

Disneyland celebrates 70 years of magic, imagination, family memories

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Seventy years ago, an ambitious dream built on orange groves and imagination opened its gates to the world. That dream was Disneyland, now one of the most iconic and beloved theme parks on the planet.

When Walt Disney cut the ribbon on July 17, 1955, few could have predicted that the experimental park he called "The Happiest Place on Earth" would go on to redefine family entertainment and launch a global legacy.

At a time when amusement parks were loud, messy, and geared mostly toward children, Disney envisioned something radically different—a place where parents and kids could create lasting memories together, surrounded by carefully crafted lands drawn from his films and fantasies.

Humble beginning

Built on 160 acres in Anaheim, California, the original Disneyland debuted with just five themed lands: Main Street U.S.A., Adventureland, Frontierland, Fantasyland, and Tomorrowland. Admission cost USD 1 for adults and 50 cents for children, with individual ride tickets sold separately through a coupon system.

The opening day, aired live by ABC, was far from smooth—plumbing issues, traffic gridlock, and melting asphalt all plagued the event. It became known internally as “Black Sunday.” But despite the rocky start, the public was captivated. Over one million people visited the park in its first year.

Legacy that keeps growing

Today, Disneyland Resort has grown far beyond its modest beginnings. With over 50 attractions, Disneyland Park is now part of a larger resort that includes Disney California Adventure (opened in 2001), three themed hotels, and the Downtown Disney District.

While classic attractions like Pirates of the Caribbean, Haunted Mansion, and Space Mountain remain guest favorites, new lands such as Star Wars: Galaxy’s Edge and Avengers Campus reflect the evolving nature of Disney storytelling. The resort is also preparing for future expansions, with upcoming experiences inspired by Avatar, Coco, and the ongoing growth of Avengers Campus.

A day to celebrate magic, and the people behind

On July 17, 2025, Disneyland Resort commemorated its 70th anniversary by honoring the individuals who keep the magic alive every day: the cast members.

In a special early morning celebration open only to cast members, the park came alive with music, photo ops, and a ceremonial flag-raising in Town Square, featuring veteran employees. The event also featured a 70th anniversary hot air balloon and live performances.



The Walt Disney Company CEO Bob Iger rings New York Stock Exchange opening bell alongside Disney Experiences Chairman Josh D'Amaro, Disneyland Resort President Thomas Mazloum, Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse on the occasion

Walt Disney Company CEO Bob Iger and Disney Experiences Chairman Josh D'Amaro joined the festivities on Main Street, U.S.A., delivering speeches that reflected on Disneyland's impact across generations.

In a symbolic moment, they rang the New York Stock Exchange opening bell remotely—joined by Mickey and Minnie Mouse and thousands of cast members for a historic photo opportunity.

Later, Iger personally greeted guests as they entered the park, remarking: "It was on this day in 1955 that Walt Disney opened the gates of Disneyland for the first time and introduced the world to this very special place. 70 years later, Disneyland remains one of Walt's greatest achievements—a place where generations of people from all

over the world have stepped through these gates and entered a world of joy and imagination.”

Spirit of innovation lives on

To mark the milestone, Disney launched a new advertising campaign celebrating real guest stories—showcasing Disneyland Resort as a place where people continue to mark their most joyful life moments. The campaign features authentic photographs and interviews from past and present visitors.

Meanwhile, the DisneylandForward rezoning initiative continues to lay the groundwork for the park’s next evolution, unlocking space for future lands and experiences to be developed over the coming decades.

As a nod to its enduring legacy, a new attraction—“Walt Disney—A Magical Life”—made its debut on July 17. Guests also enjoyed updates to Main Street Cinema, new elements in “it’s a small world,” and a one-day-only 70th anniversary cavalcade. Souvenir guide maps and commemorative buttons were also available (while supplies lasted).

70 years and counting

From its humble origins to its position as a cultural icon, Disneyland has spent seven decades inspiring imaginations, celebrating creativity, and building family memories. What began as a dream sketched out on napkins and blueprints has become a timeless destination visited by hundreds of millions.

As Walt Disney once said, “Disneyland will never be completed. It will continue to grow as long as there is imagination left in the world.”

Seventy years in, that vision is still alive—and just getting started.

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