



LEGOLAND and Merlin Entertainments

In 1968, Godtfred Kirk Christiansen opened the first LEGOLAND Park at the LEGO Group's headquarters in the Danish town of Billund. His idea was a complete success. Consequently, in the 1990s the company decided to offer this idea in other countries as well. The plans worked out well: the eight LEGOLAND Parks are among the most important amusement parks in the world.

The idea of building a park for the entire family using the popular LEGO bricks came from Godtfred Kirk Christiansen, the son of the founder of LEGO, Ole Kirk Christiansen. Godtfred took over company management from his father in 1958, working with the motto "Only the best is good enough". The first LEGOLAND director in Billund was Arnold Boutrup, formerly a decorator and chief designer at a department store in Copenhagen. He developed the idea for the first LEGOLAND and thus laid the foundation for the modern-day parks. Back then, this new world consisted of MINILAND, a large LEGO railway, a puppet theatre, an Indian camp and a traffic school, and became a paradise for families. In the first summer alone, some 625,000 guests visited LEGOLAND Billund.

Investment in Günzburg

In 1996, LEGOLAND Windsor was opened to the west of London. Just three years later, the first LEGOLAND Park open year-round was launched in Carlsbad, California. Since 2002, Germany also has its own LEGOLAND Park, located in the Bavarian town of Günzburg. Thanks to its geographic and structural advantages, the site in Günzburg was chosen over Japan's capital of Tokyo in 1999. Following investment of more than 150 million euros, upon opening the Park featured all of the highlights of its predecessors, along with numerous new attractions. More than 25 million people live within a radius of 300 kilometres. Additionally, many holiday-makers also visit Bavaria and Baden Württemberg every year. Günzburg as a family and children's region offers many leisure and holiday packages – all adjusted to the LEGOLAND visitors. LEGOLAND Deutschland Resort is now one of the top amusement parks in Germany.

LEGOLAND Florida, the second Park in North America, opened in 2011. The first LEGOLAND Park in Asia was opened in Malaysia in 2012, followed by Dubai in 2016. New Parks are scheduled to open in Japan (2017) and South Korea.

Merlin Entertainments Group: employing more than 27,000 people

Since 2005, all of the LEGOLAND Parks belong to the British Merlin Entertainments Group. Merlin now welcomes more than 60 million guests annually, at more than 100 locations in 24 different countries on four continents. The company is the largest operator of amusement attractions in Europe and is ranked second in the world. The goal of Merlin Entertainments is to provide its guests with unique, memorable experiences. This is guaranteed not only by one-of-a-kind global and local brands, but also by the commitment and passion of the more than 27,000 employees. Amongst others, the Merlin Group operates the following attractions:

Madame Tussauds, The EDF Energy London Eye, Dungeons, LEGOLAND Discovery Centres, SEA LIFE, LEGOLAND Parks, Gardaland, Alton Towers Resort, THORPE PARK, Chessington World of Adventures, Heide Park Resort, Warwick Castle, and many more. All of these brands are unique, fascinating and innovative, and all of them have great growth potential.

“Merlin is a world-class company and now operates unique theme and amusement parks on four continents. We have a clear, proven strategy for the development of an international leisure company: attractions for the whole family, which have great potential for expansion. Our balanced portfolio is built on brands with clear strengths, in terms of geography, products and demography,” explained Nick Varney, CEO of the Merlin Entertainments Group.

Following a successful IPO, shares in Merlin Entertainments have been traded on the London stock exchange since November 2013.

For more information: merlinentertainments.biz.

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Media information and graphic materials can be found at www.LEGOLAND.de/Presse.
Broadcast-quality footage is available for download at www.LEGOLAND-Videogalerie.de.

Note to editors:

The LEGOLAND Deutschland Resort was opened on 17 May 2002 in the Bavarian town of Günzburg and is one of the most popular amusement parks in Germany. Information on the LEGOLAND Deutschland Resort can be found at www.LEGOLAND.de. Tickets and accommodation packages can also be booked online at this address.

2017 Season: 1 April to 5 November

LEGOLAND Deutschland Resort is a part of Merlin Entertainments Group. Information can be found at www.merlinentertainments.biz.