

ADVENTURELAND, NEW ORLEANS SQUARE AND BEAR COUNTRY



Adventureland entrance (photo from 1950s)



Adventureland entrance (2015 photo)

Swiss Family Treehouse



Photo by Roger J. Runck, 1964, courtesy of Robin Runck

Father, Mother, Fritz, Ernst, and little Francis invite you to visit their home. You may have seen this family at your local movie theater in 1960. You probably thought their treehouse was on a far-off tropical island. But it's actually right here in Yesterland.

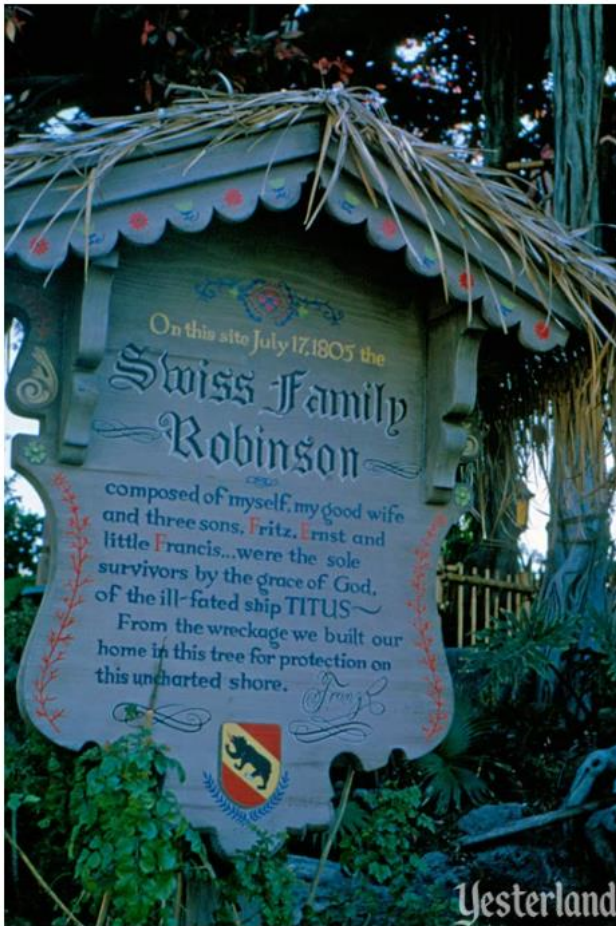


Photo by Roger J. Runck, 1964, courtesy of Robin Runck

Why a treehouse is here



Photo by Roger J. Runck, 1964, courtesy of Robin Runck

Have your ticket ready

After their shipwreck, the family managed to save furniture, supplies, and ship parts. So the Treehouse is an intriguing combination of European goods and primitive jungle products.



Photo by Chris Bales, 1999

Or not... (if you visit after the demise of tickets)

If you need to present an attraction ticket at Yesterland, it's usually for a ride or a sit-down show. But, in this case, it's for a walk-through. There's another example of this not far away; it's the Sleeping Beauty Walk-Through.

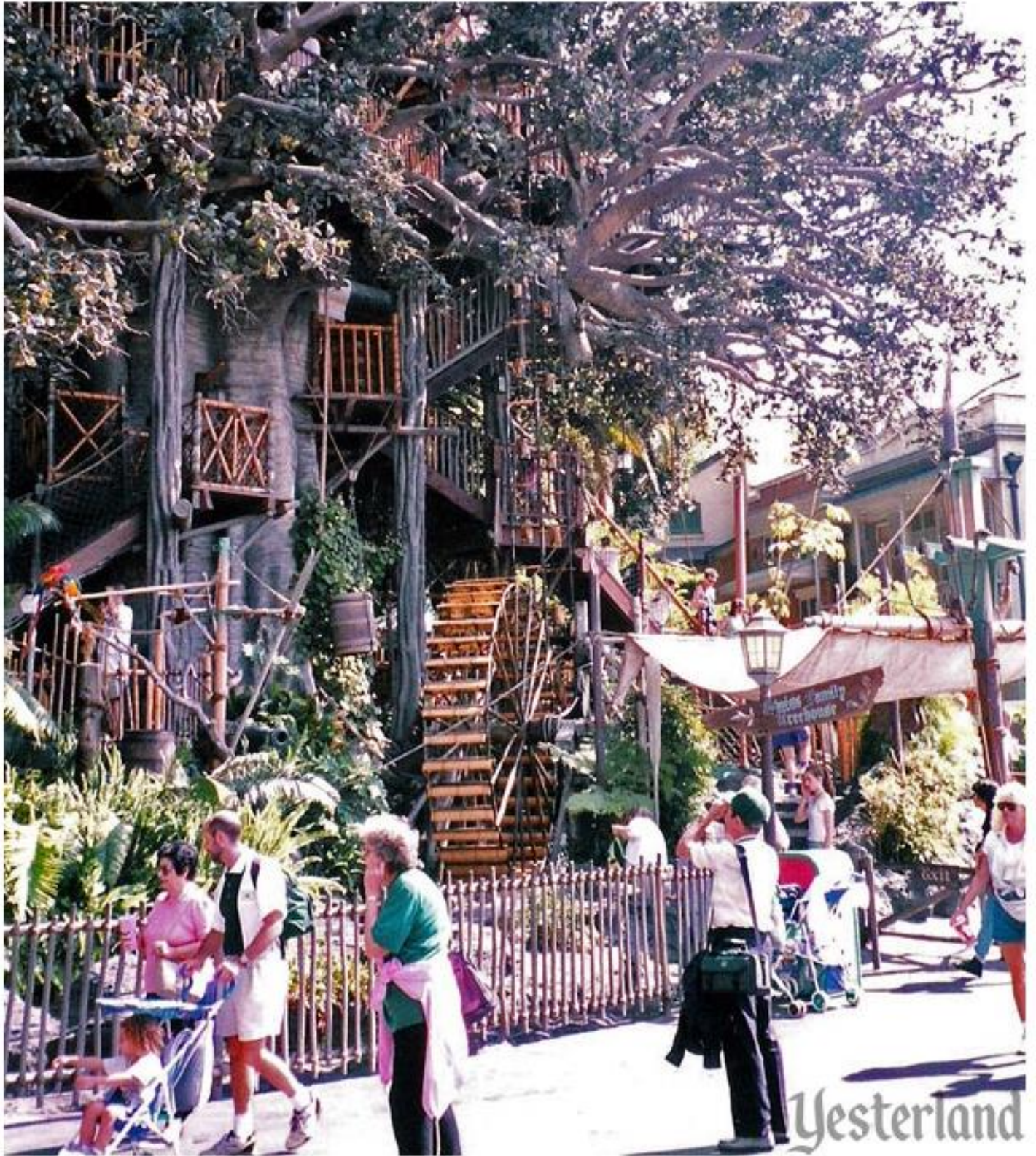


Photo by Chris Bales, 1995

Not your average treehouse



Photo by Chris Bales, 1999

Posing for photos in front of the treehouse



Photo by Chris Bales, 1999

Mighty banyan tree vines, grown into additional tree trunks



Photo by Chris Bales, 1995

This is Adventureland, so get ready to climb to adventure. As treehouses go, this one is a palace.

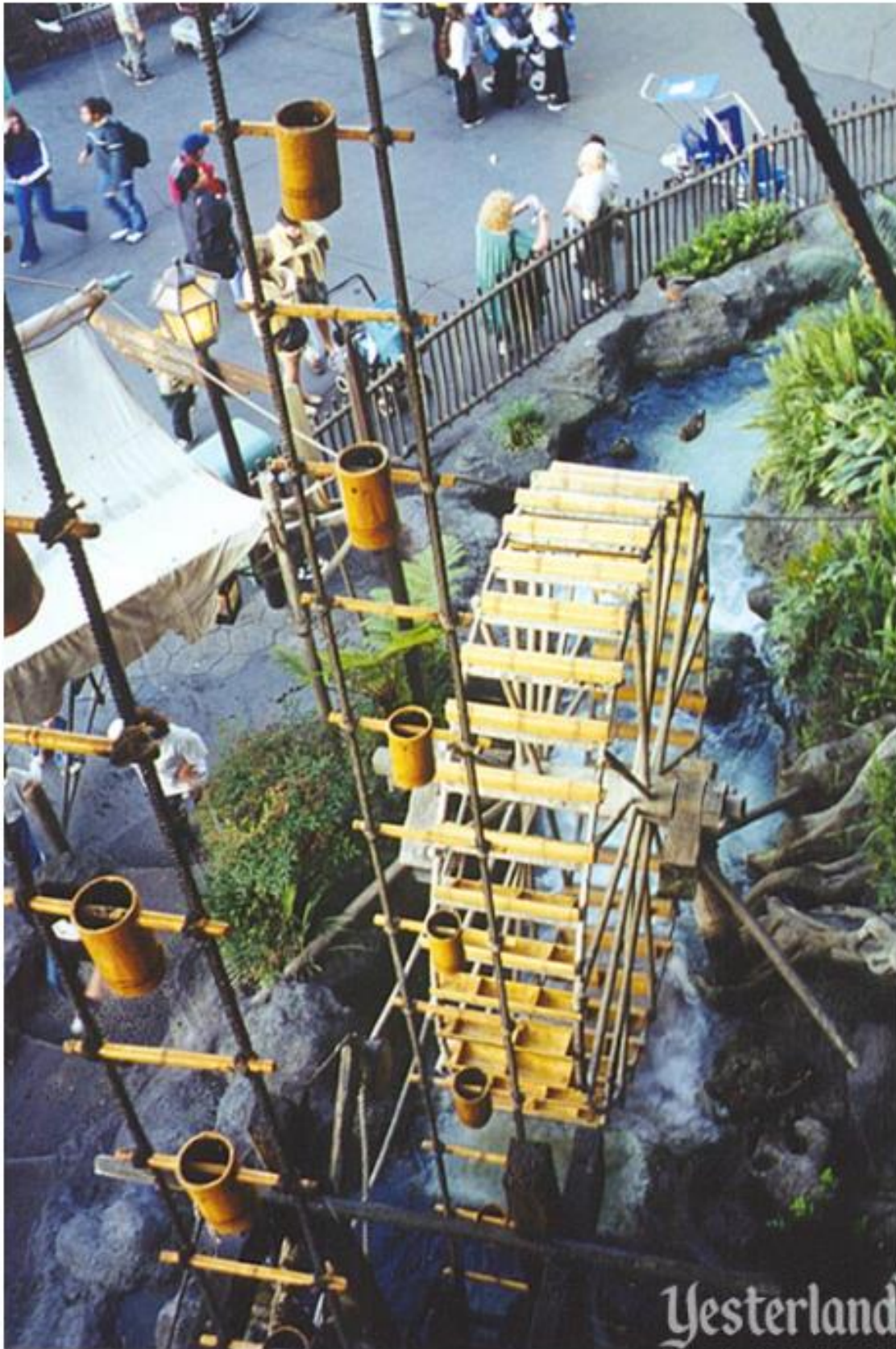


Photo by Leslie N. Herschler, 1998

Water system

This Treehouse has a clever and functional plumbing system. A water wheel drives a continuous supply of scoops, lifting 200 gallons of water per hour high into the tree. The water dumps into a system of bamboo gutters that use gravity to provide clean, running water to every room.



