

Big Thunder Mountain Railroad Whisks Riders on the Wildest Ride in the West

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Hang on to your hats, cowboys and cowgirls, aboard this runaway train through the Old West on Big Thunder Mountain Railroad at Walt Disney World Resort.

The landmark attraction in the heart of Frontierland transports Magic Kingdom guests on a harrowing journey through an abandoned gold mine, with red stone slopes, mysterious caverns, spiraling buttes and fun-filled adventures along the way.

The storyline:

- Set during the gold rush era in the flooded mining town of Tumbleweed, the 2.5-acre mountain is chock full of gold — as the legend goes.
 - Guests enter the ramshackle headquarters of the Big Thunder Mining Co. and board converted ore cars through a deserted mine shaft. As the train winds around the majestic mountain, passengers experience an adventure during which they brave rushing waterfalls, rumbling earthquakes, crashing landslides and hairpin turns.
 - Some 20 Audio-Animatronics figures including donkeys, goats, chickens, opossums and the “rainmaker” himself, Professor Cumulus Isobar, can be spotted along the rustic landscape.
 - The landmark attraction opened at Walt Disney World Resort in 1980, following the Frontierland opening at Disneyland in 1979. The attraction also can be found in Westernland at Tokyo Disneyland (since 1987) while a version opened in Disneyland Paris in 1992.
-

Facts:

- Set in a Southwestern landscape, reminiscent of the brilliantly colored wind-swept scenery found in Arizona’s Monument Valley, the attraction is punctuated by narrow gorges, tunnels, caverns and dry river beds.
 - Imagineers scoured ghost towns out west in search of antique cogwheels, buckets, ore carts and mining gear to add to its authenticity.
 - Passengers climb aboard a 15-row train that ventures to the mountain’s peak. At 197 feet above sea level, Big Thunder is one of the tallest mountains at Walt Disney World Resort.
 - It took years of planning, hundreds of rock makers, tons of steel and concrete, 4,000 gallons of paint and 900,000 gallons of water to create realistic red rock buttes and mine buildings.
 - Favorite western melodies can be heard throughout the ride, including “Oh, My Darling Clementine,” “Home on the Range,” “Little Brown Jug,” “Red River Valley” and “Turkey in the Straw.”
-

Tips:

- Big Thunder Mountain Railroad is one of the attractions at Walt Disney World Resort featuring Disney’s FASTPASS, the system that gives guests an alternative to standard “lines” at popular attractions.
- This family favorite ride is geared to please thrill-seekers of all ages, but you must be 40 inches tall to ride.
- Insiders recommend riders sit in the caboose for a wilder experience.

BIGTHUNDER/rev:7-30-07:jh:lc