Walt Disney World News

Disney’s Hollywood Studios Immerses Guests in a Celebration of Show Business

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — It’s on with the show at Disney’s Hollywood Studios, where guests of all ages are immersed in the glitz, glamour and excitement of show business — strolling down Hollywood Boulevard surrounded by the sights, sounds and personalities of Tinseltown in the 1930s; learning how classic Disney characters are brought to life through the magic of animation; blasting off on a wild limousine ride with Aerosmith as the guide; or becoming immersed in the world of big-budget movie car chases and the excitement of high-flying stunt performers.

There are more shows, "reel"-life adventures and star-gazing opportunities than ever before at Disney’s Hollywood Studios in Walt Disney World Resort.

The showbiz-themed park has nearly doubled in size since opening day in 1989, and it continues to expand with all-new thrilling attractions, Broadway-style shows and backstage glimpses.

Newly opened, “The American Idol Experience” captures the energy and excitement of the “American Idol” TV series, with some guests auditioning to take the spotlight onstage at Disney’s Hollywood Studios while fellow guests cheer them on from the audience and vote for their favorite singer with instant results. Performers with the highest votes during the day’s preliminary shows return for a high-energy grand finale show that same evening. In addition to their new-found theme park fame, the top vote-getter receives “The American Idol Experience” Dream Ticket, which allows an eligible holder to schedule a front-of-the-line audition to a future regional audition for the “American Idol” television show.

Toy Story Mania! is an innovative new ride-game experience that combines memorable film characters from Disney•Pixar classics “Toy Story” and “Toy Story 2” with games guests can play. Donning 3-D glasses, guests shrink to the size of a toy and hop fanciful ride vehicles following a midway-themed route. At each game booth, they aim for animated targets using their own special on-board spring-action shooter.

“Block Party Bash” is the wildest, most interactive traveling show in Disney history. Guests are invited to rock to retro tunes, be dazzled by high-flying acrobatics and play, party and dance as Disney•Pixar characters from “The Incredibles,” “Toy Story 2,” “Monsters, Inc.” and “A Bug’s Life” present this immersive rolling spectacle.

"Playhouse Disney-Live on Stage!" features a whole new cast of Playhouse Disney friends. Children are on their feet singing, clapping and dancing to performing stars from "Mickey Mouse Clubhouse," "Little Einsteins," "Handy Manny" and more.

"Lights, Motors, Action! Extreme Stunt Show" presented by Brawny is a high-octane adventure "imported" from Disneyland Paris. Performed multiple times daily in a 6.5-acre stunt arena, the 30-minute show features high-speed chases, car and motorcycle jumps, pyrotechnic explosions, high-falls, two-wheel driving and high-speed spins.

Sunset Boulevard pays tribute to the glamorous theater district in all its glory. It also includes a shopping area with gifts, and light dining and snacks at the outdoor Sunset Ranch Market.

Standing at the end of Sunset Boulevard like an ominous beacon straight out of an episode of a television thriller is the Hollywood Tower Hotel. It beckons guests to experience The Twilight Zone™ Tower of Terror, a thrill ride that features shakes, drops and special effects. Random drop sequences await daring guests willing to plummet from the 13th floor and enter "The Twilight Zone."

At the end of Mickey Avenue, guests can board the Disney's Hollywood Studios Backlot Tour. The tram tour takes guests behind the scenes of a staged movie production in Catastrophe Canyon and past vehicles, costumes and props from some of Hollywood's best films.

A full-scale re-creation of the famous Chinese Theater is the gateway to one of Disney's most elaborate ride-through attractions. The Great Movie Ride showcases the charm, romance, suspense, intrigue and blazing six-shooter action of some of Hollywood's most memorable cinematic moments.

The courtyard of the Chinese Theater features handprints of numerous show business stars who have visited the studios, including Alan Alda, Lauren Bacall, Robin Williams, Charlton Heston, Samuel L. Jackson, Sylvester Stallone, Bette Midler, Tom Cruise, Jim Henson and even Kermit the Frog.

In front of the Chinese Theater is Mickey's Sorcerer's Hat. At 122 feet tall, it crowns Disney's Hollywood Studios with magic inspired by the Disney animated classic, "Fantasia."

Guests can experience what it feels like to be the size of an ant as they make their way through giant blades of grass in "Honey, I Shrunk The Kids" Movie Set Adventure. It's a jungle out there as guests experience hidden slides, caves, spider webs, a "leaky hose," giant toys, tunnels and ants in a "backyard" from the hit film, "Honey, I Shrunk The Kids."

