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# HOSPITALITY DESIGN



Hotels & Resorts









Since its founding in the 1940s, Walt Disney Imagineering has directed the design and development of theme parks, hotels, restaurants, entertainment facilities, and other Disney-branded venues that all deliver an unabashedly celebratory look at the past, present, and even future. One of its latest projects, Disney's BoardWalk at Walt Disney World Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, presents the sunny optimism, fantasy, and even the eccentricity of the vacation culture that evolved around American seaside resorts in the 1900s.

Robert A.M. Stern, whose New York City firm was project architect, notes that this 45-acre development was a "breakthrough" for

Disney as it fully integrated the large central lodging facility with the various restaurants, retail shops, and entertainment venues along the boardwalk. "People are literally living above the store," Stern says, so that a full range of resort experiences are very readily at hand. His firm's design flanks a central structure containing guest registration and other public spaces with U-shaped wings: one contains Disney's BoardWalk Inn with 378 guestrooms and suites plus 14 duplex Cottage Suites, the other 532 Disney Vacation Club villas. The wings curve to follow the semi-circular boardwalk along Crescent Lake, with the space between the wings and the boardwalk area filled with the dining spots, shops, etc.

**Above:** The lodging component of the property is massed and delightfully decorated with millwork features based on Atlantic-coast hotels and resorts dating from the turn of the century.

**The 45-acre Disney's BoardWalk grounds are extensively landscaped for year-round interest.**

**Opposite:** A grand Entry Tower leads to the reception lobby and includes a working model of an old-time carousel.

Chandelier: Dern. Settee: Alpine Millwork with Clarence House fabric and West Coast Trimming fringe. Sconces: Alger. Planters: Garden Concepts. Antique Coney Island carousel miniature: Walt Disney Imagineering. Antique carousel finials: Parker Blake.

# Disney's BoardWalk

The spirit of seaside resorts is recaptured  
at a new complex at the Walt Disney World Resort



The clapboard-and-shingle-wrapped lodging components were given an abundance of pediments, columns, porches, cupolas, chimneys, and other structural and applied details to express the delightful decor of their Atlantic-coast prototypes. Stern carried this exuberance to the interior spaces, with Sue Firestone & Associates, Santa Barbara, California, among those working to fill the mix of grand and intimate spaces with furnishings that yield the look of generations-long collecting. Integral to this eclecticism is an extensive collection of art and artifacts procured and designed by Parker Blake, Inc. and displayed throughout the wealth of public areas.

In the triple-height tower that marks the passage from the entrance vestibule to the registration lobby, for example, a round settee is placed under a 48-foot-tall chandelier

fabricated from gold-leafed hippocampus (sea monsters looking like fish-tailed horses) and cherub figures: the lofty space, the fanciful tufted sitting place, and the lighting fixture contribute to the space's stunning visual impact. The lobby, a double-height room capped by a coffered barrel vaulted ceiling, is lit by large floor-level windows and clerestory windows above. Six metal-and-crystal chandeliers, wicker seating and fully upholstered pieces covered in a variety of patterned and solid fabrics, white oak floors bordered by green granite, and large potted palm trees lend a nostalgic appeal. To broaden the seaside resort ambience, a model atop the fireplace mantel depicts one of the "Colossal Elephant" Hotels found in Coney Island and near Atlantic City around the turn of the century. Also on view is a model of another icon: the circa-1900

**Below: A casual lounge near the reception lobby opens to a shaded porch.** Cane arm chair: William Switzer with F. Schumacher, Gray Watkins fabrics. Game table: Trouvailles. Table lamp, floor lamp: As You Like It. Gate-leg cocktail table: Manheim Galleries. Leather chairs, trunk tables, cocktail table, console: William Montague. Sconces: Phoenix Day. Artwork and accessories: Parker Blake. Wallcovering: Sanderson. Sofas: Bielecky Brothers with Masco fabric. Lounge chairs and fabric, game chair fabric: Brunswick & Fils. Lamp: Frederick Cooper. Area rug: AGA John.