Photos by Allen Huffman, circa 1997

Treehouse rooms

Start by touring the kitchen and library on the ground floor. You don't mind climbing stairs, do you? As you ascend and descend, there might be an extra bounce to your step as you hear the catchy theme tune, the "Swisskapolka."

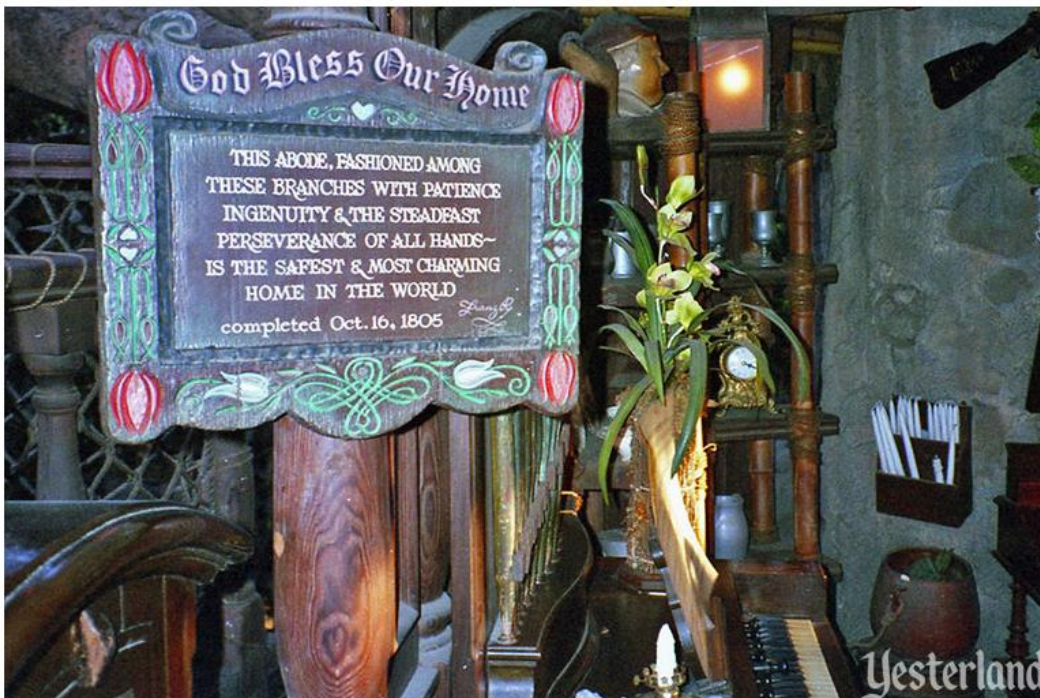


Photo by Chris Bates, 1999

"Bless our Home"



Photo by Chris Bales, 1999

Kitchen



Photo by Chris Bales, 1999

Library



Photo by Chris Bales, 1999

Gazing into the living room



Photo by Roger J. Runck, 1964, courtesy of Robin Runck

The Crow's Nest—the boys' bedroom at the top



Photo by Chris Bales, 1999

The Crow's Nest

Take a look into the rooms of the shipwrecked family. Pick your favorite—the one where you could imagine yourself living. No matter which room you pick, you get elegant furnishings salvaged from the ship, along with some terrific views.



Photo by Roger J. Runck, 1964, courtesy of Robin Runck

View toward the *Haunted Mansion* and the Rivers of America



Photo by Roger J. Runck, 1964, courtesy of Robin Runck

View into the Jungle Cruise

Count the steps. There are 68 going up, but 69 coming down. This isn't just an attraction; it's an exercise apparatus too.

The Swiss Family Treehouse opened in Disneyland in November 1962, almost two years after the December 1960 release of Walt Disney's hit adventure movie, *Swiss Family Robinson*, which was based on the 1812 novel of the same name by Johann David Wyss.

That wonderful Disneyland history book, *Disneyland, The Nickel Tour* (Camphor Tree Publishers, Santa Clarita, Calif., 1995) by Bruce Gordon and David Mumford, explains who wanted the Treehouse:

All little kids—and a lot of big kids too—want a tree house of their own, but not everyone can have one, especially one that's seventy feet tall. There was, however, one who could. In fact, if he wanted to, he could build the biggest treehouse in the history of the world.

And that's exactly what Walt did.

After providing details about the construction of the faux fig tree, the book explains the reaction at WED Enterprises (now Walt Disney Imagineering or WDI):

Apparently there hadn't been a lot of tree climbers at WED, since most of the designers thought the treehouse would be a waste of time and money. No one would climb all the way to the top, they moaned, only to have to negotiate their way back down.

But, as usual, Walt was right, and after the opening of the Treehouse, the adult climbers outnumbered the kids three to one.

Yes indeed, everybody wants a treehouse.

Although the walkthrough required a "C" ticket when it opened in 1962, it was demoted to a "B" ticket in 1966.

Guests enjoyed Disneyland's Swiss Family Treehouse for more than 36 years.



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2004

Tarzan's Treehouse

In early 1999, Disneyland evicted the Swiss Family from their Treehouse to make room for Tarzan. The giant artificial tree received a massive makeover, including thousands of replacement vinyl leaves and a new suspension bridge entrance from a new neighboring tree. In June 1999, Tarzan's Treehouse began welcoming park guests, just as Disney's animated Tarzan premiered in movie theaters.

Here's how the New York Times described the change on August 22, 1999 ("At Disneyland, Same Tree, New Tenant"):

Call it This Old Treehouse. A familiar attraction at Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif., the Swiss Family Treehouse, has received a new look to take advantage of the success of Disney's latest animated film. Tarzan's Treehouse, part of Adventureland, begins with a trip up a wooden staircase made of items salvaged from a "shipwreck."

After crossing a rope bridge, visitors enter the homes of Tarzan's human parents and his ape foster mother, Kala. Live animals and costumed characters from "Tarzan" will visit the treehouse as well.

Does anyone remember live animals?



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2010

Gramophone in Tarzan's Treehouse

Guests were delighted by the new attraction's hands-on interactivity. And what tune do the guests hear coming from the old gramophone? Why, it's the "Swisskapolka"!

Don't feel bad for the evicted Swiss Family. They still have nice homes in Florida, Japan, and France. For example, you can visit the Swiss Family Treehouse at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom, where it was one of the park's original attractions on opening day, October 1, 1971.

Tahitian Terrace



Aloha! Welcome to the islands of Tahiti, Samoa, and Hawai'i. You're seated beneath an exotic 35 foot tall tree with 4,075 artificial leaves and colorful faux flowers that always bloom.

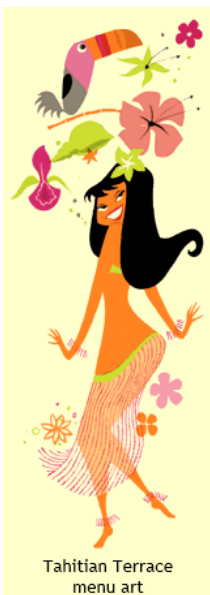
Open your menu for a selection of dishes inspired by the South Pacific. Many people consider this to be the best food in the park. With your dinner, be sure to order a "Planters Punch Tahitian" in a tall cylindrical glass. There's no rum in the punch, just a delicious blend of tropical fruit juices. The dinner was great. Now on with the show!

The waterfall curtain parts. The band fills the warm evening air with island rhythms. With graceful hip and hand movements, the dancers give you a tour of Polynesia. To add to the authenticity, the dancers emerge from backstage wearing sarongs, grass skirts, or other traditional garments, as appropriate for each island.

The lights dim for the daring barefoot firewalk and the thrilling fire-knife dance. Flames leap from water. Wow!

The Tahitian Terrace opened in 1962 in the Adventureland section of Disneyland. For over 30 years, Disneyland guests enjoyed food and entertainment inspired by the islands of Polynesia. The restaurant and show operated during the summer and on busier weekends. There was always a line to get in.

In 1993, Aladdin's Oasis replaced the Tahitian Terrace. It must have seemed like a good business decision at the time, but Aladdin's dinner show only lasted two seasons. The former Tahitian Terrace facility is no longer used as a dinner theater. If you're interested, you can look at a Tahitian Terrace Luncheon Menu.



| SPECIALTY OF THE HOUSE | | STEAK SPECIALTY | | BEVERAGES | |
|---|------|---|------|---|----|
| Polynesian Combination Platter Braised ribs, tiny fried shrimp, pineapple, chicken, beef, with Tahitian vegetables, Tahitian rice | \$89 | Maui Crisp Sandwich Baked fish, white rice, chicken, and pineapple sauce, topped with a citrus butter and french fries, served with fresh fruit | \$18 | Coffee, Pacifica | 35 |
| Surfides! Baked shrimp, chicken, beef, steak with pineapple, apricot, vegetable, and Tahitian rice | \$99 | Sliced Turkey Sandwich Cold sliced turkey of turkey, no cheese and lettuce, with fresh pineapple | \$25 | Tahitian Terrace Assorted Tea | 35 |
| Skewered Chicken Three skewers of bread of chicken or turkey, marinated in pineapple and onion, served on a bed of Tahitian rice | \$79 | Calahanian Salad Fresh pineapple, beef, salad with chicken salad, garnished with orange slices, chicken, tomato and sweet almonds | \$99 | Fresh Milk | 35 |
| Barbecued Pineapple Ribs Tender ribs, barbecued and covered with a pineapple sauce, served with vegetable and macaroni or Tahitian rice | \$95 | Tropical Fresh Fruit Salad Tossed with pineapple to cream | \$75 | Tall Glass of Iced Tea | 25 |
| | | FOR CHILDREN under 12 | | Planters Punch Tahitian A blend of all the exotic fresh juices of the tropics, served in tall frosted glass with four straws. | 50 |
| | | CHOP SWINEY SANDWICH with special sauce | | | |
| | | JUMBO SURFIDES! Baked shrimp, beef, steak with | | | |
| | | fresh pineapple Cauliflower and lettuce or rice | \$25 | | |
| | | | | DESSERTS | |
| | | | | Hot and Warm to come with | 40 |
| | | | | Tahitian Assorted Ice cream, waffle | 40 |
| | | | | Caramel pineapple ice cream topped with crushed fresh pineapples | 65 |
| | | | | Pineapple Baked Apple | 40 |

Aladdin's Oasis Dinner Show



Kazim, the proprietor and master of ceremonies, welcomes you to his establishment. The fun is about to begin when Aladdin attempts to escape from Jafar by ducking into Kazim's place.

