



Big Bear Mountain, the Longest Roller Coaster in Dollywood's History, Opens *On-Board Audio Adds Additional Thrills as Riders Search for "Big Bear"*

Pigeon Forge, Tennessee (May 12, 2023) — Today, [Dollywood's Big Bear Mountain](#) roller coaster, the largest single attraction investment in the park's history, opened with much fanfare, a nod to the Great Smoky Mountains and – of course! – a visit from Dolly Parton herself. At 3,990 linear feet, the ride is three-quarters of a mile long and is notably the longest roller coaster in the history of Parton's legendary theme park in east Tennessee.

The \$25 million coaster is located within the park's kid-friendly Wildwood Grove section, allowing even young adventurers to enjoy the ride. (It has a minimum height requirement of just 39 inches.) The ride's massive structure marks a significant expansion to Wildwood Grove, as the coaster hugs six acres of the area's undulating topography. Featuring a top speed of 48 mph, Big Bear Mountain takes guests through three separate launches, multiple airtime hills, high-speed carousel turns and tunnels, including a breathtaking pass behind a waterfall.

The morning's first riders included a group of kids dressed as junior park rangers from neighboring Great Smoky Mountains National Park, a tribute to the coaster's Smoky Mountain theme. Upon boarding, riders are launched from the ride station in coaster cars that resemble tiny SUV's as they embark on an exhilarating search for the elusive "Big Bear," a mythical animal of epic proportions.

With theming elements throughout the ride reminiscent of her beloved Smoky Mountains, Dollywood's Dreamer-in-Chief, Dolly Parton, has eagerly anticipated the opening of the new attraction.

"We said we're going to expand Wildwood Grove, and we really meant it," Parton said. "This ride is bigger than ... well, Big Bear! Seriously though, I'm so glad we're able to incorporate so much of the Smokies into this ride. I'm proud of where I'm from, and these Smoky Mountains truly are so much a part of me and who I am to this day."

In addition to becoming the longest roller coaster at Dollywood, Big Bear Mountain, which was built by ride manufacturer Vekoma, also marks the first attraction at the park to feature on-board audio. The sound system provides auditory thrills in each coaster train to match the ride's dynamic movements as guests come daringly close to Big Bear. Each highly-detailed coaster train features working headlights and taillights and seats 20 guests.

In addition to the opening of Big Bear Mountain, this year The Dollywood Company is also slated to open its second resort property, [Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort](#). Tucked away in a beautiful cove in the rolling foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, the Lodge will welcome the outdoors in with high ceilings, exposed beams and natural layered textures. Spacious family suites and bunk rooms feature lovely touches that are inspired by the beauty of the Smokies and provide options for multi-generational families and couples. It's anticipated that the lodge will accept reservations for November and beyond starting next month.

For more information about Big Bear Mountain, Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort, and the 2023 operating season, please visit [Dollywood.com](#).

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About Dollywood Parks & Resorts

A highly-awarded and widely-recognized leader in the amusement industry, The Dollywood Company consists of the 165-acre Dollywood theme park; the 35-acre Dollywood's Splash Country; and Dollywood's DreamMore Resort and Spa. Currently under construction, the 302-room Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort is scheduled for completion in 2023. As unique as its namesake and owner Dolly Parton, Dollywood is the 2010 Applause Award winner, the theme park industry's highest accolade; winner of 48 Golden Ticket Awards; and recipient of 28 Brass Ring Awards for Live Entertainment. The park is located near Great Smoky Mountains National Park and was named in 2022 by Tripadvisor as the #1 theme park in the country based on actual guest reviews. It also has been recognized as a top-three U.S. theme park by *USA Today* on multiple occasions. Dollywood is open mid-March through early January and offers rides and attractions, shows and crafters authentic to the East Tennessee region. Dollywood's Splash Country, recognized by the *Travel Channel* and *Tripadvisor* as one of the country's most beautiful water parks, operates from mid-May to Labor Day. Dollywood's DreamMore Resort and Spa, a favorite of *USA Today* voters and *Tripadvisor* reviewers, provides guests with spectacular mountain views and family-friendly amenities next door to Dollywood theme park and Dollywood's Splash Country. For more information, visit [Dollywood.com](#). Operating days and hours vary.

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