

## The Town of Celebration, FL, home to Bohemian Hotel, a delightful discovery

Our visit to the [Bohemian Hotel Celebration](#) offered our first trip to the Town of [Celebration, FL](#). What a delightful discovery.

Upon first glance, two films came to mind: "Pleasantville" and Jim Carrey's "The Truman Show" because the town has that same movie-set-come-to-life feel.

But why wouldn't it – the Disney company originally developed the town (the Bohemian hotel, by the way, marks the first and only time Disney partnered with an independent hotelier to develop and operate a hotel).

The concept for Celebration was actually the original EPCOT (Environmentally Planned Community of Tomorrow.) There was so much demand in the first phase of sales that homebuyers were chosen by a lottery. Even today, there's a high demand for residences in the community.

We admit we chatted briefly with a Realtor and looked at some listings just for fun, playing that little game some traveling couples like to play: what would it be like to live here?

Celebration is a fabulous walking town with lots of sidewalks, a couple of parks and neatly manicured lawns in front of pristine homes, townhomes and condos. The population of 9,500 swells in winter when snowbirds join the ranks of the locals.

Lake Evalyn is near the town's center and provides a beautiful setting for the boutique Bohemian Hotel Celebration.

From the hotel, guests easily stroll the single block over to the main street where shops, restaurants and an art-deco post office await. One corner holds the local theater, AMC Celebration 2 (where, incidentally, two Disney movies were featured here just 20 minutes from Disney World). The theater and several main restaurants in town have neon-lit vertical marquees adding to that movie-set feel. Most prominent of those marquees is the Bohemian's, which shines in bold red lettering spelling out Bohemian on one side, and Celebration on the other.

Following the path along the lake, there are many spots to stop and sit a spell -from rocking chairs to benches – to just take in the view and small-town atmosphere. The pathway takes you to the spot across from the movie theater that is no doubt a favorite summertime hangout for swimsuit-clad children. A palm-surrounded circular paved "courtyard" by the lake features water columns shooting up from the ground to the squealing delight of the young ones running through it. Their adult companions sit, chat and watch.

Along Celebration's main street – Front Street - are three restaurants we sampled: [Café D'Angelo](#), [Columbia](#) and [Celebration Town Tavern](#), known for its seafood.

Our first day out we opted for lunch at D'Angelo's and enjoyed the homemade Italian specialties so much that we returned the second day.

Our waiter there also recommended Columbia, so we headed there the first evening and discovered this is part of a famous chain of Florida restaurants that started in 1905 in Tampa's Ybor City. It's especially well known for its Cuban cuisine and trademarked Columbia 1905 Salad of ham, cheese, greens and more mixed tableside and served with the century-old family recipe garlic dressing. The sangria comes in hand-painted ceramic pitchers that can be ordered as a take-home souvenir. We enjoyed the seafood paella, "Paella a la Valencia," which is large enough to share for two as a dinner entrée.

Our second night, we met friends at the casual Celebration Town Tavern, known for its seafood. We sampled fried scallops, and fish and chips, both to our liking. This restaurant has an interesting Beer Club, where patrons work their way through the 99 different beer offerings, their engraved mugs awaiting their return to sample the next one on their list.

While we did not have enough time also to sample Thai Tani, we had heard, even before leaving home, that it offered good Thai food. The Celebration location is among the chain's locales.

The restaurant at Bohemian Hotel Celebration – The Bohemian Bar and Grill – is touted as Celebration's only steakhouse and was named one of the Best Places to Dine in Florida by Florida Trend Magazine.

We also explored a friendly little wine shop and several cute boutiques before making our way to that art deco post office to mail some purchases home.

A home for some, a vacation destination for others, Celebration, Florida, does provide the means to have a good time.