On a warm summer night, sit below the massive limbs of a magnificent (though artificial) tree in this full-service, outdoor restaurant. Enjoy a delicious meal of exotic delicacies, including papadam wafers with mint chutney sauce, fresh fruit with honey-yogurt sauce, shish-kebobs (beef, chicken, or vegetarian), raisin-nut rice pilaf, tabbouleh, and dessert.

As you enjoy your multi-course meal, you're entertained with music, magic, dancing, special effects, and comedy by Aladdin, Princess Jasmine, Jafar, Iago, a belly-dancing harem group, and, of course, the fabulous Genie of the Lamp! You might even become part of the show.

The Genie has big plans for your dessert—it's not just the final course; it's also a musical and theatrical production. Rub the brass lamp on your table, and make a wish. There's a puff of smoke from your lamp, and a "genie" brings you a chocolate Aladdin's lamp filled with chocolate mousse and berry topping—while other "genies" serve other tables. What showmanship in Kazim's establishment!

Aladdin's Oasis opened in Disneyland's Adventureland in 1993, replacing the beloved Tahitian Terrace. During two summers and on selected weekend days during other seasons, guests enjoyed the Aladdin's Oasis feast and show. Unfortunately, the economics didn't work out, and the show was discontinued.

In 1995, Aladdin's Oasis continued to operate as a full-service restaurant on Disneyland's busier days. Tables continued to have excellent sightlines to the stage, but, alas, the stage was empty. In 1996, Aladdin's Oasis generally remained closed, except for occasional private parties.

In 1997, the facility became a venue for storytelling—without any food service. Kazoo, the storyteller, tells a simplified version of the movie plot and plays most of the roles, with help from Aladdin and Jasmine. There's plenty of audience interaction to keep each presentation fresh.

It's now a decade later. Aladdin's Oasis is still a storytelling venue. There are no announced plans to turn the facility back into a restaurant or dinner theater.

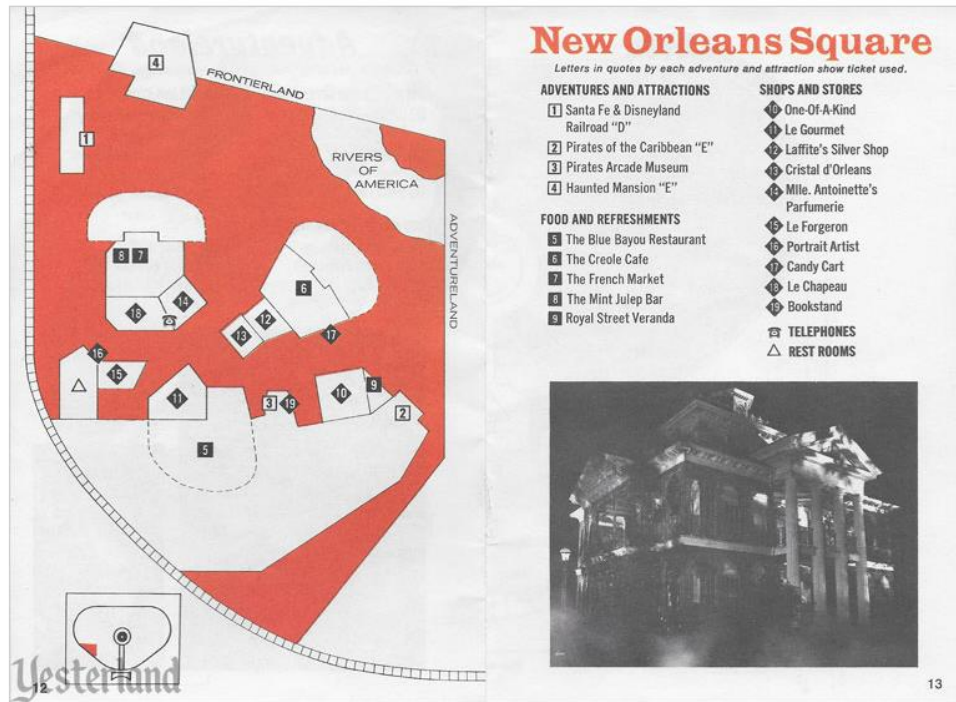


Aladdin's Oasis, the home of "Aladdin and Jasmine's StoryTale Adventures," appears to be a convenient place to throw away trash. (1998)

Pirates Arcade Museum

Yester New Orleans has four things listed under “Adventures and Attractions” in your guidebook.

Everyone knows about the two big “E” tickets—Pirates of the Caribbean and Haunted Mansion. There’s also the Frontierland station of the Santa Fe & Disneyland Railroad (which is also listed under Frontierland).



Scan from Fall-Winter 1969 Disneyland Guidebook © Disney

Four attractions on Yester New Orleans Square map

But there’s a fourth attraction—Pirates Arcade Museum.

As you exit from Pirates of the Caribbean, make a right turn just before you reach Royal Street. Or you can enter directly from Royal Street.



Photo by Marion Caswell, 1977

Taking aim on the Freebooter Shooter

Welcome to the Pirates Arcade Museum. You say it looks more like an arcade than a museum? You're right.

These are one-of-a-kind, pirate-themed Disney games in beautiful wooden cabinets with rope edges. Pull a dime from your pocket, and try your skill at an electro-mechanical shooting gallery machine. Try such favorites as:

- "Freebooter Shooter"—Take pot shots at drunken pirates teetering on top of kegs, like those in the Pirates of the Caribbean. Earn ratings such as "spifflicated" and "cupshotten."
- "Cap'n Black"—Aim carefully when you play this very dark, spooky, and challenging machine.
- "Captain Hook"—Blast away, as the machine plays "A Pirate's Life Is a Wonderful Life" from Peter Pan.
- "Pirate Shoot"—The artwork shows a one-eyed pirate, with the caption, "Test your eye, mate!"

Say hello to Fortune Red, the red-bearded pirate fortune teller. Put a coin in the slot on his cabinet.

Don't leave without buying a postcard from the special postcard vending machine. These cards feature concept drawings for Pirates of the Caribbean by Marc Davis, the creative genius behind many of Disneyland's greatest attractions.

At Disneyland, New Orleans Square opened in July 1966, but its major attraction, Pirates of the Caribbean didn't open until March 1967. The Pirates Arcade Museum, located next to the exit from Pirates of the Caribbean, opened in the same time frame.

Despite its name, it was never really a museum. But if these one-of-a-kind devices were still around today, what great museum pieces they would make!



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2005

Pieces of Eight

During the 1970s, the game arcade industry changed dramatically. Computer-driven video game cabinets superseded the games of yore.

When 1980 began, the Disneyland Souvenir Guide for 1980 still had four attractions in New Orleans Square, including this one:

Pirates Arcade

Pirate games for a doubloon or a handful of coins.

Later the same year, the Disneyland Souvenir Guide for 1980 had just three attractions in New Orleans Square, but an additional store:

Pieces of Eight

A veritable treasure chest of pirates' plunder! Eye patches, decorative brass items, sailing ship models, mugs, masks, gifts and toys.

The shooting gallery games were gone, but a dubloon impression machine and Fortune Red remained in a corner of the store.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 1998

Pieces of Eight shop in 1998

Since 1980, Pieces of Eight has sold pirate souvenirs, such as skull mugs and Jolly Roger pennants. The shop has been the perfect setting for merchandise from the Pirates of the Caribbean movie series starring Johnny Depp as Captain Jack Sparrow.



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2005

Do you need some Kodak film?

The merchandise mix has changed over the years. There was a time when shops all over Disneyland stocked a good selection of film for cameras.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2015

Fortune Red

Fortune Red has moved out of Pieces of Eight, but not far. He's now in a passageway just outside the shop. Apparently, this allows more room for merchandise inside.

Visit Fortune Red the next time you're at Disneyland. He's taken up smoking again, after many years when his pipe was absent. For 25 cents he'll dispense a fortune to you in the form of a printed card.



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2004

Fortune Red in 2004

It's too bad Fortune Red can't tell anyone where "Freebooter Shooter," "Cap'n Black," and the other games went.

Perhaps those games were obsolete in 1980, but they would make great retro games today.

One-of-a-Kind Shop



Are you looking for a special gift—something that you won't find anywhere else? Well, step right into the One-of-a-Kind Shop.

You'll always find a great selection of antique clocks, unique jewelry, 19th century objets d'art, and other treasures from the past. Whether you're a serious antique shopper or you just want to admire the style and craftsmanship of a bygone era, please take your time looking at the merchandise.

If you find an Italian music box, porcelain vase, terra cotta cherub, or carved wood statuette that you like, you'd better buy it. As the store name suggests, you might be out of luck if someone else buys it first. Your purchase is guaranteed to be an authentic antique—unless it's labeled as a reproduction.

While you're in the neighborhood, you might also want to visit:

- Laffite's Silver Shop—jewelry and other silver merchandise
- La Boutique d'Or—if gold is more to your liking
- Mlle. Antoinette's Perfumerie—blend your own fragrances
- Marche Aux Fleurs, Sacs et Mode—hats and handbags (and film and cigarettes)

The One-of-a-Kind Shop was a part of Disneyland's New Orleans Square, which opened July 1966. Walt Disney and Victor Schiro, the mayor of the real city of New Orleans, presided over the grand opening of New Orleans Square and its shops. The idea of having an antique shop within Disneyland is said to have come from Walt Disney himself.

Walt Disney died in December 1966, just over four months before the April 1967 grand opening of the Pirates of the Caribbean, the biggest attraction of New Orleans Square and arguably still the best Disney attraction of all time.

