



## Dollywood Has a Lot to Celebrate This Season

Pigeon Forge, Tennessee (September 11, 2023) – During these last few months of the year, [The Dollywood Company](#) and entertainment icon Dolly Parton have a lot to celebrate.

On Saturday, Dollywood hosted the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Golden Ticket Awards. Presented by *Amusement Today*, a leading trade publication in the theme park industry, these awards are among the most sought-after accolades in the industry. They result from a survey sent to hundreds of well-traveled amusement park fans, industry journalists and ride manufacturers around the world. Parton and her business partners, Jack and Pete Herschend, received the “Industry Legends” Award, and Dollywood itself earned a record five Golden Ticket Awards.



Brothers Pete (Left) and Jack Herschend (Right) and Dolly Parton accept the 2023 Golden Ticket Legends award during the Golden Ticket Awards ceremony held at Dollywood on September 9, 2023.

Parton and the Herschend brothers were onsite to receive their award, which recognized a one-of-a-kind partnership that created Dollywood from the former Silver Dollar City Tennessee theme park in the mid-1980s, doubling its attendance in its first season of operation in 1986. Over the next four decades, Dollywood introduced innovative new concepts to the amusement industry, created jobs for residents of East Tennessee, and welcomed millions of guests who love the park as much as they respect its namesake.

To that end, in this year's Golden Ticket Awards, Dollywood received finalist placement in 10 total categories and won more awards than any other park in the world. The park received top honors for "Best Park," an award that had been held by Europa-Park in Rust, Germany, for the last eight years; "Best Guest Experience;" "Best Kids' Area" for the fourth consecutive year; "Best Family Coaster" for its 2023 addition of Big Bear Mountain; and "Best Christmas Event" for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

"We don't do what we do to earn awards, but we're not going to turn them down either," Parton said with a laugh. "Seriously though, our teams work hard to make sure our guests enjoy their time at Dollywood, and these awards honoring what they do sure make me happy ... because they are getting the recognition they deserve."

The awards ceremony was just the beginning of some special celebrations taking place at Dollywood through the remainder of its 2023 operating season. In the coming weeks, the park will host two more great festivals and mark the opening of its second resort, [Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort](#).

From September 20 through October 30, the theme park will host [Dollywood's Harvest Festival](#). Guests will be greeted by an amazing autumnal atmosphere including more than 12,000 pumpkins; a new "Harvest Sky" featuring thousands of shimmering leaves strung above the park's Showstreet; a "bee-utiful" new interactive honey bee exhibit that debuted during the springtime Flower & Food Festival; delicious harvest-themed culinary creations (including all things pumpkin); live music featuring more than 1,740 individual performances; artisan demonstrations; Great Pumpkin LumiNights, a nighttime event that sets the park aglow; and the surrounding beauty of the Great Smoky Mountains draped in vibrant fall colors.

On November 3, The Dollywood Company will celebrate the grand opening of its highly anticipated HeartSong Lodge & Resort. The 302-room lodge will celebrate the place that inspires Dolly the most, the Great Smoky Mountains, through both design and natural setting. The lodge also

beckons guests to connect and create meaningful memories while finding their own inspiration, what Parton would call their “heartsong.”

Dollywood will end the year with its award-winning [Smoky Mountain Christmas](#) festival, which runs from November 4, 2023 through January 6, 2024. For these two months, the park transforms into a colorful wonderland with more than 6 million twinkling lights, dozens of spectacular Christmas trees, heartwarming holiday shows, festive food and drink, and the individual who may be loved as much as Dolly herself ... Santa Claus.

For more information about Dollywood and the park’s operating calendar, visit [Dollywood.com](#).

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