

TRAVEL

When will Disney's Rise of the Resistance ride open?

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The Arizona Republic
USA TODAY NETWORK

In the new Star Wars land at Disneyland, a menacing laser turret looms over a trail that leads to a mysterious cavern. Yet that is not what prohibits visitors from venturing along that path.

It's the chain across the entrance, as well as the cast members stationed out front. But more than that, it's Disney's insistence on perfection as work continues on the Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge attraction at the end of this path, a project Imagineers call their most ambitious ever.

So when is Rise of the Resistance opening?

The answer gets no more definitive than "sometime this year."

When Disney CEO Robert Iger first announced that Galaxy's Edge would

open in June, it was with the assumption that both of its marquee rides would be open as well: Rise of the Resistance and Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run.

But when park officials later said Galaxy's Edge would debut May 31 — deemed a soft opening — they made clear that Rise of the Resistance would not be ready.

It had been decided that opening without Rise was better than delaying the opening. Based on reviews and fan reactions, Disney made the right choice.

The new land has been well-received. Guests have flocked to Oga's Cantina (Disneyland's first foray into offering alcohol to the public) and Savi's Workshop (build a \$200 lightsaber), where two-hour lines have been common.

Waits for Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run, in which groups of six pilot



A laser turret looms over Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge at Disneyland.
SCOTT CRAVEN/USA TODAY NETWORK

Obituaries

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Fred J. Hicks

NORTHVILLE - Fred J. Hicks, age 100, lifelong resident of Northville, passed away peacefully at home on June 15, 2019. He was born December 19, 1918 in Northville, Michigan; son of Fred V. and Hazel (nee Wilcox) Hicks. Fred graduated from Northville High School; Class of 1936. He proudly served his country in the United States Army during WWII. Fred was united in marriage to Laura A. Bolton on March 25, 1942; they spent 77 loving years together as husband and wife.

Fred worked as a postal carrier for the Northville Post Office, retiring in 1982. He was a member of the National Rifle Association. He was a nature lover and enjoyed being outside fishing and hunting. He also enjoyed gardening; his home vegetable garden included tomatoes, peppers, beans, and an abundance of garlic. Fred read the newspaper from cover to cover and liked doing crossword puzzles. He was very mechanical and able to fix anything. He was a wealth of knowledge, which he often shared with family and friends. Fred was the person his family went to for everything, he was truly loved by those around him.

Fred is survived by his loving wife, Laura A. Hicks; his children, Patricia (Fred) Fitch and Fred (Frances) Hicks; his grandchildren, Matt (Michelle) Fitch, Laura (Dale) Morey, Jacqueline (Mike Hay) Hicks, Amanda (Matt) Sheridan, Christina (Tom Hubbard) Hicks-Hubbard; his great grandchildren, Rebecca, Andrew, Chelsey, Shelby, Madison, Ashley, Colby, and Lillian; and his great great grandchild, Kinsley. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Visitation will be held Wednesday, July 3, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. until Noon with a Memorial Service at Noon at Casterline Funeral Home, 122 W. Dunlap, Northville. Rev. Douglas W. Vernon from First United Methodist Church of Northville will officiate the service.

In lieu of flowers the family would appreciate memorial contributions to Angela Hospice, 14100 Newburgh Road, Livonia, MI 48154

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the iconic ship on a dangerous mission, have been moderate. Waits typically are 30 to 40 minutes, and rarely longer than an hour.

But Rise of the Resistance is a different beast, a hulking rancor as opposed to the domesticated tauntaun. (Star Wars fans will understand.) Its complexity is what's causing the delay.

Those who follow Disney for a living — particularly bloggers who report on everything from queue refurbishments to the latest themed churros — speculate the ride's many intricacies have temporarily flummoxed builders, as if the Imagineering has exceeded the technology.

When will it open?

Make no mistake, Imagineers are going to get it right. Whatever problems are holding up the ride will be solved.