The space previously occupied by the One-of-a-Kind Shop became Le Gourmet, a shop specializing in Disney-themed cooking and serving accessories and related items. Le Gourmet is now also gone.



Le Gourmet in 1998

Bear Country

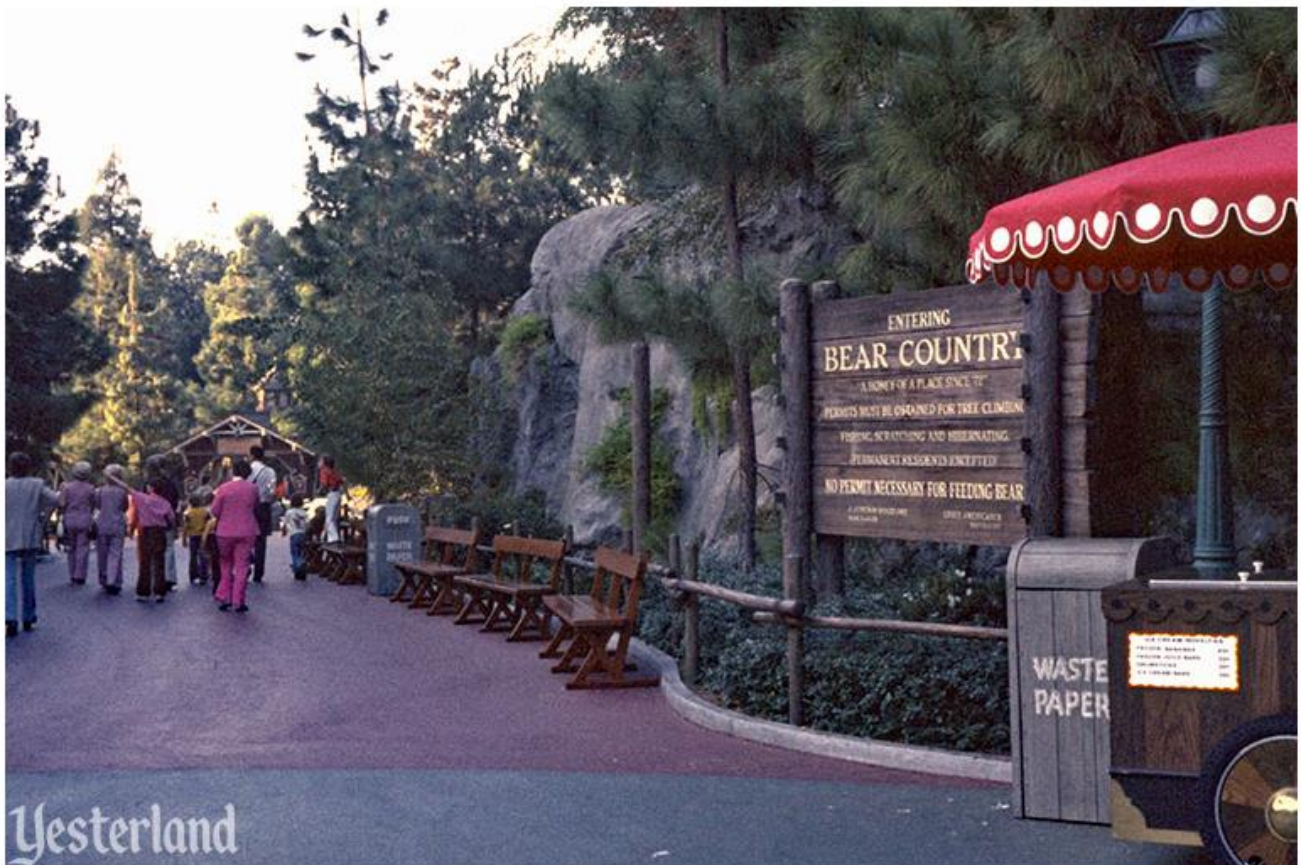


Photo by Werner Weiss, 1974

Wilderness Trail to Bear Country

The color of the pavement on the Wilderness Trail changes from gray to maroon. That means you've entered a new land. Welcome to Bear Country!

You hear someone snoring rather loudly from somewhere along the trail. That's Rufus the Bear. Nobody ever sees him, but everybody hears him.

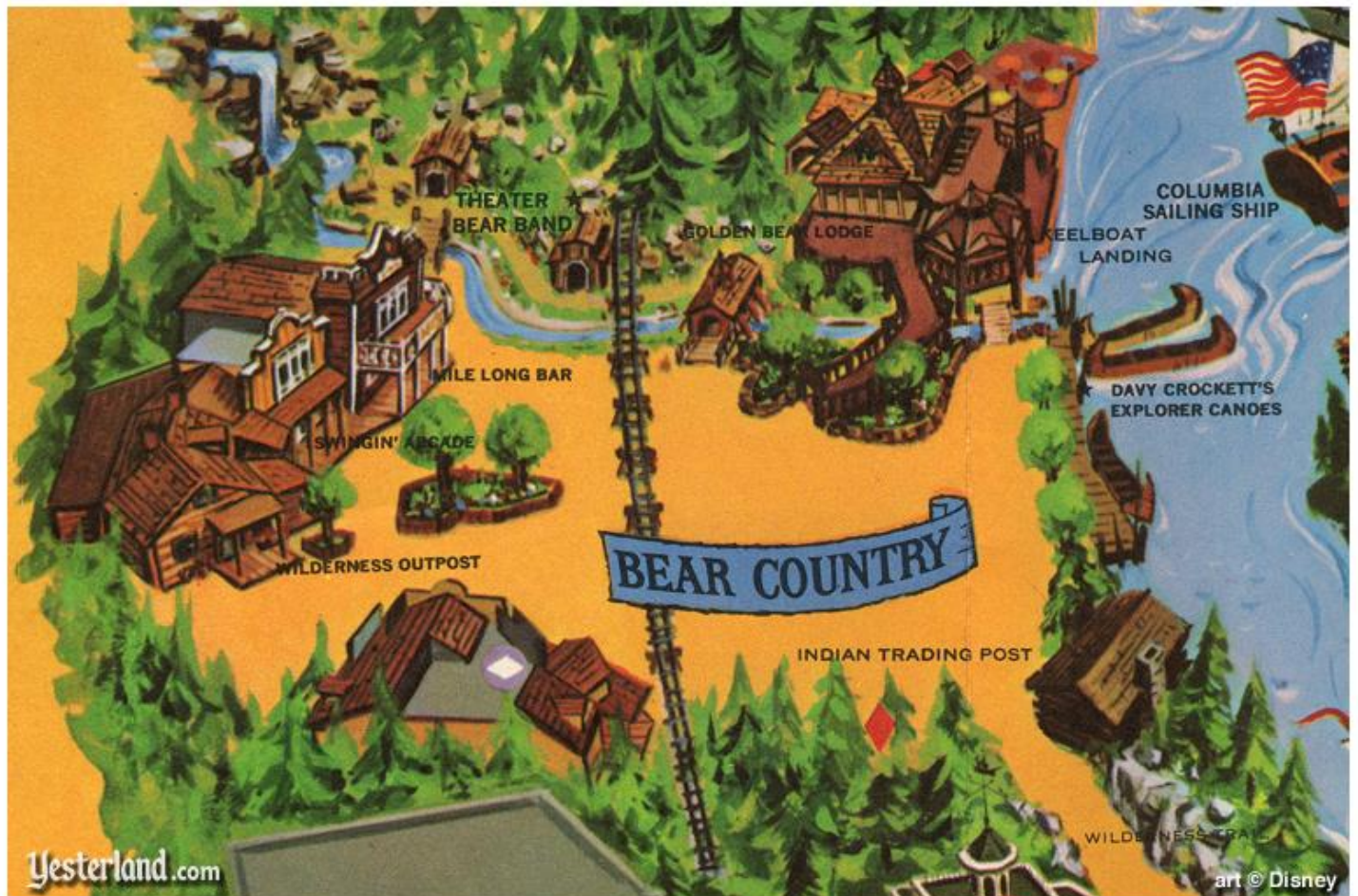
Let's see if we can read the sign:

ENTERING
BEAR COUNTRY
"A HONEY OF A PLACE SINCE '72"
PERMITS MUST BE OBTAINED FOR TREE-CLIMBING,
FISHING, SCRATCHING AND HIBERNATING
(PERMANENT RESIDENTS EXCEPTED)
NO PERMIT NECESSARY FOR FEEDING BEARS

J. AUDUBON WOODLORE
PARK RANGER

URSUS AMERICANUS
NATURALIST

The Bear Country naturalist is named Ursus Americanus. Wow. That's also the scientific name for the American Black Bear. What a coincidence!



A portion of the souvenir map

Your souvenir map of the park shows you what you'll find in Bear Country.

The big, new "E" ticket attraction here is the Country Bear Jamboree. If you've read about it, you might know that "it stars the wildest bunch of foot-stompin', knee-slappin' ripsnorters ever to lumber out of the north woods."

That's not the only attraction here. They're not new, but the Mike Fink Keel Boats and Davy Crockett's Explorer Canoes now depart from Bear Country. The Santa Fe & Disneyland Railroad passes through Bear Country on a wooden timber trestle, but it doesn't stop here.



Bear Country Baths

Photo by Werner Weiss, 1974

If you head to the left after you enter Bear Country, you'll soon reach the Baths. Would you like a hot bath for just 25 cents?

Don't get your hopes up. The structure with the "Hot Baths 25¢" sign is actually just a north-woods-themed restroom building. And you can use those restrooms without paying 25 cents (or using a "B" ticket).



Mile Long Bar

Photo by Bill Nelson, 1973

Thirsty? Step into the Mile Long Bar. Okay, the bar isn't really a mile long, but it looks like it. There's a mirror at each end, so the bar seems to go on forever. Of course, there's no beer or whiskey at this bar, but there's Pepsi and apple cider. Cool off with ice cream or a frozen banana.

Next door, you'll find Teddi Barra's Swingin' Arcade. Teddi Barra is the "last of the big-time swingers" who descends from the ceiling on a swing during the Country Bear Jamboree and beckons you with her famous line, "Y'all come up and see me some time, y'hear?" Her arcade has some one-of-a-kind games, including "I'm Gomer, Fly Me." For 25 cents, you can fly Gomer the bear in circles around a clever Pepper's ghost (partial mirror illusion) environment, avoiding obstacles such as a bear trap. See how many points you can rack up!