In "Muppet Vision 3-D," Jim Henson's legendary puppets and special-effects wizardry combine with Disney's famous Audio-Animatronics technology, explosive in-theater effects and 3-D action and animation on 70mm film, in a wild and wacky multi-dimensional experience.

The stunts are left to the pros in "Indiana Jones Epic Stunt Spectacular!" an action-packed live show that re-creates the heart-pounding heroics of classic adventure films through movie stunt demonstrations.

Nearby, Star Tours invites theme park guests to embark on the wildest journey ever to depart from this side of the galaxy. Combining flight-simulator technology and an action-packed, thrill-a-second motion picture, Star Tours creates a "Star Wars" experience that transforms the audience into passengers aboard a careening spacecraft on an uproarious flight to the Moon of Endor. Familiar faces — like R2D2 and C-3PO — are along for the ride.

Another major attraction in real-life film making is The Magic of Disney Animation, where guests get an insider's view of Disney animated feature films. The attraction includes displays of Oscars won for the many classic Disney films produced over the years, artwork from Disney's animated films and the chance to learn how to draw a favorite Disney character in the Animation Academy.

From the Oscar-winning films "Beauty and the Beast" and "The Little Mermaid," Disney's beloved animated characters spring from the big screen to life on stage in other theme park shows.

"Beauty and the Beast-Live on Stage" captures the spellbinding story of Belle and the Beast in a 25-minute musical extravaganza at Theater of the Stars. "Voyage of the Little Mermaid" features dazzling special effects that combine with puppets, Audio-Animatronics, live performers and clips from the film.

Other attractions at Disney's Hollywood Studios:

- Rock 'n' Roller Coaster Starring Aerosmith presented by Hanesbrands Inc. is an indoor roller coaster that features a high-speed launch of 0-57 mph in 2.8 seconds, three inversions, rock-concert lighting and a specially created Aerosmith soundtrack blasting from 120 onboard speakers in each coaster train.

- "Sounds Dangerous Starring Drew Carey" is a show at ABC Sound Studios that allows guests to experience a comedic side to a police detective's chase through the use of three-dimensional sound. Headphones at each seat make the audience feel as if they are along for the ride.

- "Fantasmic!" is a theatrical spectacular featuring Sorcerer Mickey in a tale of fantasy and fright with lasers, lights, fire and water, and is presented on select nights in the 6,500-seat Hollywood Hills amphitheater. In a dream-world battle of good versus evil, Mickey's imagination comes to life — from the whimsical ways of his colorful friends to the darkness of the Disney villains.

  Shops and restaurants continue the adventure through Tinseltown history and lifestyle. The Hollywood Brown Derby faithfully recalls the landmark Hollywood restaurant, a caricature-walled meeting place of the stars where gossip washed down the signature Cobb salad and grapefruit cake.

  "California Crazy" architecture on a quiet lake serves up snacks and desserts from buildings created in the form of a tramp steamer and "Gertie," a life-size dinosaur. Around the bend, 50?s Prime Time Cafe takes guests into the kitchenettes of '50s sitcoms for dining atop laminated tables next to old-fashioned TVs tuned in to reruns of long-ago shows.

  Other themed dining opportunities include: Sci-Fi Dine-In Theater Restaurant, Mama Melrose's Ristorante Italiano, Backlot Express, ABC Commissary and Hollywood & Vine.

  Disney's Hollywood Studios is also home to annual weekend festivals that pay tribute to sports celebrities and the biggest film saga of all time. ESPN The Weekend and *Star Wars* Weekends are included with regular theme park admission.

- *Star Wars* Weekends combine the power of the Force and the magic of Disney into a multi-weekend event that takes place in spring. Working in close partnership with the creative minds at Lucasfilm, Disney's Hollywood Studios creates interactive experiences that immerse guests in the most popular film saga of all time. Star Tours, the Disney's Hollywood Studios attraction created by Disney and George Lucas, serves as the centerpiece of the celebration.
- ESPN The Weekend is a sports fan's dream, featuring more than 30 sports celebrities. Popular ESPN shows — including "SportsCenter," "Baseball Tonight" and "Cold Pizza" — broadcast live from the theme park and athletes take part in interactive experiences with fans throughout the weekend.

  Disney's Hollywood Studios immerses guests in the glamour of show business 365 days a year with thrilling attractions, incredible Broadway-style shows, world-class atmosphere entertainment and interactive film, television and radio production facilities. The theme park is part of the 25,000-acre Walt Disney World Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

  For more information, call 407/824-4321 or visit disneyworld.com.

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