# Boardwalk named a top park

A family elevates together during a ride on the Fireball at the Boardwalk, which was ninth on Citysearch's list of the nation's best amusement parks.

## Citysearch puts amusement park in its top-10 list

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When it comes to American amusement parks, sunshine, a cool sea breeze and even a dose of small town culture weigh just as much as big rides and funny people in furry outfits.

At least that's the feeling the editors **SANTA CRUZ** of Citysearch get from the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

Citysearch placed the Boardwalk ninth among the best American amusement parks. Astroland Amusement Park in Brooklyn, N.Y., ranked No. 1. Anaheim's Disneyland came in fourth.

Outside the entrance to the Giant Dipper on Monday, James Elliot of Vancouver, British Columbia, said: "It has a small town feel (with) the smells and sounds of a county fair," he said as he dolled out ride tickets to his son James, 12, and daughter, Sahara, 10. "It's beautiful and the scenery is great."

The family had just visited Disneyland and Universal Studios.

Scenery may not be what a 12-year-old roller coaster enthusiast yearns for, but as most youths can attest, the buck stops at the folks.

"This old-school boardwalk harkens back to an earlier era of lazy leisure and family-friendly amusement," Citysearch writes.

"The park features a carousel, dozens of rides, test-your-skill challenges, laser tag, an indoor video game and pinball arcade, and the requisite cotton candy, hot dog and lemonade stands, along with plenty of goofy time-wasters like Skee Ball, Whack-a-Mole and indoor mini-golf."

Though Citysearch notes one downfall, "Any sunny day is perfect for the beach down below, though the water's usually quite chilly."

Kris Reyes, community relations director at the Boardwalk, said, "We work really hard to provide a unique and memorable experience at the Boardwalk, and we are honored to be chosen among the top 10 best amusement parks in the country."

"It's a good combo of everything, 'cause I can watch them ride while I eat," said Robin Beamon of Modesto as her niece and nephew swung like a pendulum on the Fireball.

Charlotte Matityahu and Cheryl Lawless, both of Palo Alto, brought their kids for the food and rides.

"It has the beach and that's the big draw for me," Lawless said as her daughter Alana, 10, got off the Rock-'n'Roll and ran to the front of the line.

Matityahu was a little more blunt.

"You're not inundated with stuff," she said. "Great America has become so tacky..."

Amusement parks are big business these days. Worldwide revenue totaled $19 billion, with American parks bringing in more than half of that, according to Forbes.com. An average one day ticket costs $25.

Except for Mondays, where rides are 60 cents apiece, the Boardwalk costs $26.95 for an all-day ride pass. But it's open to foot traffic, which saves a few bucks for nonriders, like grandpa or grandma.

Unless you're Dave Pulling's father-in-law. Before plopping down on the beach, the 65-year-old charged the Double Shot and liked it, Pulling said.

"(The Boardwalk) kind of has a throwback, nostalgic feeling," Pulling said. "We like that."

So did Pulling's son, 6-year-old Zach, who had just ridden the Giant Dipper.

"It was scary," he said.

He closed his eyes and screamed the whole time.

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### Top 10 amusement parks in America

Citysearch, a search service that provides information on businesses, from restaurants and retail, to travel and professional services, recently ranked the country's amusement parks. Citysearch.com contains over a million business ratings and reviews.

1. Astroland Amusement Park, Brooklyn, N.Y.

2. Busch Gardens, Tampa Bay, Fla.

3. Cedar Point Amusement Park, Sandusky, Ohio.

4. Disneyland, Anaheim.

5. Kennywood Park, West Mifflin, Pa.

6. Camp Snoopy at the Mall of America, Bloomington, Minn.

7. Magic Kingdom, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

8. Paramount's Carowinds, Charlotte, N.C.

9. The Boardwalk, Santa Cruz.

10. Six Flags Astroworld, Houston.

*Source: Citysearch.com*