

Capturing Disney Parks presents **DISNEY ICON SPOTLIGHT**

Episode 75 | Julie McDonald from **@disneyjulesmac1965** | March 19, 2023

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 Julie McDonald. I am 57 years old, married to Mick for 36 years. I have one daughter, Laura who gets married in July to Gareth, her fiancé. I am Grandma to the lovely Ted whom I am teaching to love all things Disney. Mick and I lived in Hong Kong for 2 years in 1987 and our daughter was born out there. I have two degrees in Education and taught for 31 years. For 23 of those years, I was a Headteacher/Principal of an Outstanding award-winning Infant school and had 51 staff members who worked for me. I looked after thousands of children and ensured they got a good start with their education. In 2011, I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and carried on working until 2021 when I retired due to ill health. On my retirement from teaching, I decided to focus on my love for Disney and help people enjoy the parks and Disney cruises who are in a wheelchair like myself. I became an InsidEar for Disneyland Paris 4 weeks ago.



Pictures provided by Julie

Q 02 | THE PARKS

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

Home park is Disneyland Paris and have been going since 1995 so have seen a lot of changes over the years. I have also been on two Disney cruises sailing from the UK and have another booked in September 2023. My ambition is to visit all the Disney sites in the world but due to my health I can't fly at the moment.

Q 03 | THE PLATFORM(S)

Where can we find your Disney fan platforms?

Instagram: [@DisneyJulesmac1965](#)

YouTube: [@DisneyJulesmac1965](#)

Facebook: Julie McDonald

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.

My passion is helping other people really enjoy Disneyland Paris in wheelchairs. I am unable to transfer out of my chair onto rides so have to find other ways to enjoy the parks. I cover this using photos and video clips on Instagram and Facebook daily as well as sharing old photos from the park when it first opened. I also give advice on the food in the parks. I also write about my experiences on Disney cruises and life in concierge and whether the luxury Disney life is worth it.

Q 05 | THE LOVE

How and when did your love for Disney Parks start?

I often wanted to go to the American parks when I was younger as I loved the Disney films. I also watched Walt himself in his programmes and fell in love with his vision and enthusiasm. It just did not happen when I was younger as my parents could not afford it so I had to wait until Disneyland Paris opened in 1995 to first visit a park.

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?

We go twice a year and go for 5 nights stay. We always stay at the Disneyland Hotel.

Q 07 | THE FAVORITS

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

“Mickey and the Magician” is the best show but I also loved the “Jungle Book Jive” in 2019. My favourite rides are “It’s a Small World”, “Phantom Manor” and on the “Molly Brown” riverboat.

Q 08 | THE MEMORY

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

I have two. Watching the “Jungle Book Jive” as Goofy led his army of Indian drummers marching through the castle out onto the castle stages. It was just the wall of sound and the colourful spectacle that hit you and made you dance. I was sat there doing my best to dance in my wheelchair to the wonderful sounds. My second is the first time I went to the park after being in my wheelchair. My husband left me sat in Main Street whilst he nipped into City Hall. I suddenly had 5 Cast Members come over and check I was ok and if they could help me in anyway. I cried as they were so kind and gave me lots of tips how to enjoy the parks in my wheelchair. They were true magic!

Q 09 | THE TIP

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

Stay in a Disney hotel to be totally immersed in the magic and get a meal plan so you can try all the wonderful restaurants. You can manage your budget better then.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-site hotel | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Off-site hotel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Pass | or | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ticket |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Animation | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Live-action |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pins | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuimo's |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Early morning visits | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Evening visits |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PhotoPass | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid direct attraction or show access |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jack Sparrow | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Captain Hook |

THE END

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



Niels van Eijkelenburg
owner of Capturing Disney Parks

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/capturingdisneyparks>

Twitter (news)

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