Hungry? Visit the Golden Bear Lodge for hamburgers, hot dogs, salads, sandwiches, and Pepsi products. Dine outdoors while watching the Mike Fink Keel Boats and other river traffic.

There are two shops in Bear Country. The Indian Trading Post features realistic American Indian gifts. Wilderness Outpost sells gifts and apparel with a Bear Country flavor.

It seems that Bear Country is here to stay—as long as the bears can keep the other critters out.

Disneyland's Bear Country opened in March 1972. It replaced the Indian Village, which had been part of Frontierland. The new area was "outdoorsy," rustic, Western, and not particularly large. It would have fit in well as part of Frontierland. But Disneyland promoted Bear Country as a brand new land—the first new land since New Orleans Square opened in 1966.

It also meant that Disneyland now had two places called Bear Country—at least until 1977. Bear Country, with bears scratching their backs on trees and catching fish in a pond, had been part of the Mine Train Through Nature's Wonderland since 1960.



Photo by Robert Demoss, 1987

Site preparation for *Splash Mountain*, 1987

Within a few years—possibly to avoid confusion with other places having similar names (such as the Golden Bear music club in Huntington Beach)—the Golden Bear Lodge became the Hungry Bear Restaurant. Other than that, Bear Country didn't change much for 15 years—except that fewer and fewer guests wandered over to this dead-end section of Disneyland as the draw of the Country Bear Jamboree diminished.

Something had to be done.

Disneyland had long had only a single thrill ride, Matterhorn Bobsleds (1959). But during the 1970s, as guests abandoned Bear Country, Disneyland found success with two additional thrill rides, Space Mountain (1977) and Big Thunder Mountain Railroad (1979). It was time for another thrilling mountain.



Photo by Corby DeMeis, 1988

Construction of *Splash Mountain*, 1988

The new mountain would be squeezed onto a site that had been a hill between the Haunted Mansion and Bear Country. It would be *Splash Mountain*, a water flume thrill ride themed around Walt Disney's *Song of the South* (1946). The mountain would be inhabited by the Audio-Animatronics cast of *America Sings*, which was slated to close after a 14-year run.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2009

Critter Country entrance sign

With the 1989 opening of Splash Mountain, Bear Country became Critter Country. The Country Bear Jamboree stayed, but there were too many other animals to keep the old name.



Photo by Photo by Allen Huffman, 2005

Entrance to *Splash Mountain*

The Bear Country "Baths" were a victim of progress. The entrance to Splash Mountain is near where the "Baths" once stood. The other structures of Bear Country fared better.



Photos by Allen Huffman, 2000

Crowds and Brer Bar (2000 photos)

Crowds returned to this once-forgotten corner of Disneyland as Splash Mountain became an instant hit.

To go with the Song of the South theme, Mile Long Bar became Brer Bar, named after Brer Bear.



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Teddi Barra's Swingin' Arcade

Teddi Barra's Swingin' Arcade survived the arrival of Critter Country, although video games replaced some of the old-fashioned, one-of-a-kind machines.

The Indian Trading Post, which had survived the transition from the Indian Village to Bear Country, became the Briar Patch. It no longer sold American Indian goods.

Another big change was on the horizon. In September 2001, the Country Bear Playhouse (the vacation-themed update to the Country Bear Jamboree) closed permanently.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2004

The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh

In April 2003, The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh, a modest, Fantasyland-style dark ride, opened in the building that had previously housed the performing bears.

Cynics suggested there was exactly one reason why Disneyland executives of that era invested in the new ride. It wasn't because they wanted to create a delightful ride experience for all ages. It was because the ride's exit could funnel guests into a large Winnie the Pooh retail store. And unlike Henry or Gomer from the old show, Winnie was a bear who could move merchandise.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2004

Pooh Corner

Critter Country gained a Winnie the Pooh superstore. Pooh Corner took over Brer Bar, Teddi Barra's Swingin' Arcade, and the retail space around them, resulting in "the ultimate Winnie the Pooh destination for apparel, souvenirs, plush, and candy." In earlier years, each of the storefronts in that corner of the park offered something different and charming.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2015

Inside Pooh Corner



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2015

Teddi Barra's sign in 2015, long after the demise of her Swingin' Arcade

That brings us to the present day.

For more than 60 years, this corner of Disneyland was a dead end. That changed May 31, 2019, with the opening of Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge. A waterfront walkway goes to one of three entrances to the new land.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2018

Walkway at the Hungry Bear going to Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge

By the way, old snorin' Rufus the Bear moved into Splash Mountain for a couple of years. You could hear him snoring right before the first drop. Rufus was chased out by Brer Bear, who now lives in the cave.

Mile Long Bar



Photo by Marion Caswell, 1975, courtesy Dennis Caswell

You've just left the Country Bear Jamboree. You're in the back of Bear Country, outside of the John Colter Building. It has a sign promising a Mile Long Bar.

John Colter was a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and is said to have been the first person of European descent to enter what became Yellowstone National Park. Perhaps you remember "The Ballad of John Colter" (lyrics by Tom Blackburn, music by George Bruns) from Walt Disney's *Westward Ho the Wagons!* (1956).

Who knew John Colter was also the landlord of a bar in Bear Country?

The building doesn't look big enough to hold such an incredibly long bar—even if you include the adjacent Wilderness Outpost and Teddi Barra's Swingin' Arcade.

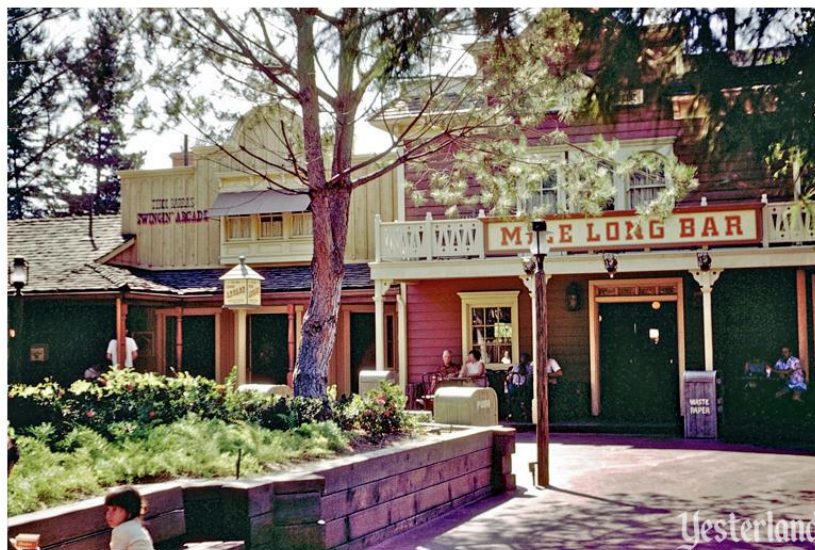


Photo by Bill Nelson, 1973

Shop, arcade, and bar

Now go inside. Step up to the Western stand-up bar. There's a brass footrail and another brass rail higher up—perhaps for your elbows. Look to the left. The bar and the brass rails go on forever, although everything gets darker in the distance. Now look to the right. Same thing.



Photo by Marion Caswell, 1977, courtesy Dennis Caswell

To the right

As you look to the left and right, you'll see a lot of people wearing exactly the same clothes as you. They could be your identical siblings, except every other one of them combs their hair or carries their bag on the opposite side.



Photo by Allen Huffman, 1998

To the left

Don't try to walk to the other end of the bar. You're likely to find a small table blocking your path. If it wasn't there, you might walk into yourself—except you would hit glass first.

You've already figured out the bar isn't really a mile long. It just looks that way because of a mirror at each end.

The reason the bar gets darker in the distance is that even the best mirrors don't reflect 100%. With each "bounce," they absorb a bit of light.

You might expect whiskey and beer at a Western bar, but you won't find such potations here. There's Pepsi and apple cider. Perhaps you'd rather cool off with ice cream or a frozen banana.



Photo by Allen Huffman, 1998

Melvin keeping his eyes on things

Above the bar, hunting trophies Melvin the moose, Buff the buffalo, and Max the buck deer keep their eyes on the place. You might think that if you wait long enough, they'll talk and sing. Nope. If you want a performance from them, head back to the nearby Country Bear Jamboree—or to the Mile Long Bar at Yester Magic Kingdom Park.

Mile Long Bar opened at Disneyland on March 4, 1972, the same day as Bear Country and the Country Bear Jamboree.



Photo by Chris Bates, 2001

Brer Bar (1989-2002)

With the 1989 opening of Splash Mountain, Bear Country became Critter Country, and the Mile Long Bar became Brer Bar—a reference to Brer Bear in *The Song of the South*.

Inside, the decor of Brer Bar was essentially the same as Mile Long Bar, with mirrors for the “mile-long” illusion and Melvin, Buff, and Max above the bar. After all, the Country Bears were still performing Country Bear Vacation Hoedown next door at the Country Bear Playhouse. (The two photos from 1998 are actually from Brer Bar.)

In 1990, Disney and Coca-Cola entered into a 15-year contract to make Coke products the exclusive soft drinks at all Disney parks. That was the end of Pepsi products at Mile Long Bar / Brer Bar.



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2009

Pooh Corner (2003-present) in the former Mile Long Bar / Brer Bar



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2015

Candy at Pooh Corner at Disneyland

The Country Bear Playhouse was shuttered September 9, 2001, so the building could be reused for a new ride, The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh. Since 1995, there had been a small Pooh Corner shop where Critter Country's Crocodile Mercantile had been, but a Pooh ride could feed a Pooh superstore. There was a perfect place to put it: Brer Bar and the spaces adjacent to it, including the old Pooh Corner.

The Pooh ride opened April 11, 2003. Its exit pointed guests toward a corner entrance into the new Pooh Corner. Guests could buy all sorts of Winnie the Pooh merchandise, as well as candy.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2019
Pecos Bill Tall Tale Inn and Cafe, the former Mile Long Bar at Magic Kingdom Park

Walt Disney World also had a Mile Long Bar—before Disneyland did. When Magic Kingdom Park opened October 1, 1971, the exit from Country Bear Jamboree in Frontierland sent guests into the original Mile Long Bar. The big difference there was that Melvin, Buff, and Max were performing animatronics.

