

= Manta ( SeaWorld Orlando ) =

Manta is a steel flying roller coaster at SeaWorld Orlando . The attraction allows guests to encounter numerous species of ray before boarding a manta ray @-@ shaped train that takes them on a 3 @, @ 359 @-@ foot @-@ long ( 1 @, @ 024 m ) roller coaster ride above the park , reaching top speeds of 56 miles per hour ( 90 km / h ) . Designed by Swiss firm Bolliger & Mabillard , Manta restrains riders in the prone position and features four inversions . The well @-@ received attraction officially opened to the public on May 22 , 2009 . Their slogan is " Dive deep , fly high ? " .

= = History = =

SeaWorld Orlando revealed the concept that was to become Manta to a gathering of travel industry representatives and community leaders on April 2 , 2008 , although it had been in the planning stages for years . The exact specifications were not immediately revealed , but the park said it would be their largest single investment in an attraction , and that it would open sometime in 2009 . The park also announced that the attraction would include a roller coaster , but that it would be more than just a roller coaster . Joseph Couceiro ? vice president of sales and marketing ? described the ride as " the next generation SeaWorld attraction " that would immerse guests in elements of marine life .

Artists ' concepts of the new attraction were leaked onto the Internet in April 2008 ; however , SeaWorld officials would not confirm whether the images were accurate representations of the final design , but said that the roller coaster would have a gliding sensation . Searches of trademark applications uncovered an entry for the use of the term " Manta " as an amusement ride , and construction on a large site within the park had already begun . On May 29 , 2008 , park officials confirmed that the attraction would be named Manta , and announced additional details about the attraction .

Construction of the roller coaster track and attraction buildings began in September 2008 . Superior Rigging & Erection built the supports and track . The ride 's layout was completed in December 2008 , and construction on other parts of the roller coaster continued into early 2009 . SeaWorld began previewing the attraction in early May 2009 , before it was officially opened on May 22 .

= = Design = =

= = = Theme and surrounding experience = = =

Manta is an attraction which encompasses a themed queue and a roller coaster . The queue is designed to resemble a seaside village decorated with mosaics and artwork inspired by rays . Within the attraction 's 4 @-@ acre ( 16 @, @ 000 m<sup>2</sup> ) site are ten aquaria containing 184 @, @ 000 US gallons ( 700 @, @ 000 l ; 153 @, @ 000 imp gal ) of water . Approximately 3 @, @ 000 animals representing over 60 species are visible ? including over 300 rays , such as cownose rays and spotted eagle rays . Other creatures on display include sea horses , leafy seadragons and tropical fish .

Portions of the aquarium exhibit can be viewed by guests who do not wish to ride the roller coaster . Non @-@ riding guests can use a second entrance to the attraction area , which is separated from those waiting for the roller coaster . Guests in the ride 's queue have access to special exhibit components , such as a Plexiglas " pop @-@ up " window into the aquarium . Manta 's rails , supports , and track are filled with sand to reduce noise .

= = = Trains and loading procedure = = =

Manta is a flying roller coaster , which simulates the sensation of flight . It is designed to resemble the way rays ? mantas in particular ? appear to fly through seawater . Guests are initially seated

upright on the trains in one of eight rows that hold four passengers each , accommodating up to 32 riders . Manta operates with three trains . Before departure , mechanisms in the station raise the cars up to the track , such that the riders ' spines are parallel to the track . Guests are secured in their seats using a locking lap bar , a vest @-@ like harness , and flaps at the riders ' ankles to hold their feet in place .

The cars are highly stylized . The lead car is shaped like a manta ray with a wingspan of 12 feet ( 3 @. @ 7 m ) . In the original plans , the wing of the car was intended to make contact with water at a certain point of the ride , but Bolliger & Mabillard said the idea would not work and a fountain was used instead . The roller coaster 's wings appear to skim the water 's surface . Water jets in the attraction 's main lagoon create a splash effect as the train passes . SeaWorld can adjust several features of the splash effect , including its duration and the train 's speed when it enters the area . The roller coaster 's color scheme includes deep purple , ultramarine blue and cobalt .

= = = Track = = =

The steel track of Manta is 3 @, @ 359 feet ( 1 @, @ 1024 m ) long and lift hill is 140 feet ( 43 m ) high . There are four inversions ; a pretzel loop , two inline twists and one corkscrew . The track is dark blue and the supports are light blue . Sand is placed inside some sections of track to reduce the noise produced by the trains . Friction brakes are used to control the speed of the train . The track was fabricated at the Ohio @-@ based Clermont Steel Fabricators . In 2015 , a clone of Manta opened at Nagashima Spa Land under the name of Acrobat .

= = Ride experience = =

Manta features a dual station configuration , which allows two trains to be loaded at the same time , thus increasing the ride 's capacity . After departing from the station , the train will make either a slight left or right turn ? depending on which station it leaves ? into the 140 @-@ foot ( 43 m ) chain lift hill . From the top of the lift hill , the train makes a 113 @-@ foot ( 34 m ) downward right turn into a 98 @-@ foot ( 30 m ) -tall pretzel loop , after which it turns left , leading into the first of two inline twists . The train then makes a right turn followed by a slight upward left turn into a corkscrew , before turning right into the mid @-@ course brake run . The train then drops to a point just above a body of water , at the same time making a 270 @-@ degree right turn , where water jets spray up near the train to produce the effect of the train actually hitting the water . After exiting the turn , the train goes by a waterfall , goes through the second inline twist , makes a left turn into the final brake run , then makes a left turn into one of the two stations where the next riders board .

= = Reception = =

Manta has been lauded by the mainstream media and industry press since its debut in May 2009 . Busch Entertainment Corporation , SeaWorld Orlando 's parent company , credited Manta with improving park attendance . In July 2009 , ThemeParkInsider.com named Manta " best new attraction " . In September 2009 , Manta placed third in Amusement Today magazine 's poll for the Best New Ride of 2009 .

In Mitch Hawker 's worldwide Best Roller Coaster Poll , Manta peaked at position 23 in its debut year . The ride 's ranking in subsequent polls is shown in the table below .