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## **New Orlando Book Makes A Splash SeaWorld, Discovery Cove and Aquatica Get their Own Dedicated Guide**

(ORLANDO, FL) Three Orlando theme parks within hailing distance of each other that take the seven seas as their inspiration now have a guidebook devoted just to them.

*SeaWorld, Discovery Cove & Aquatica: Orlando's Salute to the Seas* (Intrepid Traveler, \$15.95), by Kelly Monaghan, reflects the heightened interest in the parks now owned by Anheuser-Busch but being rebranded as Worlds of Discovery.

In addition to the Orlando parks, Monaghan also reviews two other Worlds of Discovery parks in nearby Tampa, Busch Gardens Africa and Adventure Island.

The sea-themed Orlando parks offer a series of high-ticket animal interaction programs. The swim-with-the-dolphins experience at Discovery Cove is perhaps the best known, but SeaWorld also lets visitors meet a beluga whale, descend into a tank full of sharks, or participate in training the marine mammals under the parks' care.

"Worlds of Discovery has done an excellent job of appealing to the family market, while creating a number of opportunities for those with higher budgets to treat themselves to a heightened vacation experience," says Monaghan. "The dolphin swim at Discovery Cove is a perfect example; it's the most expensive day you can spend at an Orlando area theme park."

With that in mind, he has included a chapter on the luxury resorts near SeaWorld that allow the upscale traveler to enjoy the sort of upscale pampering and gourmet cuisine offered by the on-site hotels at Disney World and Universal.

SeaWorld, the oldest of the three featured parks, has long offered a "natural" alternative to the heavily themed fantasy parks of Walt Disney World Resort and Universal Orlando Resort. Its large stadium shows showcase some of nature's greatest wonders — killer whales lofting their trainers high in the air, lithe dolphins performing in Cirque du Soleil-like splendor, and sea lions and walrus just horsing around.

SeaWorld is also home to a growing number of roller coasters and thrill rides. "SeaWorld hit on a winning combination when they added Kraken, an absolutely awesome steel roller coaster," Monaghan says. "And they'll be upping the thrill quotient in 2009, when they open Manta, which is billed as a 'flying coaster' that will take riders high in the air and then within a few feet of a splashdown."

Discovery Cove, in addition to the dolphin swim, lets visitors feed stingrays and exotic birds or snorkel with tropical fish while enjoying a remarkable recreation of a posh Caribbean island resort. The newest park, Aquatica, is a water

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park with a twist — swift swimming dolphins from far off Australian waters.

The animal theme takes to dry land at Busch Gardens Africa in Tampa, which combines a world class zoo with a collection of some of the scariest roller coasters in the nation along with a smorgasbord of variety entertainment.

“Thanks to the clever combination tickets that Worlds of Discovery offers,” Monaghan notes, “it’s possible to create a one or two week vacation devoted exclusively to celebrating the natural world with plenty of theme park thrills thrown in. That’s something neither Disney nor Universal can match.”

Anheuser-Busch, which owns the parks is in the process of merging with Belgian beer giant InBev and there is speculation that the theme parks will be spun off to a new buyer. That doesn’t worry Monaghan.

“If the new management does sell the parks, it’s unlikely that a new owner will mess with success. The parks are profitable and attendance is growing every year. In fact, SeaWorld has passed Universal’s Islands of Adventure in popularity, something no one would have predicted just a few years ago.”

Monaghan is also the author of a guide to Universal Orlando, now in its eighth edition.

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To request a review copy of **SeaWorld, Discovery Cove & Aquatica**, to arrange an interview with Kelly Monaghan, or for any additional information, please contact Sarah Pappanikou at The Intrepid Traveler at 203-469-0214 • sarah@intrepidtraveler.com • fax 203-469-0430  
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## **SeaWorld, Discovery Cove & Aquatica:**

### **Orlando’s Salute to the Seas**

by Kelly Monaghan

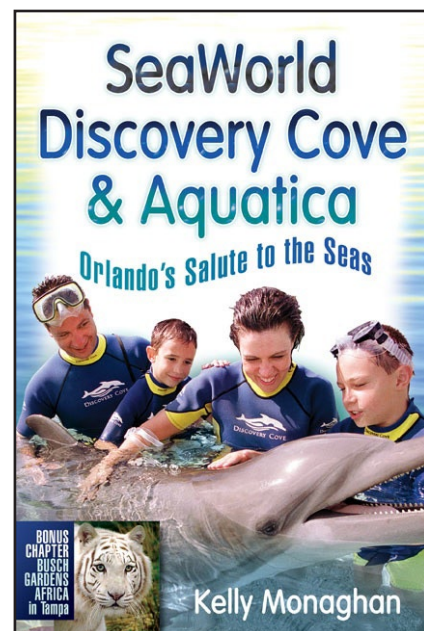
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