Florida's Mile Long Bar closed January 5, 1998, to be combined with the Pecos Bill Cafe next door. The renamed Pecos Bill Tall Tale Inn and Cafe opened May 1998.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2000
Mile Long Bar in Westernland at Tokyo Disneyland (defunct)



Photo by Eric Lynxwiler, 2015, used with permission
Hungry Bear Restaurant at Tokyo Disneyland, expanded into Mile Long Bar space

Tokyo Disneyland also had a Mile Long Bar. It opened with the first Disney park in Asia on April 15, 1983. Following the same pattern as its cousins in the United States, it was located adjacent to the Country Bear Jamboree, only this time the land was called Westernland.

As in Florida, an adjacent restaurant expanded into the space that had been been the Mile Long Bar. And that's why the sign on what had been its exterior facade now reads Hungry Bear Restaurant.

Three different Mile Long Bars in three different lands in three different parks—but none of the Mile Long Bars survived.

Country Bear Jamboree



Photo by Werner Weiss, 1974

“The Bear Band bears will play now,
in the good ol’ key of G.
Zeke and Zed and Ted and Fred,
and a bear named Tennessee.”

It’s called the Country Bear Jamboree, but in addition to 17 bears, there’s a raccoon, a bison, a moose, and a stag deer. They all hope you’ll enjoy the show.

Here are some of the songs you’ll enjoy in this fast-paced musical variety show:

- “The Five Bear Rugs,” performed by Henry, introducing the band
- “My Woman Ain’t Pretty, but She Don’t Swear None,” performed by Liver-Lips McGrowl
- “Mama, Don’t Whip Little Buford,” performed by Henry and Wendell
- “Tears Will Be the Chaser for My Wine,” performed by Trixie
- “Pretty Little Devilish Mary,” performed by the Five Bear Rugs
- “How Long Will My Baby Be Gone?” performed by Terrence
- “All the Guys that Turn Me On Turn Me Down,” performed by the Sun Bonnets—Bunny, Bubbles, and Beulah
- “Heart, We Did All that We Could,” performed by Teddi Barra, descending on a swing from the ceiling
- “Blood on the Saddle,” performed by the unbearable Big Al
- “The Ballad of Davy Crockett,” performed by Henry, who is joined by Sammy the hat racoon
- “Blood on the Saddle,” performed again by Big Al
- “Ole Slewfoot” (“He’s big around the middle and he’s broad across the rump”), performed by almost all the other bears, trying to drown out Big Al.
- “Come Again,” performed by Henry, Sammy, Max, Buff, and Melvin.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 1974

"Every time I meet a guy who gets me shook,
all I ever get from him's a dirty look.
It's the same way everywhere I've found...
all the guys who turn me on turn me down!"



Photo by Werner Weiss, 1974

"There was...
blood on the saddle,
and blood all around.
And a great big puddle
of blood on the ground."

We hope that you'll be comin' back again!

In 1972, Country Bear Jamboree opened in Disneyland as the centerpiece of the park's newest land, Bear Country. It was the first Disneyland attraction to be cloned from a Walt Disney World attraction.

Here's how the Spring 1972 issue of Disney News introduced an article about the attraction:

One of the most popular attractions at Walt Disney World in Florida is the country-western musical mish-mash known as Country Bear Jamboree. It stars the wildest bunch of foot-stompin', knee-slappin' rip-snorters ever to lumber out of the north woods. And this spring, the "rip-snorters" are coming to Disneyland, bringing with them, along with their lack of talent, a whole new land to the "happiest place of earth": Bear Country.

Even though Country Bear Jamboree first opened in Florida, an earlier version of the show was meant for California—but not for Disneyland.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2007

Country Bear Jamboree at Magic Kingdom Park

The history of Country Bear Jamboree goes back to when Walt Disney was alive.

As one of his final projects, Walt planned Mineral King, a mountain resort for a site in Sequoia National Forest. Walt was confident that guests would enjoy skiing, hiking, and other daytime outdoor activities. But he was concerned that those guests would leave the property at nightfall, taking their wallets with them. He would need to offer reasons for them to stay.

Here's how the book *Disneyland: the Nickel Tour* (by Bruce Gordon and David Mumford) explains what happened next:

So Walt commissioned [Imagineer] Marc Davis to come up with shows that would keep those folks (and their money) right there at Mineral King. "Walt thought maybe we should have a show that had something to do with bears," Marc recalled. "Lots and lots of bears."

Marc went to work sketching musical bears whose personalities might be bigger than their talent. Walt Disney's Mineral King project was never built, but good Imagineering ideas tend to resurface.



Photo by Chris Bales, 2015

Henry at Magic Kingdom Park



Photo by Chris Bales, 2015

Trixie at Magic Kingdom Park

With the change of geography from the Sierra Nevada Mountains to Central Florida, the cast has given some connections to Florida. Henry would introduce Trixie as "a special treat out of Tampa." He would introduce Bunny, Bubbles, and Beulah as "those little Sun Bonnets from the Sunshine State."

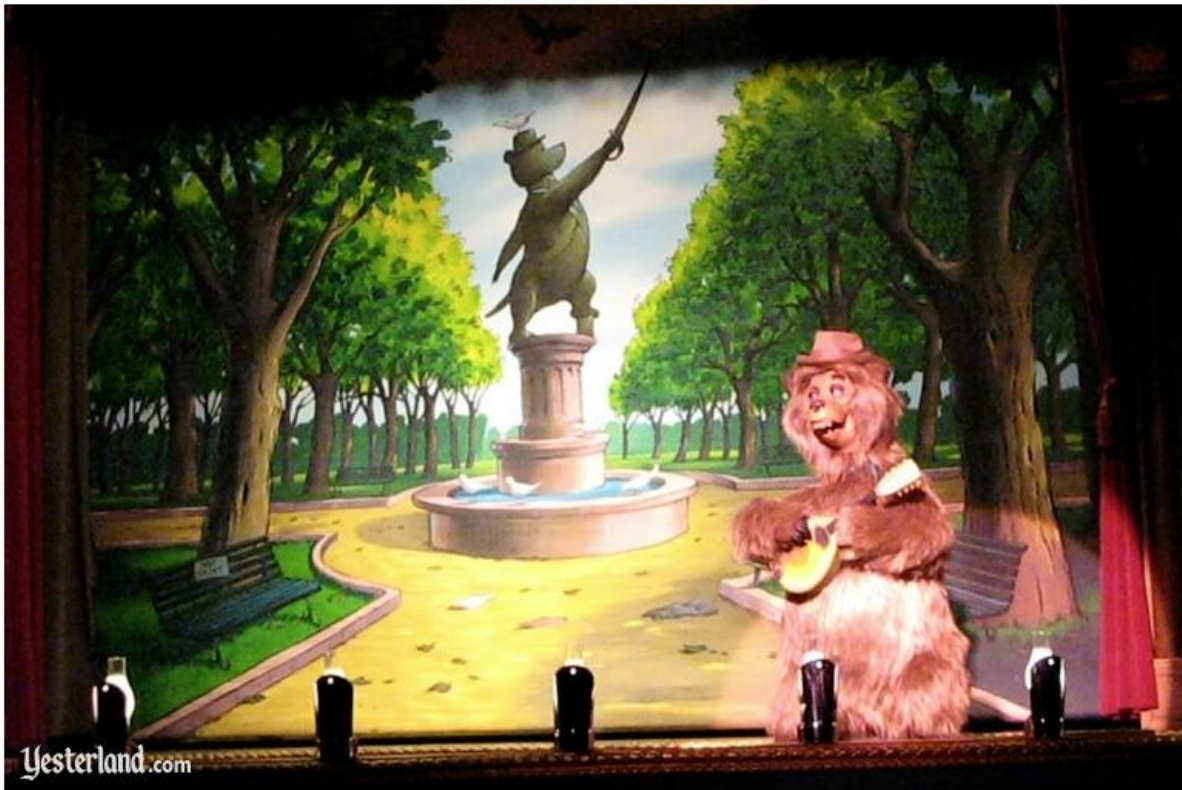


Photo by Werner Weiss, 2007

Wendell at Magic Kingdom Park

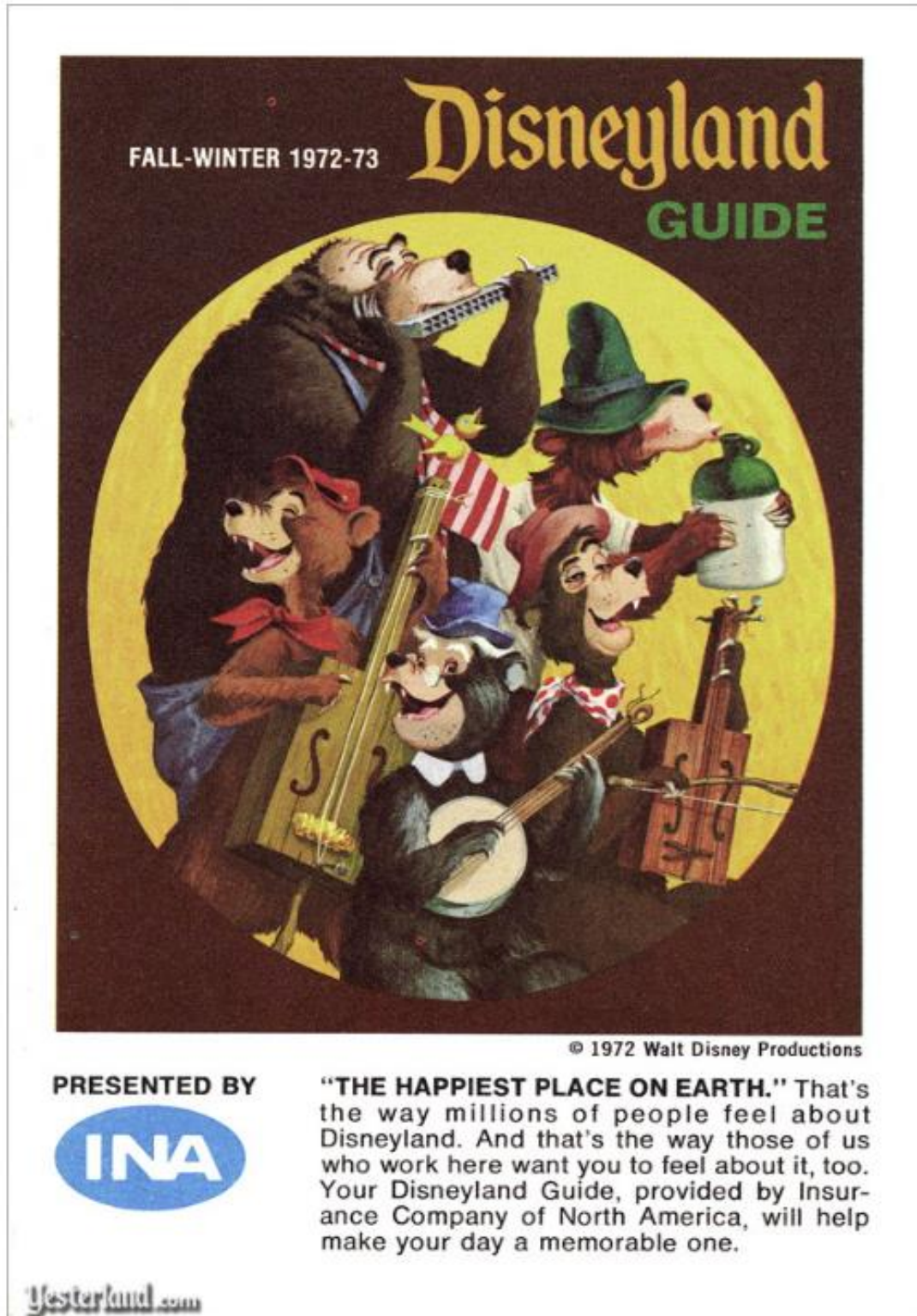
In 1971, the Country Bear Jamboree opened as one of the original attractions of the new Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World in Florida. The response there was enthusiastic. Guests waited in long lines to see the show in a single theater at the Magic Kingdom. The sponsors were Pepsi-Cola and Frito-Lay, two business units of PepsiCo, Inc. (formed in 1965 when Pepsi-Cola and Frito-Lay merged).