But Disney won't open an attraction until officials are sure it can perform dependably. If they open it too soon and it breaks down every few hours, they'll face the dark side of social media.

When it comes to an opening date, it's no surprise that park officials stick to generalities. The official line is, "Rise of the Resistance will open this year." But we can't resist guessing when it may rise to the level of welcoming guests.

■ **End of August.** There are two reasons why the ride could open at the end of August. First, the biennial convention for Disney superfans unfolds Aug. 23-25 at the Anaheim Convention Center.

Officials are known for dropping big news here. Iger unveiled Galaxy's Edge at the 2015 expo.

Second, this would correlate with the Aug. 29 Galaxy's Edge opening at Disney World in Florida. That would be some nice synchronicity.

■ **Our odds:** 3-1. This is the Star Wars horse we'd bet on in the Rise of the Resistance race.

■ **Late September/early October:** Crowds typically are lighter as summer transitions to fall and kids are back in school. Opening Rise of the Resistance now could stoke crowd levels to record highs for this period. If not, the season's smaller crowds could help Imagineers break in the attraction slowly. Should it go down, fewer people will be there to complain on social media.

■ **Our odds:** 8-1. Hardly a long shot, but we don't feel strong about the timing.

■ **November.** What better way to fill the gap between Halloween and Christmas than the rise of Rise? As wreaths take the place of pumpkins, guests would pay scant attention to the decor as they line up for Galaxy's Edge, which is committed to its story and should remain a holiday-free zone.

■ **Our odds:** 15-1. A dark (side) horse to be sure.

■ **December.** One would think Rise of the Resistance would open long before

the first carols are sung. But the attraction's envelope-pushing technology may require extensive time to perfect. Not to be ignored: the Dec. 20 opening of the ninth and final "Star Wars" film with roots to the 1977 original. Is it merely coincidence the movie is called "The Rise of Skywalker?" Probably, but still intriguing.

■ **Our odds:** 6-1.

■ **Who knows:** Iger initially said Galaxy's Edge would open in June. We booked hotel dates throughout that month so we'd be prepared to attend the media preview. Which was May 29.

■ **Odds each of these guesses is wrong:** Even money.

What to expect

Rise of the Resistance may be Disney's crowning achievement after 64 years in the theme-park business. It will blend special effects, trackless vehicles and audio-animatronics.

While video screens will be part of the ride, it will rely largely on a 3D environment, including a detailed interior of a Star Destroyer that fans will swear was taken right from the big screen. It will be as much an experience as a ride.

Guests will proceed past the laser turret and into a cavern lined with horizontal ridges, the result of being carved by lasers. It leads to a briefing room inside a secret rebel base, where "recruits" are briefed by Rey (in hologram form and played by Daisy Ridley, re-creating her role from the "Star Wars" films).

The adventure begins as guests board a shuttle escorted by Poe (Oscar Isaac), an experienced X-Wing pilot. And, of course, things go badly.

The floor vibrates as the transport lifts off from Batuu, and it's not long before the shuttle is pulled toward a Star Destroyer, an immense craft belonging to the evil First Order. The "abductees" are taken to a bay, a vast space said to be one of the more impressive sights on the attraction thanks to the use of animatronic figures and video projections.

Travelers wind up in a detention cell where Kylo Ren (Adam Driver) shows up to interrogate them, employing a few Jedi mind tricks that go far beyond "These aren't the droids you're looking for."

In another set piece, there's an explosion and a hole suddenly appears in a wall. A Resistance fighter appears to lead recruits to eight-person trackless vehicles to make an escape, at one point dodging laser blasts from full-side AT-ATs, the four-legged tanks first seen on Hoth in "The Empire Strikes Back."

At one point, vehicles seem to climb 100 feet, facing off with stormtroopers. Eventually, a successful escape is completed, or so we assume, given Disney's embrace of happy endings (and returning guests safely).

One last guess: The lines will be strong for this one.