

RODEO ROUNDUP

With livestock, top performers, tasty treats, and charitable events, the Houston Rodeo has something to offer everyone within Houston and surrounding communities

Written by Taylor McLaughlin | Photography courtesy of Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo

An all-women's event, barrel racing showcases each contestant's ability to maneuver their horse during a timed race



Dozens of breeds of cattle, goats, rabbits, sheep, and swine make their appearance during the Livestock Show

As people fill the NRG Arena in their best western wear, cowboys and cowgirls perfect their speed in hopes of bringing home unsurpassed scores for the night. The fast-paced barrel racing, the excitement that comes with bull riding, and the future cowboys and cowgirls who take on the mutton bustin' challenge, are just some of the many features of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

Since 1932, the Show has offered continuous traditions for fans all over the map. According to Sarah Poole, the manager of advertising and media, the Show "welcomed visitors from 70 different countries in 2014."

OUTSIDE THE ARENA

It may be the big-name performers that draw in the rodeo's massive crowds each night, but outside of the arena there seems to be an endless list of events for both adults and children to enjoy prior to the bright lights and booming speakers. For children and adults alike, guests can visit AGventure to see improved exhibits that focus on agricultural education, observe infants residing at the birthing station, and partake in the traditional fair festivities.

For your older cowboys and cowgirls, Poole suggests checking out the shopping mall, which is stocked with all things western, and then head to the Hideout for some good ol' Southern two-stepping. While exploring these various vendors, children can enjoy Kids Country, a carnival with rides, games, and exhibits. Thanks to the upcoming "Plan My Day" feature on the website, Poole shares that family and friends will be able to "customize their schedule and print it in order to share with a friend via email or social media."

DELECTABLE SOUTHERN TREATS

Most Katyites have heard about, and from time-to-time craved, the special fair treats that make the rodeo experience all the more memorable. Poole adds, "Visitors can find every food on a stick imaginable, as well as fantastic fried food." On top of the vendors, street stands, and the carnival food in and outside of the arena, rodeo participants can take part in "I Ate All Eight," a competition where they visit eight food vendors that were awarded the Gold Buckle Foodie Award.

GIVING BACK

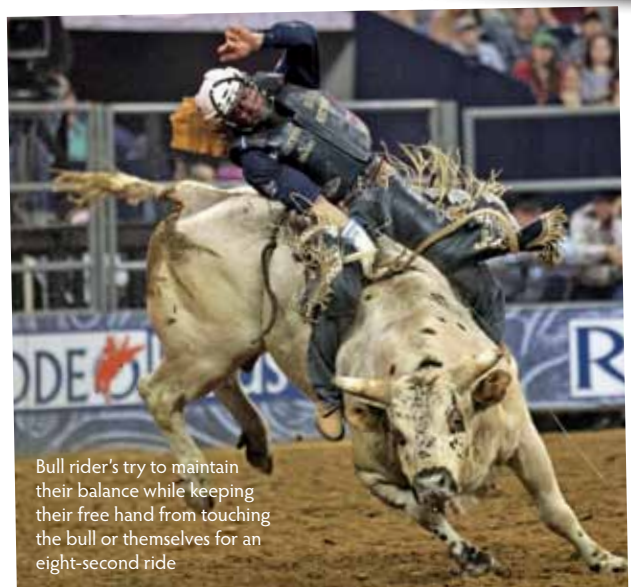
Since the beginning of the rodeo, the organization has been paying it forward. "The [association] has committed nearly \$375 million to supporting the youth of Texas and agriculture," Poole says. The rodeo has also provided educational scholarships for students within the area. For the upcoming 2015 year, over \$24 million will be dedicated to "educational program grants, scholarships, graduate assistantships, and junior show exhibitors, and calf scramble participants." KM



Barrelmen dressed as clowns try to divert the bull's attention away from bull riders



Mutton bustin' gives contestants as young as age 5 the chance to show their sheep-riding skills



Bull rider's try to maintain their balance while keeping their free hand from touching the bull or themselves for an eight-second ride

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2015 Concert Lineup

March 3 ERIC CHURCH	March 13 PIT BULL
March 4 HUNTER HAYES	March 14 BILLY CURRINGTON
March 5 MIRANDA LAMBERT	March 15 LA ARROLLADORA BANDA EL LIMÓN AND LA MAQUINARIA NORTEÑA
March 6 JOHN LEGEND	March 16 DIERKS BENTLEY
March 7 ALAN JACKSON	March 17 ARIANA GRANDE
March 8 FALL OUT BOY	March 18 FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE
March 9 JUSTIN MOORE	March 19 BLAKE SHELTON
March 10 TIM MCGRAW	March 20 THE BAND PERRY
March 11 BRANTLEY GILBERT	March 21 BRAD PAISLEY
March 12 ZAC BROWN BAND	March 22 LUKE BRYAN

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Upcoming Rodeo Events

Go Texan Day Feb. 27

The Downtown Rodeo Parade and ConocoPhillips Rodeo Run Feb. 28

Armed Forces Appreciation Day March 4

Black Heritage Day March 6

Go Tejano Day March 15



TAYLOR MCLAUGHLIN loves to partake in all of the festivities of Rodeo Houston, especially watching the mutton bustin'.

FACT:

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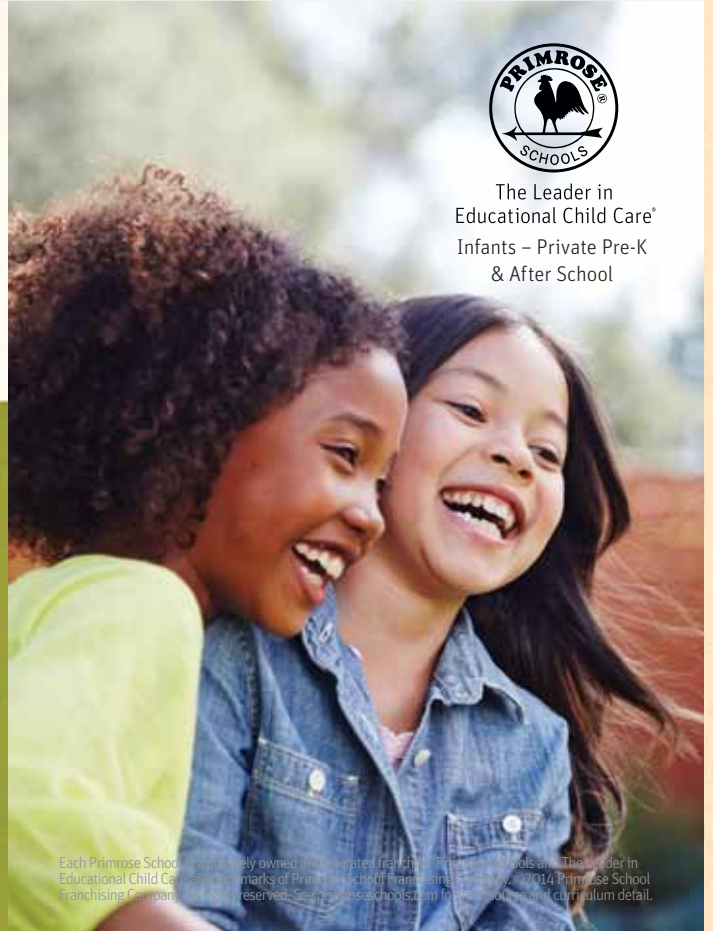
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Sherea Vitelli
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