

The Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress *Has It All!*



Grand Cypress property view from our suite.

by Melissa Wolcott and Al Martino

It's time to plan your family vacation, but you have a problem. Teenaged "Susie" wants to go horseback-riding.

Little "Bobby" wants to go to a theme-park and go on rides. Dad wants to hone his golf skills, and Mom just wants to relax by a pool and maybe play a little tennis. Seems like one or two members of the family have to give up or compromise their ideal vacation, doesn't it? The answer is a resounding "No."

All of the above can be found a scant 1 1/2 hours from Tampa Bay in one place, at the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress Resort.

We discovered this 1,500 acre tropical paradise, centrally located between Disney World, Sea World and Universal Studios, in Orlando. Unlike many other Orlando Hotels, the Hyatt's grounds are so vast, with a lake, and edged by woods, that you forget you're in Orlando.

We checked into a suite on the Regency Club floor, which affords guests some extra privileges. It is a privately accessed concierge level, which includes a complimentary continental breakfast, afternoon

cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, and a personal multi-lingual concierge staff who will attend to your every need. Although the Grand Cypress is a perfect choice for business



Grand Cypress' beautiful lobby.



Kid-friendly bunk beds.

travelers, it is also very family friendly. Some of the suites we viewed even have homey bunk beds for kids.

Our 2-room suite had a wonderful view of the

pool, grounds, and way beyond, to all of the Disney and SeaWorld properties. We enjoyed the different theme park fireworks at night from our balcony. At night we would return from our exhausting day (of having fun) to turn-down service with comfy robes, chocolates and a fresh rose. In the morning we woke up to a paper slipped under the door with highlights

from our home town news, which, I'm sure, is of great interest especially to the business traveler. We would stroll down to the lounge for a lovely fresh continental breakfast, and be on our merry way.

The 800,000-gallon pool is very elaborately designed, with slides, grottoes, and whirlpools. As the pool is open 24 hours, we were able to steal away at night to relax in one of their whirlpools. A fun poolside feature for kids, and parents too, is the "Dive In" movies. On Saturday evening, they show a G-rated feature film, and hand out free popcorn.

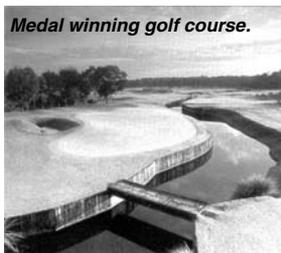
The lake has a sandy beachfront, and paddleboats, canoes and sailboats are all available for your use. On Saturday nights, you can roast marshmallows, make s'mores and share stories around the fire pit on the beach.

Twelve private tennis courts on property,



Equestrian Center

with instruction from top pros should inspire your game. If not, there's also racquetball and basketball available. If you seek an even smaller ball—say golfball size—here's where the Grand Cypress



Medal winning golf course.

really shines. The 45 holes of Jack Nicklaus signature-designed golf should really challenge your game. The 18-hole New

Course is patterned after the great Scottish courses. They have hosted several LPGA and PGA Tournaments. A variety of programs are available at the Grand Cypress Academy of Golf, under the guidance of certified PGA and LPGA professionals. For kids of all ages, a 9-hole Pitch 'n' Putt course will sharpen your skills.

One of the most unique features of the Grand Cypress is the Equestrian Center. Since it was pouring rain when we visited the center, we just toured their beautiful tack shop, but learned they have a state-



Equestrian Center

of-the-art boarding and training facility. Lessons are available for riders of all ages and experience levels. Young Junior lessons start at the age of two! The center offers lessons in hunt seat, jumping, combined training, dressage and basic western. Guests can bring their own horse or ride one of the center's horses, and Equestrian packages including accommodations are available.

On to our favorite resort activity... eating! The hotel has five restaurants to choose from, from very casual to casual elegance. We chose Hemingways, a charming spot detached from the hotel with a Key West atmosphere—an homage to “Papa” Hemingway. Our waiter, Gabriel Bergin, and busboy, Jose Titley, were most gracious, friendly, and on the ball. We were given a table



Hemingways waiter Gabriel Bergin, and busboy Jose Titley with their mentor.

overlooking the lush vegetation of the Hotel grounds. In conversation with Jose, we learned that he has been with Hemingways since its opening day 18 years ago, and Gabriel has been with the Hotel for nearly as long—quite a testament for a happy wait staff!

The menu choices were creative, so we decided to try a variety of dishes. We started off with a Shrimp and Crab Summer Roll appetizer combined with tender baby greens and glaze noodles, and wrapped in soft rice paper. We dipped them in a cilantro lime sauce and peanut drops, and the flavors blended beautifully. Next we chose the Steamed Dim Sum, made up of Pacific Rim



spiced chicken dumplings with mango salsa, roasted peanuts and scallions—tender and delicious. We had to try the salad

named “Hemingway’s Key Wester” to fit in with the mood of the restaurant. A glass plate in the shape of a fish was served, and held a wonderful combination of crisp romaine, applewood smoked bacon, hearts of palm, tomato and capicola ham.



After mulling over the tempting entrees, we decided on a seafood one and a meat one. “The Old Man And The Sea” was mahi-mahi (our choice, but five other fish were available as well) prepared flame

grilled, and served with a choice of sauces. The fish was fresh, tender, and cooked just right. The meat dish was a center cut filet mignon (apparently one of Papa Hemingway’s favorites) flamed grilled, and served over a wild mushroom ragout, paired with roasted garlic crushed potatoes and a bearnaise sauce—also tender and flavorful.

The best part of the meal is always the



last, and always the one you have to have saved room for. Alas, we did not, and had to pass on their irresistibly attractive dessert menu, and opt for one cheesecake slice between us.



Gabriel had overheard that it was our anniversary, and presented our cheesecake in a lovely arrangement with script in chocolate and sauces.

A relaxing stint in the whirlpool in one of the grottoes put the finishing touches on a perfect day.

The Grand Cypress can handle romantic Bed & Breakfast packages for two, all the way up to handling large conventions. For the nominal surcharge of \$10 per night to your room, you are entitled to: Court time at the racquet club, golf driving range, pitch n’ putt course, bicycles, canoeing, sail and paddle boating, free local phone calls, in-room safe and shuttle transportation to major theme parks.

Just think. Conde Nast Traveler ranks the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress one of the world’s best resorts, and it’s only a short trip up I-4! What are you waiting for?

The Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress is located at One Grand Cypress Boulevard, Orlando, FL 32836. For hotel rates and more information, call (407) 239-3921, or visit the website at: www.grandcypress.hyatt.com

