



## A CONVERSATION WITH TOM STAGGS

# MAKING MEMORIES THAT LAST A LIFETIME



The Eyes & Ears recently sat down with Walt Disney Parks and Resorts Chairman Tom Staggs. With such an eventful year almost behind us – and another one about to begin – we asked Tom to reflect on the past few months and to talk about the direction in which we're headed.

*It's been an exciting year for Cast Members everywhere. What were you most proud of?*

**Tom:** It's really been an amazing year in Parks and Resorts. And we all have a lot to be proud of: the launch of the Disney Dream, breaking ground for our new resort in Shanghai, the new Star Tours and Little Mermaid attractions, the opening of Aulani, Toy Story Playland in Paris and plans for the new AVATAR-themed lands. And just this week we open Toy Story Land in Hong Kong. I am equally proud of our whole team. Last month, I visited Walt Disney World with James Cameron and his team, as part of our kick-off for AVATAR. As I showed him the property and introduced him to our team, he was quite simply blown away. His reaction underscored the importance of the work that our Cast, Crew and Imagineers do to exceed our Guests' expectations, day in and day out.

*That's an impressive list.*

*But of course, now we're wondering, what's next?*

**Tom:** Given everything we've done recently, it's amazing to consider all that we still have to come. Next year, the Disney Fantasy will join the fleet at Disney Cruise Line, we'll open Disney's Art of Animation Resort in Orlando, we will begin unveiling elements of the Fantasyland expansion at the Magic Kingdom, we'll open Grizzly Gulch in Hong Kong, and we'll finish the incredible re-imagining of Disney California Adventure, including the opening of Cars Land. These projects are great examples of how we can deliver the quality and promise of the Disney brand in new ways for our Guests around the world.

*This growth obviously reflects all that we're doing right. What do you think keeps Guests coming back to our parks and resorts?*

**Tom:** We strive to be the most trusted provider of shared travel and leisure experiences throughout the world. And we do this by ensuring that every experience we create provides

opportunities for families, friends and loved ones to spend time together making memories that last a lifetime. Our business may look different than when Walt first built Disneyland, but his dream of providing a place where families can spend time together lives on and is as meaningful as ever.

*We, as Cast Members, take very seriously the role of ensuring that every experience provides our Guests with the opportunity to make lifelong memories. How can we do that even better?*

**Tom:** We have to be relentlessly innovative. Just as everyone is responsible for safety, courtesy, show and efficiency, we should always be trying to discover new ways to challenge the status quo, be more efficient, and to surprise and delight our Guests at every turn. We often talk about innovation in terms of technology. But innovation goes beyond technology and should extend to everything we do. Regardless of our roles, each of us has the opportunity to innovate and improve on what we do and how we do it.

*I love the fact that we can all be innovative in our roles. What do you like most about your role as chairman?*

**Tom:** That I get to work with so many talented and creative people throughout the company. The excellence of our team comes from the deeply rooted cultural commitment to quality and service that has been part of our organization for over half a century. And together, we get to do the impossible and create amazing experiences for Guests around the world.

*And that's what it's all about, right?*

**Tom:** Absolutely. What people cherish most are the experiences they have and the memories we help create. After we opened Aulani, many people referred to it as "Disney without the theme park." I love that in a way, because it speaks to the quality that we've achieved at our new resort. However, I'd like to reach the point where people simply say, "Wow, that's an experience that only Disney could provide" – and that means an experience associated with the highest levels of service, quality and storytelling.