**Right: The main lobby is designed for both grandeur and comfort.** Chandeliers: Alger. Wicker chairs: Fong Brothers with Cowtan & Tout fabric. Upholstered chair: A. Rudin with Brunswick & Fils fabric. Wicker sofa: Fong Brothers with Stroheim & Romann fabric. Console table: Collection Reproductions. Floor lamps: ELA. Area rug: Tai Ping. Antique carousel gondola, elephant hotel model, roller coaster model, artwork & accessories: Parker Blake.















amusement ride touted as the world's first "upside down loop-the-loop roller coaster." These two grand areas give way to more-cozily scaled sitting areas and lounges including one with comfortable seating, game tables, antique radios and other early twentieth-century electronic novelties. Like many of the property's other public areas, this room opens to a wide, white-wicker-filled porch that invites relaxation.

The Inn's 378 guestrooms and suites were designed for a similar retro appeal. In the standard guestrooms, of which there are 14 different footprints, custom drapery fabric carries images of antique picture postcards. Floral patterns on carpet, wallcovering, bedding, chairs, and pillows are mixed for a jaunty look against a mix of painted and stained casegoods. Suite options include 45 Club Rooms and the top-of-the-line Steeplechase Suite. This 2,000-square-foot-plus space, comprising such rooms as a main salon, dining room, library, and master bed-

**Above:** Filled with an array of treasures seemingly waiting to be taken out for summertime fun, the Members' Attic Lounge serves guests at Disney's Vacation Club timeshare units. Wicker chair: Fong Brothers with Grey Watkins fabric. Sofa, side table: Lexington with Roger Arlington fabric on sofa. Coffee table: Drexel. Croquet lamp: Scott Lamps. Rocker: Pearson with F. Schumacher fabric. Artwork and accessories: Parker Blake.

**Opposite:** A series of pedimented doorways leads from a prefunction area to the conference center. Hanging on the wall is a mirror that was originally part of a band organ. Wallcovering: Sellers & Josephson. Focal table: Niernan Weeks. Sofa: Collections Reproductions with Fonthill fabric. Floor lamp: Frederick Cooper. Table lamps: Chapman. Chandelier: Alger. Carpet: U.S. Axminster. Console: Troy Wesnidge. Wicker chairs: Fong Brothers with Nancy Corzine fabric. Mirror, table-top urn, artwork & accessories: Parker Blake.



room and bath, features hearty appointments including needlepoint rugs over parquet floors, decorative plaster ceilings, plush woven fabrics, antique furniture, and accessories. Picture it this way: if the standard guestrooms recall your Aunt Betty's summer house on the Jersey shore, the Steeplechase Suite belongs to the guy who owns all the real estate in Aunt Betty's town.

While a great amount of attention has been paid to the indoor amenities (the Inn's guestrooms, public areas including a state-of-the-art, 15,000-square-foot conference center, and the Disney Vacation Club villas component) this property has been integrally designed to promote strolls along the boardwalk. Shops and spots for light fare as well as destination-quality restaurants line this promenade, while the deco-inspired Atlantic Ballroom dance hall anchors one end and the ESPN Sports Club the other.

Family-oriented swimming pools take on the carnival look and vigor of Luna Park in one case; there are also designated "quiet pools" and spas for those looking for a bit of serenity. *John P. Radulski*

