



An American Tour: 91



Mason, Ohio's *King's Island*

Kings Island is a 364-acre amusement park located 24 miles northeast of Cincinnati in Mason, Ohio. It is owned and operated by Cedar Fair Entertainment Company. The park first opened in 1972 by the Taft Broadcasting Company in an effort to move and expand Coney Island, a popular resort destination along the banks of the Ohio River that was prone to frequent flooding. After more than \$275 million in capital investments, the park features over 80 rides, shows, 14 roller coasters and a 33-acre water park.

Throughout its history, Kings Island has appeared in popular sitcoms and has been highly publicized for its record-breaking attractions and events. One of the park's most well-known attractions, The Racer, is often credited with reviving worldwide interest in the roller coaster industry during the 1970s. Other attractions, such as The Beast and Banshee, set new world records including some that are still held. The park has also suffered through times of negative publicity, particularly regarding the early demise of roller coasters The Bat and Son of Beast.

Kings Island is divided into several themed sections. The park is open from April - Labor Day and reopens for a short time on weekends in September for Halloween-themed events. In 2014, Kings Island was the second-most visited seasonal amusement park in the United States, behind Cedar Point with app. 3.2 million visitors. It was third overall for seasonal attendance in North America, led by Canada's Wonderland. Kings Island has won *Amusement Today's* Golden Ticket Award for having the "Best Kids' Area" in the world for thirteen consecutive years (2001–2013).

Soak City was announced in 2011, as the new name for Boomerang Bay. The Australian theme was dropped and additions included a second, larger wave pool along with sand-volleyball courts and a completely revamped lazy river with new names all around. In 2014, the longest inverted roller coaster in the world, Banshee, opened in the location previously occupied by Son of Beast within the park's Action Zone. The seven-inversion coaster was announced on August 8, 2013, and was built by Bolliger & Mabillard

