

The big 3-0

As Disneyland Paris turns 30 this year, Qin Xie explores the new ways to celebrate with Mickey and the gang



With new shows, new dishes and loads of new attractions – Disneyland Paris kicked off its 30th anniversary celebrations in style this month. As Europe's most popular theme park embarks on a new era of sustainability and creativity, here's what to expect.

PARADES AND SHOWS

Due to the French travel ban at the end of 2021, most UK travellers won't have seen the freshly

renovated Sleeping Beauty Castle yet. Several new shows have been created to help show off the park's pièce de résistance after 12 months of painstaking refurbishments.

At Central Plaza, at the base of the castle, there are multiple performances of a new daytime show, Dream... and Shine Brighter! More than 30 of the most popular Disney characters will take to the stage in iridescent costumes that were designed specially for the anniversary celebrations, accompanied ➤

PICTURE: SYLVAIN CHAMBON

DESTINATIONS

THEME PARKS & ATTRACTIONS | DISNEYLAND PARIS



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: 30th anniversary cocktail; Main Street parade; Minnie shows off her new iridescent 30th outfit; Gardens of Wonder

PICTURES: Matt Da; Sylvain Cambon; Valentin Desjardins



by the irresistibly catchy soundtrack, *Un Monde Qui S'Illumine* (A World That Lights Up).

Disney Illuminations, featuring light projections, music and fireworks around the castle, has also returned. But for a limited time, and weather permitting, there's also a new pre-show called Disney D-Light. A swarm of drones will whizz their way around the castle, in sync with pre-programmed lights and music, before creating a '30' in the sky. It's the first time the technology has been used in any Disney park and the results are truly spectacular.

RIDES AND ATTRACTIONS

For those who love a good selfie, a new Gardens of Wonder installation has been created near the base of the castle. There are 10 themed gardens featuring 30 of the most popular heroes, princesses and villains from Disney and Pixar. Unlike previous installations, all of the hand-built artworks have moving elements that help bring the characters to life.

Marvel fans will want to wait until the summer, though, when the hotly anticipated Avengers Campus finally opens inside Walt Disney Studios Park. The two main attractions are the 360-degree experience dedicated to Spider-Man and a "hyper-frenetic" ride featuring Iron Man; Disney has so far revealed very few details about what

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these will look like. One thing you can be sure of, though, is that this will be very popular.

SWEET TREATS

More than 60 new food and drink items have been created for the celebrations, ranging from ice cream and cakes to cocktails and smoothies. Different options are available in the restaurants, food carts and snack bars around the parks, as well as inside Disney hotels.

Most of the food carts and snack bars will carry Mickey-shaped lollies in lilac-coloured icing, while the buffet restaurants will offer special macarons with the 30th anniversary logo. Even more special are the creations made for the table-service restaurants. One of the highlights is Le Bouquet Final, a white chocolate and strawberry cake that's hidden under a dome. For the most comprehensive selection of sweet treats, head to Victoria's Home-Style Restaurant on Main Street USA. And for guests staying in Disney hotels, there's a special anniversary cocktail waiting at the bar.

MAGICAL MERCHANDISE

More than 350 items, which were developed over 18 months, have been created to celebrate the landmark anniversary. Guests will find everything from clothes to toys and items for the home. The iconic Mickey ➤



ABOVE: Disneyland Paris's D-Light Illuminations pre-show features drones in the shape of the number 30

and Minnie Mouse ears have been given a makeover and are available in glittery blue, and black and gold. There is also a 'double dangler' Pandora charm, 30th Boden glass and travel mug and a 3D 72-piece spherical puzzle.

The park has also announced a collaboration with Stella McCartney. The British designer has created Minnie's first-ever trouser suit as well as a new limited-edition T-shirt to celebrate International Women's Day.

SUSTAINABILITY PLEDGES

The 30th anniversary will be marked by "transformation, limitless creativity and new technology" and as part of this new era, Disneyland Paris has renewed its sustainability pledges.

This includes reducing the resort's environmental impact, enriching its biodiversity and inspiring guests and employees to take positive climate action.

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In terms of the guest experience, this means replacing plastic straws and stirrers with 100% biodegradable ones, the installation of eco-pumps for shampoo and shower gel to reduce the number of plastic bottles in its hotels, using LED lights to reduce energy consumption and employing hybrid vehicles to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Behind the scenes, there's a concerted effort to increase the number of green spaces at the resort. There's a garden that produces some of the fruits and vegetables used by the restaurants while animals, brought in as part of Disneyland's biodiversity programme, reduce the need for human intervention.

Sheep and hens graze hard-to-reach areas and bees help pollinate the plants in the resort.

Welcome to the all grown-up, more-sustainable – and creative as ever – Disneyland Paris of 2022. **TW**

FUN FACTS & FIGURES



150

synchronised drones spelling out the number 30 in the sky above Sleeping Beauty Castle



35,000

trees and one million flowers are planted every year. If Disneyland Paris were a garden, it'd be the biggest in Europe



450

costumes in Minnie and Mickey's dressing room – including the new iridescent versions designed for the resort's 30th



2,000+

lines of rhinestone sewn onto the characters' 30th anniversary costumes

PICTURES: Shutterstock/Potapov Alexander, MIRACRAOR, Den Rozhmovsky, yampirou.com

BOOK IT

A two-night stay at **Disneyland Paris** costs from £172 per person, including accommodation at Hotel Santa Fe and three days' access to the parks, departing on September 28. b2bportal.disneylandparis.com/login