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Dierks Bentley took the 4th of July off this year. The summer holiday is always a big one for musicians, especially country performers. But after grinding it out for 15 years, Bentley figures he has finally earned himself a little vacation time.

“It’s an important weekend for me, and I prefer just being a regular American citizen and watching the fireworks and having that weekend off,” says Bentley, on the phone from San Diego while wrapping up his vacation earlier this month. “I had to work hard to get that, and it’s been a long journey.”

That journey has brought Bentley, 41, through eight albums, countless live shows and one substantial career overhaul. Now the hard partying, Arizona-born country rocker is set to headline this weekend’s Faster Horses festival, a return engagement after he headlined the inaugural Faster Horses in 2013.

“It’s so different than any other festival I’ve been to, as far as the fan experience and the backstage experience for us as artists,” says Bentley, who is performing at the festival Friday night along with fellow headliners Miranda Lambert (Saturday) and Luke Bryan (Sunday). “There’s so much detail and thought that’s gone into everything, and a lot of thought that’s gone into making it special for the fans.”

Bentley’s Faster Horses return comes after what he considers “the most important five years of my life.”

Five years ago, he was coming off the touring cycle from his bluegrass record, 2010’s “Up on the Ridge,” which he made after he felt he had hit a creative plateau in his career. His songs weren’t

hitting, he was opening tours instead of headlining them and he was banging his head against a wall trying to make things work.

“I felt really restrained on all levels, and I was like man, I gotta do something here,” he says. “I was going crazy.”

He re-entered the commercial country scene with “Home,” his 2012 release, which featured three songs — “Am I the Only One,” “Home” and “5-1-5-0” — which hit No. 1 on Billboard’s Country Airplay chart. (Another single, “Tip it on Back,” hit No. 5.) His philosophy on “Home” was to expand his reach, burrow into Nashville’s songwriting community and find songs that built into a cohesive whole.

“Nothing was mathematical about the decision, it was all from the heart, from the gut,” says the father of three, who married his childhood sweetheart, Cassidy Black, in 2005. “I felt like whatever I did, the songs needed to be great. Before, I had really put touring and albums in the same box. This time around I wanted to make great albums and not worry about whether they lead to successful tours or lead to anything, really. Just make great records, and if you do that, maybe the fans will follow you. And if not, you can always look back and say, ‘I made a great record.’ ”

The fans followed, and Bentley’s career picked up again. He released “Riser” in 2014, which featured the smash hit “Drunk on a Plane,” and last year brought “Black,” which was highlighted by the hits “Somewhere on a Beach” and the Elle King duet “Different for Girls.” Bentley’s been at it for long enough to know that careers ebb and flow, and he’s happy to be in the positive column these days.

“You’re either growing or dying, that’s just the way it goes,” he says.

Bentley has always been a lively stage presence, and he’s never been shy about drinking alcohol on stage.

“I try to meet my fans at least a quarter of the way,” he says, adding he’ll drink Jack Daniels but won’t “slow it down” by mixing it with Coca-Cola. “For me, it’s like walking into a bar where if you buy the bartender a shot, he’s going to take it. That makes it fun. The same thing goes with my show. It’s a party — hopefully with some heavy, meaningful songs mixed in — but for me, that’s part of the connection. I want to be your guy, I want to be your crazy bartender that will jump on stage, do a shot, sing a song and hang with you.”

In order to get to that level on stage, Bentley has a pre-show routine he abides by which includes dunking himself in a 65-gallon trash can full of ice cold water before every show. He spends 10-15 minutes inside, slowing his breathing and holding his breath for several minutes, which provides him with a mental cleanse and a way to find his center before going out and entertaining thousands of fans.

He learned the technique from a friend of his who turned him on to the teachings of Dutch “cold plunge therapy” advocate Wim Hof.

“I’d prefer not to pound four Red Bulls before I walk on stage. This is a way to get that energy in a more natural way,” says Bentley. “It’s one of those things that when you’ve been on the road as long as I have, you get into some pretty weird things.”