

# The List

## Dance halls



### 1. Gruene Hall, New Braunfels, Texas

Built in 1878, this 6,000-square-foot landmark is the oldest continuously running dance hall in Texas and the centerpiece of the Gruene Historic District.

830-606-1281, [gruenehall.com](http://gruenehall.com)

### 2. Billy Bob's Texas, Fort Worth

Covering three acres with 22 bars, a huge dance floor, and a bull-riding arena, this is truly the "World's Largest Honky Tonk." 817-624-7117, [billybobstexas.com](http://billybobstexas.com)

### 3. The Million Dollar Cowboy Bar, Jackson, Wyo.

The barstools are saddles and the bar is studded with silver dollars, but music is king here. Willie, Waylon, and Hank Jr. have all graced the stage. 307-733-2207, [milliondollarcowboybar.com](http://milliondollarcowboybar.com)

### 4. Buck Owen's Crystal Palace, Bakersfield, Calif.

Buck Owens spent his last night on earth performing here, and the "Bakersfield sound" he created lives on at this restaurant, bar, and dance hall. 661-328-7560, [buckowens.com](http://buckowens.com)

### 5. HandlebarJ, Scottsdale, Ariz.

With live music every night and two-steppers on the dancefloor, this Arizona institution is known for much more than its great steaks. 480-948-0110, [handlebarj.com](http://handlebarj.com)



## 3 Days at the...

# Calgary Stampede

Live like a local at the 99th-annual Calgary Stampede (July 8–17).



### Plan It

► Located on downtown's Stephen Avenue Mall, the **Hyatt Regency Calgary** blends historic and contemporary Calgary in luxurious style. 403-717-1234, [calgary.hyatt.com](http://calgary.hyatt.com)

► The iconic **Fairmont Palliser Hotel** is rich in history and architecture (and recently underwent a \$30-million facelift). 800-257-7544, [fairmont.com](http://fairmont.com)

► The first time Graves stayed at the **Hotel Arts** was when he was the 2006 Calgary Stampede Parade Marshal. He's been back twice. 800-661-9378, [hotelarts.ca](http://hotelarts.ca)

► **Day 1:** The Calgary Stampede boasts the richest one-hour in rodeo with its \$100,000 payout on **Showdown Sunday**. "Nothing gets your motor running like the Calgary Stampede," says reigning PRCA and Calgary Stampede steer-wrestling champion **Lee Graves** (pictured above). A Calgary native, Graves says "there's so much to see and do when you're here." For starters, your rodeo ticket includes gate admission to the 196-acre **Stampede Park** and a host of events, such as the 125th anniversary of the **Halliburton Heavy Horse** competition. The Stampede is also known for hosting great music acts. Check out the **Scotiabank Saddledome** (Kenny Chesney and Sugarland perform this year) or the rowdy **Nashville North**, home to Canadian country favorites **Gord Bamford** and **Dean Brody**. **The Alberta Hotel**, built in 1890, is now **Murrieta's Bar and Grill**. Try Graves' favorite, the aged Alberta reserve Angus steak.

► **Day 2:** No trip to Calgary is complete without seeing the **Canadian Rockies**, and Graves recommends taking the scenic route. First stop is **Spruce Meadows**, a 400-acre international destination for show jumping. Take the **Cowboy Trail (Hwy 22)** through Grave's hometown of **Black Diamond** and grab lunch at the **Longview Steakhouse**. ("People drive out from Calgary all the time to eat there," says Graves.) Then take picturesque Hwy 40 through **Kananaskis Country** to **Canmore** and **Banff National Park**. Wash off the road grime with a soak in the therapeutic **Banff Springs Upper Hot Pool**.

► **Day 3:** Get your energy up for the finals with a free **pancake breakfast** from the **Calgary Stampede caravan committee** at various locations. Graves says the **Lazy S** serves a decadent three-course meal and has "the best seats in the house" for the rodeo finals. "If you want to be down where you live it, breath it, and smell it, then the **infield seats** are where it's at," says Graves. Don't miss "the half-mile of hell" at the **GMC Rangeland Derby's World Championship chuckwagon races** held at 8 p.m. every night. **Scotsman Hill**, overlooking Stampede Park, is an ideal place to watch the **Lights up the Night** fireworks. And the grand finale? Calgary's infamous **Ranchman's Dance Hall**. "It's the unofficial stomping grounds for the PRCA cowboys, and where we always go to celebrate," says Graves. — Tracey Feist