

Voyagers Will Travel ‘Under the Sea’ Encountering Ariel and Her Friends When ‘The Little Mermaid’ Attraction Opens June 3 in Disney California Adventure Park

ANAHEIM, Calif., June 2, 2011 – Guests will enter the enchanting story of “The Little Mermaid,” complete with characters and songs from the Academy Award-winning Disney animated motion picture, when they board The Little Mermaid ~ Ariel’s Undersea Adventure, premiering Friday, June 3, in Disney California Adventure park at the Disneyland Resort.

Set in and around Ariel’s underwater world and located inside a new space on Paradise Pier, the new attraction combines the enduring appeal of a classic Disney “dark ride” with wonderful technological innovations to offer guests a personal journey into the scenes of the film. The Little Mermaid ~ Ariel’s Undersea Adventure adds to the excitement of Disney Soundsational Summer, June 3 through Sept 5, a season that offers guests even more ways to make special memories at the Disneyland Resort.

Adventurers on the attraction will feel as if they are descending below the ocean’s surface, one of the special effects that take this “dark ride” to a new level of sophistication. Once “under the sea,” guests will find themselves immersed in the classic story of “The Little Mermaid,” sharing Ariel’s adventure through advanced Audio-Animatronics technology, a magical cast of characters and a captivating musical score that will entice everyone to sing along.

“Being involved in this attraction is a dream come true for me,” said Lisa Girolami, Walt Disney Imagineer and Senior Show Producer for The Little Mermaid ~ Ariel’s Undersea Adventure. “I watched the movie when it first came out and I’ve seen it many, many times since. To be able to create Ariel’s world and bring it to our guests, and then get to watch the faces of the kids and parents as they come through here, is just going to be the best thing ever.”

‘Out of the sea ... Wish I could be ... Part of that world’

The fun begins outside the attraction, where the building housing The Little Mermaid ~ Ariel’s Undersea Adventure is a new landmark along Paradise Pier. Its Victorian Exposition-style exterior, including a statue of King Triton and relief carvings of frolicking mermaids (Ariel’s sisters), was inspired by the spectacular pavilions found in the classic seaside amusement parks of the early 20th century.

The ride loading area features an 86-foot hand-painted mural depicting the characters from “The Little Mermaid.” By night, the building will be outlined in thousands of lights, serving as a gateway to Paradise Pier.

Guests begin their journey by boarding their own colorful “clamshell” ride vehicles, part of the Omnimover ride system that is familiar to fans of the “Doom Buggies” in the Haunted Mansion attraction in Disneyland park. The Omnimover, a Walt Disney Imagineering design, gives passengers a point-of-view experience, directing their attention to the key scenes in the attraction.

Scuttle, the tale-spinning seagull, welcomes guests as they embark on their adventure, doing his best to tell the story of Ariel’s ambition to leave her ocean home and become part of the human world.

'I wanna be ... Walking around on those – what do you call 'em? Oh – feet!'

To meet Ariel and participate in her adventure, guests must first head “under the sea.” A combination of special effects creates a sense of descending to the ocean floor, all without leaving the clamshell vehicle.

The first locale on the underwater journey is Ariel’s grotto, where she keeps the treasures she has found on land – whozits, whatzits and thingamabobs – and sings “Part of Your World.” The Audio-Animatronics figure of Ariel features some remarkable magic touches, including an underwater “floating” red hair effect.

Next, in a dazzling musical extravaganza with an underwater party atmosphere, dozens of singing and playing marine creatures (“the carp with the harp, the newt with the flute”) try to encourage Ariel to remain “Under the Sea.” The conductor, of course, is Sebastian the crab.

'It won't cost much ... Just your voice! ... You poor unfortunate soul'

Despite the warnings, Ariel is determined to visit the Sea Witch to find a way to become human. Ursula’s lair is another stunning scene, featuring her slithering henchmen Flotsam and Jetsam and Ursula herself – 7½-foot tall and 12-foot wide, from tentacle tip to tentacle tip. Ursula sings her signature piece, “Poor Unfortunate Souls.”

Next, as Ariel’s wish to be human is granted, guests follow her up to the ocean surface, where they witness Ariel’s friends encouraging Prince Eric to “Kiss the Girl.” This inspires a stormy response from the villainous Ursula and leads to the finale, which holds some surprises – even for those who know and love the motion picture.

Created by Walt Disney Imagineering, The Little Mermaid ~ Ariel’s Undersea Adventure features the characters from the beloved motion picture, including many of the original voice talents, and is enhanced with the iconic award-winning songs of Howard Ashman and Alan Menken. Glen Keane, supervising animator and character designer for Ariel in the film, was a creative consultant in the attraction’s development.

“Many times I’ve thought, ‘Why didn’t we have a Mermaid attraction sooner?’” Keane said. “But now I’m glad we didn’t. They’ve done this one so well.”

About the Disneyland Resort

The Disneyland Resort features two spectacular theme parks – Disneyland (the original Disney theme park) and Disney California Adventure park – plus the Downtown Disney District comprised of unique dining, entertainment and shopping experiences. The Resort’s three hotels are the luxurious, 948-room Disney’s Grand Californian Hotel & Spa, which also features 50 two-bedroom equivalent DVC units; the magical 969-room Disneyland Hotel and the 481-room Disney’s Paradise Pier Hotel with its “day-at-the-beach” fun. For information on new attractions and vacations at Disneyland Resort visit www.disneyland.com, call (866) 60-DISNEY or contact local travel agents.

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