

# 'its a small world' Attraction in Fantasyland at Magic Kingdom

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Nestled in the heart of Fantasyland in Magic Kingdom is one of the most beloved attractions at Walt Disney World Resort – *it's a small world*.

Inspired by a similar Disneyland theme park attraction, *it's a small world* was brought to Florida for the grand opening of Walt Disney World Resort in 1971. Thirtysomething years later, it got a makeover that included décor from its California cousin. *it's a small world* received the most extensive renovation and refreshment in its history, courtesy of Walt Disney Imagineering, the original creator of this classic attraction.

“From its beginnings as one of the ground-breaking Disney shows, premiering at the 1964-1965 New York World’s Fair, to the millions of guests who enjoy it today at Disney theme parks around the world, *it's a small world* is an attraction that endures the test of time,” said Eric Jacobson, senior vice president of creative development for Walt Disney Imagineering. “Its colorful cast of international dolls and delightful theme song – paired with a simple message of multicultural friendship – celebrate the beauty of nations, peoples and societies coming together in global harmony.”

The exterior marquee of *it's a small world* is vibrant with a color palette and layered flats depicting a small troupe of international children aboard a whimsical sailing ship.

The celebrated “clockwork” art from famed Disney artist Mary Blair that dons the facade of the Disneyland attraction also appears in the Walt Disney World attraction’s main inner queue area. The space comes to life with fanciful, three-dimensional set pieces, including a delightful miniature facsimile of the Disneyland attraction’s signature clock tower. The clock’s smiling “face” rocks to and fro as a gentle “tick-tock” and hourly musical chimes echo throughout the load area.

The exterior and the queue area set the stage for the magical boat ride to come. Every show scene reflects the attraction’s opening day brilliance, from sets and scenery to “hair and makeup” for the international cast of Audio-Animatronic performers.

There are 147 animated toys throughout the attraction and 289 dolls that “sing” the familiar song, “it’s a small world,” in five languages (English, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Swedish). Academy Award-winning composers Richard M. Sherman and Robert B. Sherman, who won two Oscars for their work on Disney’s feature film “Mary Poppins,” were asked by Walt Disney to create a simple, yet catchy, piece that could be sung in many different languages while guests traveled by boat through the attraction. The resulting song, “it’s a small world,” became one of the best-known and happiest of all Disney tunes.

## **The Creation of a Classic**

Originally created for the 1964 World’s Fair in New York as an exhibit to benefit UNICEF (United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund), this is a boat ride through a Lilliputian land populated by colorfully dressed Audio-Animatronics dolls representing children from many regions of the world. In 1963, executives from the Pepsi-Cola Co. asked Walt Disney for assistance with the creation of an exhibit for the 1964 World’s Fair to benefit UNICEF. With Walt’s blessing, Marc Davis, one of the original Disney animators (Nine Old Men) designed the boat ride attraction through the countries of the world. The first version of *it's a small world* was on exhibit at the New York World’s Fair from 1964-65 where it entertained and thrilled more than 10 million children. In 1966, after some major enhancements, including an enlargement of approximately 33 percent, the attraction found a permanent home at Disneyland in California.

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