember a time when I didn't.

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?

I'm at Disneyland Paris 5 days a week, every week, for the last two years (minus lockdowns, ew).

Q 07 | THE FAVORITS

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

Thank goodness you didn't tell me to pick just one.

Attractions: Flight of Passage (WDW), Crush's Coaster (DLP), Tron Lightcycle Power Run (SHDLR), Pirates of the Caribbean: Battle for the Sunken Treasure (SHDLR)

Parades: Festival of Fantasy (WDW), Mickey's Dazzling Christmas Parade (DLP) (← Am I biased because I was Opening Cast? Maybe. Maybe.)

Shows: Finding Nemo the Musical (WDW), Festival of the Lion King (WDW), Mickey's Royal Friendship Faire (WDW).

BUT my favorite Nighttime Spectacular is 100% "Fantasmic!" and I will never, ever change my mind.

Q 08 | THE MEMORY

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

When I was working at Walt Disney World on my Disney College Program, my older sister was serving as a religious missionary for our church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Because of this, when my family came to visit Walt Disney World during my program, she was unable to join. When she returned from her mission (8 months after I'd completed my program), I surprised her with a trip to Walt Disney World. It was her first visit and I got to be her personal tour guide for a completely packed 5-day trip. I showed her everything I loved, every hidden detail I knew of, and gave her every dose of Disney Magic I could muster. It was perfect. I was so happy I was able to provide that experience for her.

Q 09 | THE TIP

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

Be nice to Cast Members. I've worked in the Recreation, Attractions, and Entertainment departments at Disney Parks and each and every one of them has challenges that could be lightened with a little more kindness. I remember a time while working at "Flight of Passage": someone took the time to say "Thank You" when I collected their 3D glasses after their ride. It was the first person to say anything nice to me all day, and I was finishing up a LONG shift. I was so shocked by their genuine, small act of kindness that I told them to wait for a moment off to the side. Once the exit pathway had cleared, I gave their entire group a Fastpass to any attraction they wanted. They were so surprised, "but why are you doing this for us?", they asked. I told them, "you're the first person that's said "thank you" to me all day. It meant a lot to me." Cast Members won't always have a way to 'reward' your kindness, but it does mean a lot to them. Sometimes you won't even know how much it meant.

Q 10 | THE CHOICES

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

- | | | | |
|--|----|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mickey | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Donald | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Characters | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Attractions | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Star Wars | or | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marvel | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parades | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Nighttime spectaculars | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On-site hotel | or | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Off-site hotel | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Pass | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Ticket | <i>Option 3: Cast Member</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Animation | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Live-action | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pins | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuimo's | <i>Option 3: I don't have strong feelings about either one</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early morning visits | or | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evening visits | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PhotoPass | or | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paid direct attraction or show access
(Premier Access, Lightning Lane, FastPass, ...) | |
| | | | <i>Addition: FastPass, but only the free version, I won't pay for priority access</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jack Sparrow | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Captain Hook | |

Q 11 | THE QUESTION

Do you have a question for me?

Not so much a question, just more of a thank you! It was fun to relive some of my Disney memories while writing this up. Thanks for the opportunity to share it.

Niels: *You're welcome Bronwen. Happy to be in touch and know your Disney-story now!*

THE END

I would like to thank Bronwen 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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Instagram

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