

# First Disneyland Mountain

## For 55 Years, the Matterhorn Has Thrilled Guests and Dominated Disneyland Park Skyline

Since June 1959, the Matterhorn has been a highly visible landmark for Disneyland Park, a sign to travelers that they are nearing The Happiest Place on Earth. Now part of the Disneyland “Mountain Range of Thrill Rides” – including Space Mountain, Big Thunder Mountain and Splash Mountain – Matterhorn Bobsleds was the first Disneyland roller coaster.

- The Matterhorn Bobsleds attraction is unique to Disneyland park and does not appear at any other theme park
- The Matterhorn Bobsleds attraction premiered June 14, 1959, as part of the first major expansion of Disneyland Park. Other attractions celebrating their 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary this summer are the Disneyland Monorail and the Submarine Voyage.
- The introduction of these big new attractions in 1959 coincided with the introduction of what soon became another Disneyland cultural icon – the “E Ticket.”
- Since 1959, the Matterhorn has been the highest point in Disneyland Park, at 147 feet. It is the second-highest point in the Disneyland Resort, behind the Twilight Zone Tower of Terror, which stands 183 feet tall in Disney California Adventure Park.
- Matterhorn Bobsleds was the first roller coaster in the world to employ a tubular steel track and an electronic dispatch system, which enables more than one car at a time to be on the track.
- The most recent update to Matterhorn Bobsleds, completed in June 2012, added glistening new paint and “snow caps” on the outside, along with new lighting on the menacing Abominable Snowman inside. New, three-person bobsleds now allow guests to be seated individually.
- The attraction was inspired by the 1959 live-action Disney adventure film, “Third Man on the Mountain,” which starred James MacArthur and Michael Rennie as mountaineers. The movie was filmed in Zermatt, Switzerland, on and around the real Matterhorn.
- The mountain was built to 1/100<sup>th</sup> scale of the original Matterhorn, or 147 feet versus the 14,700 feet of the original.
- Scale and color were key components in the landscaping of the Matterhorn, with designers recreating the mountain meadow feel near the base of the mountain and the stark absence of growth above the timberline. Careful pruning and replacement of overgrown trees is done to maintain the proper scale.
- From 1959 to 1994, the Skyway (which opened in 1956) carried guests between Fantasyland and Tomorrowland, passing through an opening in the mountain.
- Guests who look quickly while whizzing through the Matterhorn caverns may spot mountaineering supplies and other evidence of the “Wells Expedition.” These scenic details are a tribute to the late Frank Wells, who was President and Chief Operating Officer of the Walt Disney Company from 1984 until his death in 1994. Wells was an experienced mountain climber and skier.
- The first major modifications to the attraction occurred in 1978, when the first tandem bobsleds appeared and the Abominable Snowman began to haunt the mountain caverns.

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