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2007

Big Al at Magic Kingdom Park

The Disneyland version had twice the capacity of the original Magic Kingdom version. Also, shows started twice as often. These twin accomplishments were possible because of twin theaters with two identical Audio-Animatronic casts.



Fall-Winter 1972-73 Disneyland Guide with *Country Bear Jamboree* on the cover

Country Bear Jamboree was the first new ticketed attraction at Disneyland since the Haunted Mansion in 1969—not counting Davy Crockett's Explorer Canoes in 1971, which was essentially just a new name for Indian War Canoes. Disneyland guests had been accustomed to a steady stream of new attractions since Disneyland opened in 1955, and the attraction "drought" of 1970 and 1971 was unexpected. The reason, of course, was that Walt Disney Productions had focused its limited resources on Florida.

Although Country Bear Jamboree opened without a sponsor at Disneyland, host bear Henry would still announce, “Just refrain from hibernatin’... and we’ll all enjoy the show, cause we got a lot to give!”—a reference to Pepsi Cola’s 1969-1973 slogan, “You’ve got a lot to live, Pepsi’s got a lot to give!”


E coupon or 85c (adults)
(children 75c)

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>MINE TRAIN RIDE (Frontierland) A Western-style adventure through Nature's Wonderland, Rainbow Caverns.</p>  | <p>PACK MULES (Frontierland) See Nature's Wonderland from the back of a sturdy pack mule.</p>  |
| <p>JUNGLE RIVER CRUISE (Adventureland) Travel through tropical jungles and exotic areas of the world on a jungle boat.</p>  | <p>DISNEYLAND-ALWEG MONORAIL TRAINS (Tomorrowland) Circle above and around Disneyland on the transportation system of tomorrow.</p>  |
| <p>MATTERHORN BOBSLEDS (Fantasyland) Race down and around "snow covered" slopes in a fast-moving bobsled.</p>  | <p>IT'S A SMALL WORLD presented by BANK OF AMERICA (Fantasyland) Join the happiest crew that ever sailed around the world.</p>  |
| <p>ENCHANTED TIKI ROOM presented by UNITED AIR LINES (Adventureland) A Polynesian Paradise, where 225 birds, flowers and tropical tikis entertain.</p>  | <p>SUBMARINE VOYAGE (Tomorrowland) Journey through "liquid space" on an exciting undersea cruise to the North Pole.</p>  |
| <p>PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN (New Orleans Square) Sail through the wildest adventure that ever rocked the Spanish Main.</p>  | <p>COUNTRY BEAR JAMBOREE (Bear Country) The wildest show in the wilderness, featuring Big Al, Teddi Barra and a cast of 18 "Bears in the Band".</p>  |
| <p>HAUNTED MANSION (New Orleans Square) Join the 999 "frightfully funny" ghosts.</p>  | |

Yesterland.com
7

"E" coupon page scan © Walt Disney Productions

"E" Ticket attractions in the Fall-Winter 1972-73 Disneyland Guide

Country Bear Jamboree required an "E" coupon, the highest category of Disneyland tickets.

In 1975, the Bears at Disneyland found a sponsor, Wonder Bread. The 15-year sponsorship also included the nearby Hungry Bear Restaurant.

A seasonal show, Country Bear Christmas, premiered in 1984, and returned regularly during the holidays.

In 1986, Disneyland's original Country Bear Jamboree "went to Yesterland." A new vacation-themed show, the Country Bear Vacation Hoedown, replaced it. The attraction's new name was often listed as Country Bear Playhouse—presumably to allow other updated shows, but that never happened.



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2003

Former *Country Bear Jamboree*, now the home of a different bear

Disneyland's *Country Bears* were evicted by a Disney star of the same species—the short, and stout, and highly popular bear, Winnie the Pooh. Having successfully evicted Mr. Toad from Magic Kingdom Park at Walt Disney World to make room for *The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh*, Pooh Bear decided to do the same to his ursine brethren at Disneyland.

The Bears continued to perform the *Country Bear Vacation Hoedown* at Disneyland until September 9, 2001. The *Country Bear Playhouse* went dark forever.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2002

Disney's *The Country Bears* at the El Capitan on Hollywood Blvd.

What's odd is that Disneyland closed the attraction even though Walt Disney Pictures had a film in production, *The Country Bears* (2002), based on the attraction. There would be no Disney synergy for the Bears.

You can still see the Bears perform.



Photo by Chris Bales, 2015

Bear Band and Henry at Magic Kingdom Park

Magic Kingdom Park in Florida has an abbreviated version of the original show. When it returned from a refurbishment in October 2012, it was 5 ½ minutes shorter. Most of the banter is gone. Some songs were trimmed or removed. The single theater can handle more guests over the course of a day.



Photo by Robert Parker, 2013

Country Bear Theatre at Tokyo Disneyland

At Tokyo Disneyland, three different shows rotate through the theater each year: the original “Country Bear Jamboree,” with the banter in Japanese, during the first half of the year; “Vacation Jamboree” during the summer and fall; and “Jingle Bell Jamboree” at the end of the year.

Bear Vacation Hoedown

“Banjos 'n' fiddles are bear necessities in this neck of the woods, so there's plenty of foot-stompin', hand-clappin', sing-along good fun. With a cast of more than 20 Audio-Animatronics bears, expect a musical mix of corn and comedy.”



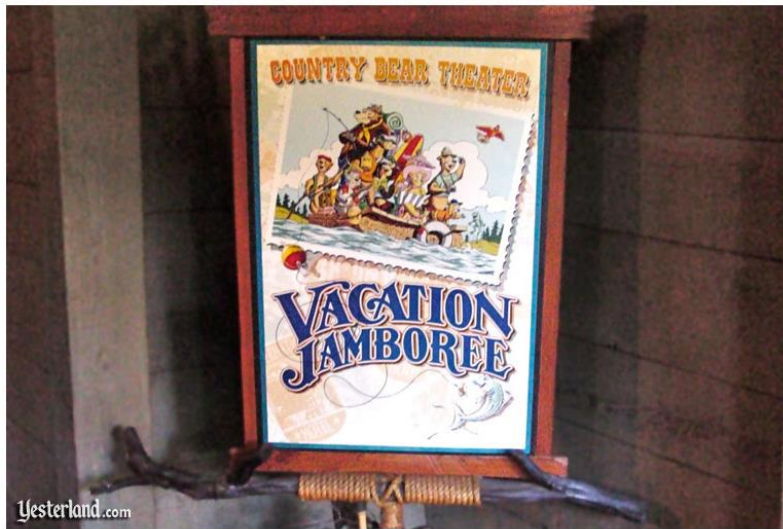
Photo by Chris Bales



Photo by Chris Bales, 1995

Welcome to the attraction that's named Country Bear Theater Vacation Jamboree... or maybe it's named Country Bear Playhouse... or maybe it's named The Country Bear Vacation Hoe-down.

No matter what you call it, it's a lot of summer vacation fun.



Yesterland.com

Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

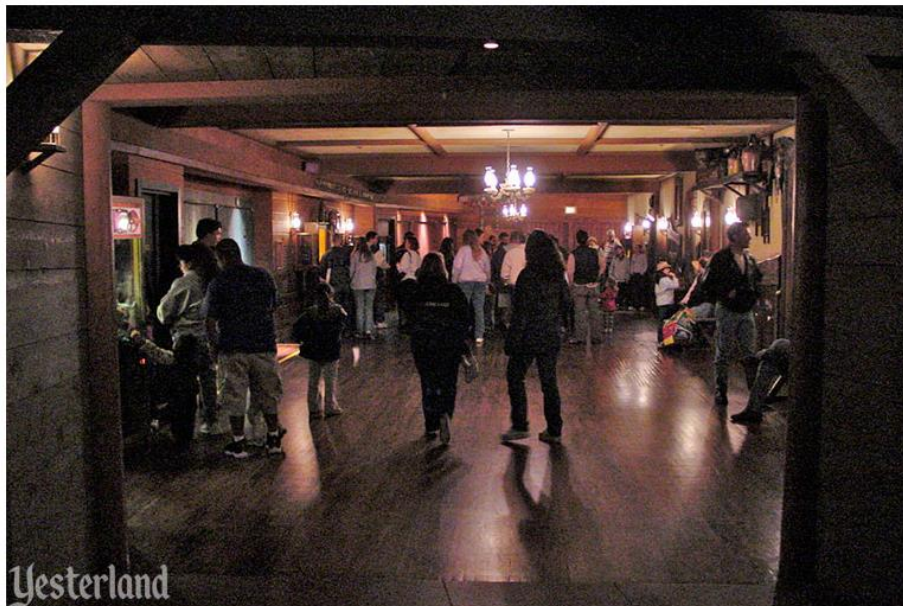


Yesterland.com

Photos by Allen Huffman, 2001

Conflicting nomenclature

The same performing bears who used to present the Country Bear Jamboree have a new show for you at Yesterland—with new songs, new costumes, new props, and even a replacement for old show's raccoon (a skunk).



