

PRESS RELEASE



Funtown Splashtown USA Earns National Recognition for the Whispering Pines Haunted Hotel Dark Ride

Park's First New Ride in 20 Years Makes the Final Top Ten List from USA Today's 10Best Readers' Choice Travel Awards

(Saco, ME) – January 17, 2024 – [Funtown Splashtown USA](https://www.funtown.com), Maine's family-owned and operated theme park, is thrilled to announce its newest ride, the Whispering Pines Haunted Hotel, has been named one of the [Top 10 Best New Theme Park Attractions](#) in the United States. The eerily fun ride, which debuted last August, earned sixth place overall in the 2023 USA Today's 10Best Reader Choice Travel Awards.

"We wanted to bring something entirely new to the park, and our town's previous Haunted Mansion attraction gave us the perfect inspiration," said William Cormier, owner/senior vice president at Funtown Splashtown USA. "Together with the creative team from [Sally Dark Rides](#), we developed a completely new story, making it a one-of-a-kind ride only found here at Funtown. It's been a bit. Families love riding together and the interactivity seems to bring out the competitive spirit in everyone. Guests almost always get back in line and ride it again. We are thrilled and honored that guests, fans, and USA Today's readers clearly love our new ride as much as we do."

"For more than 45 years Sally Dark Rides has been tasked to develop completely original dark rides that appeal to all ages," shared Drew Hunter, vice president creative design, Sally Dark Rides. "When the team at Funtown Splashtown USA invited us to create a haunted hotel for their park, we jumped at the chance to make it completely unique. We loved the opportunity to weave a tale about a wicked witch, her pair of enchanted pets, and a curse that needed park guests to eradicate it. Funtown is a special park, and together, we created a truly special, frighteningly fun ride. We celebrate the incredible recognition with them."

Originally opened as a drive-in food stand in 1960, Funtown Splashtown USA has grown into one of the Northeast's most beloved amusement and waterparks. The park's unofficial motto – "Treat each day like it's a party"- inspires the team each season to provide fun and memorable visits to their guests allowing them to ensure all of their guests 'Create Memories That Will Last A Lifetime'.

According to the ride's storyline, a witch put a spell on the Whispering Pines Hotel. When guests board one of the four-passenger ride vehicles, they hold an interactive "curse eradicator" to help end the witch's curse. The ride features 14 different rooms, with one room even featuring the carpet pattern from the movie, "The Shining" and its famously creepy Overlook Hotel. While the ride has a scary tone and theme, it complements Funtown's family-focus, and appeals to guests of all ages.

Twenty nominees in each category were chosen by a panel of experts in this year's Travel Awards program. USA Today's readers and the general public then selected the final Top10 winners in each category. This is the first time Funtown Splashtown USA earned a nomination on the Top10 list, and the placing in the final top ten is great recognition for the seasonal park.

The annual USA Today 10Best Readers' Choice Awards highlight the best of the best in travel destinations and experiences. Nominees in all categories are submitted by a panel of experts, and the final set of nominees are selected by 10Best editors. USA Today readers and the general public vote to determine the winners. Winners were announced on Friday, January 5, 2024.

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About Funtown Splashtown USA

Located on Route 1 in Saco, Maine, Funtown Splashtown USA started as a drive-in food stand called Marvel Drive-In in 1960. It is now home to over 50 rides, water slides, pools, and various games and food stands! The park, which is family owned and operated, was founded by Kenneth and Violet Cormier. Kenneth passed in 2013, but Violet is still a very active piece of Funtown Splashtown USA. Even at 87, Violet Cormier shows no signs of slowing down, her and her family keep the park running and growing year after year. The park's unofficial motto—which is Violet Cormier's rallying cry is— "treat each day like it's a party!", the park thanks each and every one of its guests and supporters for allowing us to help you 'Create Memories That Will Last a Lifetime'.

More information can be found at www.funtownsplashtownusa.com

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About Sally Dark Rides

Sally Dark Rides creates story-based dark ride experiences for theme parks and entertainment centers around the world. These rides seamlessly blend art and technology to form incredibly immersive environments that make for unforgettable experiences. The family-owned and operated company boasts a multitude of award-winning attractions and has been recognized as a founding leader of the interactive dark ride.

For more information about Sally Dark Rides, visit SallyDarkRides.com.

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