

= Kumba ( roller coaster ) =

Kumba is a Bolliger & Mabillard sit down roller coaster located at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay , in Tampa , Florida . Opened in 1993 , it stands 143 feet ( 44 m ) tall and has a top speed of 60 miles per hour ( 97 km / h ) . Kumba features a total of seven inversions across the 3 @-@ minute ride .

= = History = =

Kumba was officially announced in November 1992 as a record @-@ breaking Bolliger & Mabillard roller coaster set to become the park 's signature attraction . The ride officially opened to the public on April 20 , 1993 . When Kumba opened , it featured the world 's tallest vertical loop , and was also the tallest , fastest and longest roller coaster in Florida . In 1995 , Kumba conceded the title of ride with the world 's tallest vertical loop to Dragon Khan at PortAventura which features a 118 @-@ foot @-@ tall ( 36 m ) vertical loop . In 1996 , it conceded Florida 's titles of tallest and longest roller coaster to Montu , a Bolliger & Mabillard roller coaster in the Egypt section of the park . In 1999 , it conceded the fastest title to Islands of Adventure 's The Incredible Hulk , yet another Bolliger & Mabillard roller coaster .

= = Characteristics = =

The 3 @, @ 978 @-@ foot @-@ long ( 1 @, @ 212 m ) Kumba stands 143 feet ( 44 m ) tall . With a top speed of 60 miles per hour ( 97 km / h ) , the ride features seven inversions including a 114 @-@ foot @-@ tall ( 35 m ) vertical loop , a dive loop , a zero @-@ g roll , a cobra roll and two interlocking corkscrews . The vertical loop featured on Kumba wraps around the lift hill . Kumba was the first ride in the world to feature a number of now @-@ common roller coaster elements , including interlocking corkscrews and a dive loop . Riders of Kumba experience up to 3 @. @ 8 times the force of gravity on the 3 minute ride .

Kumba features four steel and fiberglass trains , each containing eight cars . Each car seats four riders in a single row for a total of 32 riders per train . The block sections only allow for three trains to be on the track at any one time , meaning the ride can still operate at full capacity when one train is receiving maintenance . Under three train operation , the ride caters for 1 @, @ 700 riders per hour .

The name Kumba was derived from the translation of " Roar " in the African Kongo Language .

= = Ride experience = =

The ride begins with a right @-@ hand , 90 @-@ degree turn out of the station which leads into the 143 @-@ foot @-@ tall ( 44 m ) chain lift hill . After reaching the peak , trains go through a small pre @-@ drop . The ride then goes down a 135 @-@ foot ( 41 m ) drop to the left into a 114 @-@ foot @-@ tall ( 35 m ) vertical loop that wraps around the lift hill . After leaving the vertical loop , the ride rises up into a diving loop , followed by a zero @-@ g roll , where riders experience a feeling of weightlessness . A straight section of track and a small hill leads to a Cobra roll . After exiting the cobra roll , the trains rise up into the mid @-@ course brake run . The exit from the brake run leads into a pair of interlocking corkscrews . The train then dives into a tunnel , and exits into an upward clockwise helix . The train then hits the final brake run , before making a right hand turn and returning to the station .

= = Reception = =

Kumba has generally been well received . Robb Alvey of Theme Park Review stated Kumba was his favourite ride in the Florida area , describing it as " an old @-@ school , intense ride " that he has been on hundreds of times . Dewayne Bevil of the Orlando Sentinel gives Kumba ratings of 4 out of 5 for both thrill and theming . Keith Kohn , also of the Sentinel , described the ride as " an

amazing experience " .

The opening of Kumba had a significant impact on park attendance figures . In its debut year , park attendance increased approximately 15 % to an estimated 3 @. @ 8 million visitors . The park expected that trend to continue into 1994 . In 1995 , Joe Fincher , Busch Gardens Tampa Bay 's general manager , described Kumba as a " superstar roller coaster " that " has been terrific for us " .

In Amusement Today 's annual Golden Ticket Awards , Kumba has consistently ranked highly . It is also one of only seven roller coasters to appear in the top 50 every year since the award 's inception in 1998 . It debuted at position 4 in 1998 , before dropping to a low of 31 in 2011 , and rising to 23 the following year .

In Mitch Hawker 's worldwide Best Roller Coaster Poll , Kumba entered at position 7 in 1999 , before dropping to a low of 39 in 2004 . The ride 's ranking in subsequent polls is shown in the table below .