Yesterland

Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Playhouse lobby

Enjoy the fast-paced show with familiar and not-so-familiar songs:

- “The Great Outdoors,” performed by Henry and the Five Bear Rugs
- “Life’s No Picnic Without You,” performed by Trixie
- “On the Road Again,” performed by Wendell
- “We Can Make It To the Top,” performed by Liver Lips McGrowl
- “California Bears,” performed by the Sun Bonnets, Gomer, Max, Buff, and Melvin
- “Two Different Worlds,” performed by Terrence with Dolores the octopus
- “Rocky Top,” performed by the Five Bear Rugs
- “Nature,” performed by Ernest
- “Singin’ In the Rain,” performed by Teddi Barra and Henry
- “Ghost Riders In the Sky,” performed by the Five Bear Rugs
- “On My Way To Your Heart,” performed by Big Al
- “Thank God I’m a Country Bear,” performed by the entire cast



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Five Bear Rugs

“Ain’t nothin’ like the great outdoors to ease your soul;
Ain’t nothing like the great outdoors to keep you from growin’ old;
If your mind’s been hazy and you’re feeling lazy and down on all fours,
Then join us bears and suck up some air, in the great outdoors.
Yeeha!”



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Henry

"Us bears we do love nature, and tramping through the woods;
Us bears we do love fishin' every hour if we could;
Us bears we do love singin', in country harmony;
And if y'all won't join us, we'll chase you up a tree!"



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Max, Buff, and Melvyn

Buff: "Melvin!"

Max: "Wake up!"

Melvin: "Huh?"

Max: "The way you're always hibernatin', you must be part bear."

Melvin: "Aw, heck, I'm only part moose as it is."



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Trixie

"You tossed my love aside, just like a crumb upon the ground;
If heartaches were fried chicken, I could sell 'em by the pound;
My sandwiches are stale, as all the promises you made;
And I can taste the teardrops in my lemonade."



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Wendell

"On the road again;
I can't wait to get on the road again;
The life I love is makin' music with my friends;
I can't wait to get on the road again."



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Liver Lips McGrowl
"Are you feelin' rocky?
Have you lost all hope?
Down in the dumps,
At the end of your rope?
I know it ain't easy;
It's an uphill climb;
Trust me darling;
Put your hand in mine;
We can make it to the top;
We can make a mountain rock."



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Gomer



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Sun Bonnets

Sun Bonnets: "Well, East Coast bears are hip; I really dig those styles they wear; and the Southern bears, with the way they talk..."

Melvin, Buff and Max: "They knock me out when I'm down there."

Sun Bonnets: "The Midwest farmer's daughter really makes you feel alright; and the Northern bears, with the way they kiss..."

Melvin, Buff and Max: "They keep their boyfriends warm at night."

Sun Bonnets: "I wish they all could be California bears..."



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Terrence

"Two different worlds;
We live in two different worlds;
Oh, we've been told that a love like ours,
Could never be."



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Ernest

“Some folks are partial to nature,
Like rivers and mountains and trees;
They’ll sit and sniff the flowers,
For hours and hours;
That kind of stuff just makes me sneeze.”



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Swingin' Teddi Barra
“I’m singin’ in the rain,
just singin’ in the rain;
What a glorious feelin’;
I’m happy again.”



Photo by Allen Huffman, 2001

Big Al

"I was beatin' a path to a love that would last;
I thought nothing could keep us apart;
Lost the love of my life and my Swiss Army knife;
(and it was a nice one too);
When I got lost on my way to your heart;
(without a spoon and a can opener, everything)."



Photo by Chris Bales

The Entire Cast

"Well I got fine life, got me old fiddle.
When the sun's comin' up, I got cakes on the griddle.
And life ain't nothin' but a funny funny riddle.
Thank God I'm a country bear!"

The show's over. The exit takes you directly to the Brer Bar, where you can enjoy an ice-cold Coke.

Maybe you can lead everyone in the bar in a rousing sing-along: "It's time for a vacation, for some rest and relaxation. Forget your cares, and join us bears, in the great outdoors!"

Country Bear Vacation Hoedown opened in February 1986 as a refresh of Disneyland Park's long-running Country Bear Jamboree, which had opened in March 1972. The attraction's new name was often listed as Country Bear Playhouse, suggesting that the County Bears might be reprogrammed with new shows every few years—but that never happened. The vacation show became the permanent show at Disneyland, except when Country Bear Christmas temporarily took its place during Holiday seasons.



Photo by Chris Bales, 2001

Temporary holiday show

For some guests, the vacation show failed to live up to the original. Somehow, the Sun Bonnets were more memorable lamenting "All the Guys that Turn Me On Turn Me Down" than wishing for "California Bears." Trixie made a bigger impression with "Tears Will Be the Chaser for My Wine" than with "Life's No Picnic Without You." And Big Al was more delightfully gloomy with "Blood on the Saddle" than with "On My Way to Your Heart."

Other guests preferred the vacation theme and its song selection—including "Rocky Top" and "Ghost Riders in the Sky." The updated version came across as somewhat more Californian and less Floridian.



Photo by Chris Bales, 2001

“Final Performances”

After 29 years—including 15 years of Country Bear Vacation Hoedown—the attraction closed permanently on September 9, 2001.

A bear with a proven ability to sell merchandise would take over the twin-theater building—and the structure next door (including the Brer Bar), which was perfect for a large gift shop. The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh opened April 11, 2003.

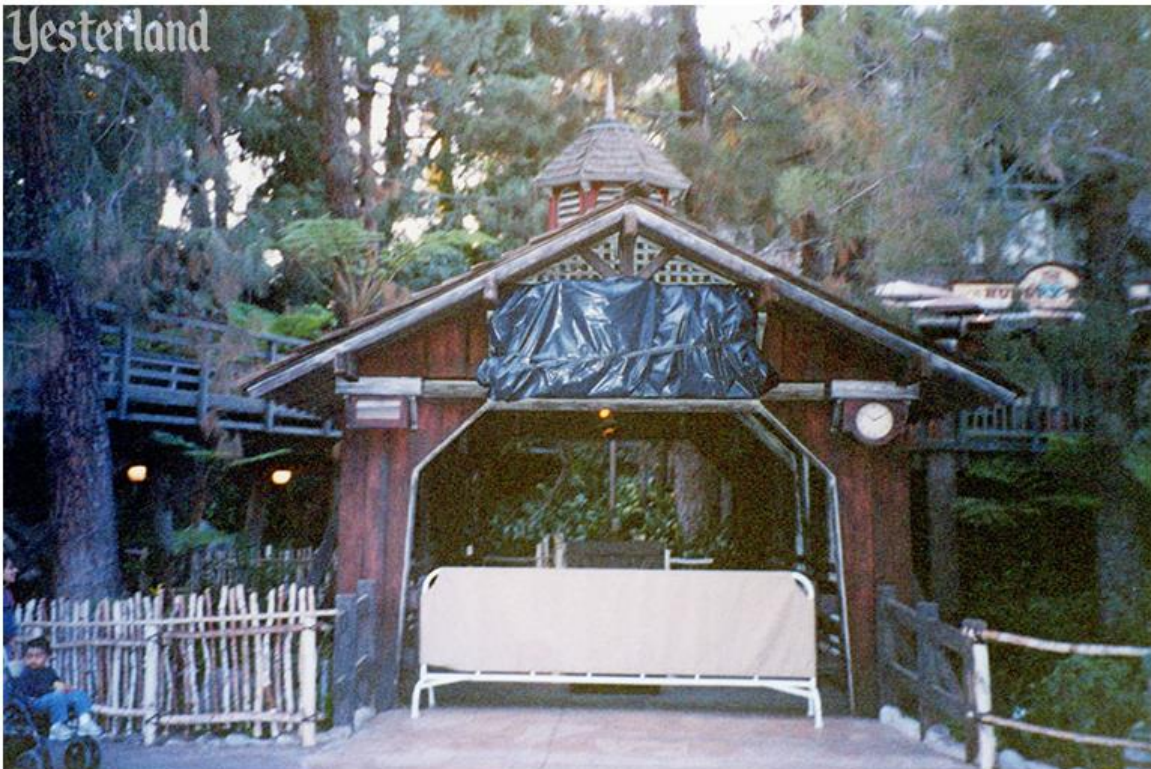


Photo by Chris Bales, 2001

Closed forever



Photo by Robert Demoss, 2002

Construction wall for *The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh*

The Country Bears left Disneyland long ago, but they're still performing at two other Disney parks. But only one has a version of the vacation show.



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2000

Country Bear Theatre at Tokyo Disneyland

At Tokyo Disneyland, a version of Vacation Jamboree is one of three Country Bear Theater shows that rotate seasonally each year, along with Country Bear Jamboree and Jingle Bell Jamboree. The Tokyo version is partially in English and partially in Japanese. Some songs are the same; some are different. Trixie performs "Achy Breaky Heart" with two verses in Japanese and one in English. Who knew Trixie is bilingual?



Photo by Werner Weiss, 2000

Gomer and the Sun Bonnets at Tokyo Disneyland

At Magic Kingdom Park in Florida, Country Bear Vacation Hoedown had a relatively short run: 1986 to 1992. The Country Bear Jamboree had opened as one of the park's original attractions in October 1971. It returned after the vacation version closed. Twenty years later, when it returned from a refurbishment in October 2012, the original show was trimmed by around 5½ minutes to allow more performances per day.

Indian Trading Post



Here in the rustic woods of Bear Country, you'll find an old wooden cabin with a stone chimney and grass growing on the roof. Step inside. Shop for Indian arts and crafts, including a large selection of pottery and turquoise jewelry.

The Indian Trading Post opened in 1956 as part of Disneyland's Indian Village. The store was part of the "show," adding to the atmosphere of the Indian Village, and selling merchandise appropriate to its surroundings.

In 1972, Bear Country replaced the Indian Village, but the Indian Trading Post stayed in business, fitting nicely into the Northwestern outpost theme.

In 1989, Bear Country became Critter Country, home of Splash Mountain. To go along with Splash Mountain's Song of the South theme, the Indian Trading Post became the Briar Patch. The Native American goods gave way to "handcrafted items, clothing and toys from Critter Country," and "souvenirs from Splash Mountain and Winnie the Pooh, too."

By the Summer of 1996, the Briar Patch stocked only Disney plush toys, such as those carried by The Disney Store at your local shopping mall.



Briar Patch at Disneyland (2005 photo)