**Disney's BoardWalk** Lake Buena Vista, Florida

**Owner:** Walt Disney World Co.

**Developer & Design Director:**

Walt Disney Imagineering/Wing Chao, Paul Katen, Todd Lenahan, Helenka Synder

**Design Architect:** Robert A.M. Stern Architects/

Paul Whalen, Principal Designer

**Architect of Record:** HKS, Inc./

Fred Roberts, Principal Architect of Record

**Interior Design:** Sue Firestone & Associates/

Kirk M. Nix, Principal Designer

**Art Design & Procurement:** Parker Blake, Inc./

Alix Beeney, Art Director & Principal Procurement Agent

**Lighting Design:** Lighting Design Alliance/

Julia Rezek, Senior Designer

**Graphic Design:** RTKL Associates/

Cindy Reppert Ault, Senior Designer

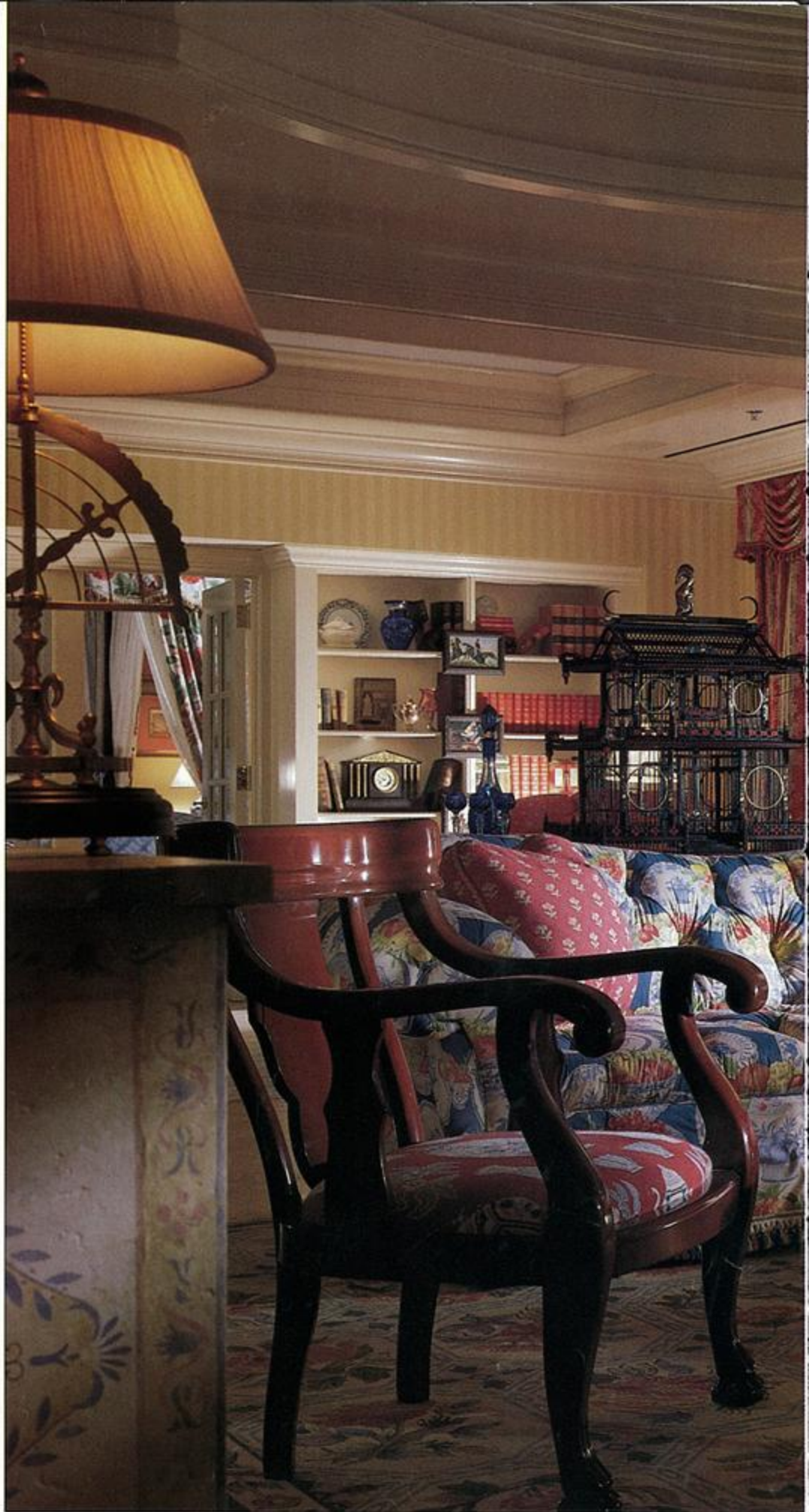
**Landscape Architecture:** EDAA/Joe Shively,

Senior Landscape Architect

**Purchasing Agent:** Walt Disney World Purchasing

**Photography:** Peter Aarons/ESTO (contents, page 67),

Robert Miller (all interiors)







The Steeplechase Suite, the living room of which is shown above, provides more than 2,000 square feet of opulence. In total, there are 378 guestrooms and suites including a selection of cottage units. Sofa: Baker with Cowtan & Tout fabric (including pillows). Chair: Nancy Corzine with Brunswick & Fils fabric.

Coffee table: Milling Road. Chest: Minton Spidell. Fishbowl planter: International Art Properties. Drapery fabric: Robert Allen. Drapery lace: Fantagraph. Table lamp: Frederick Cooper. Area rug: Tai Ping. Artwork and accessories: Parker Blake.