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Dierks Bentley's Seven Peaks Festival: 7 Reasons Why It's a Must-Attend Event



Dierks Bentley and Brian O'Connell during Seven Peaks Music Festival.

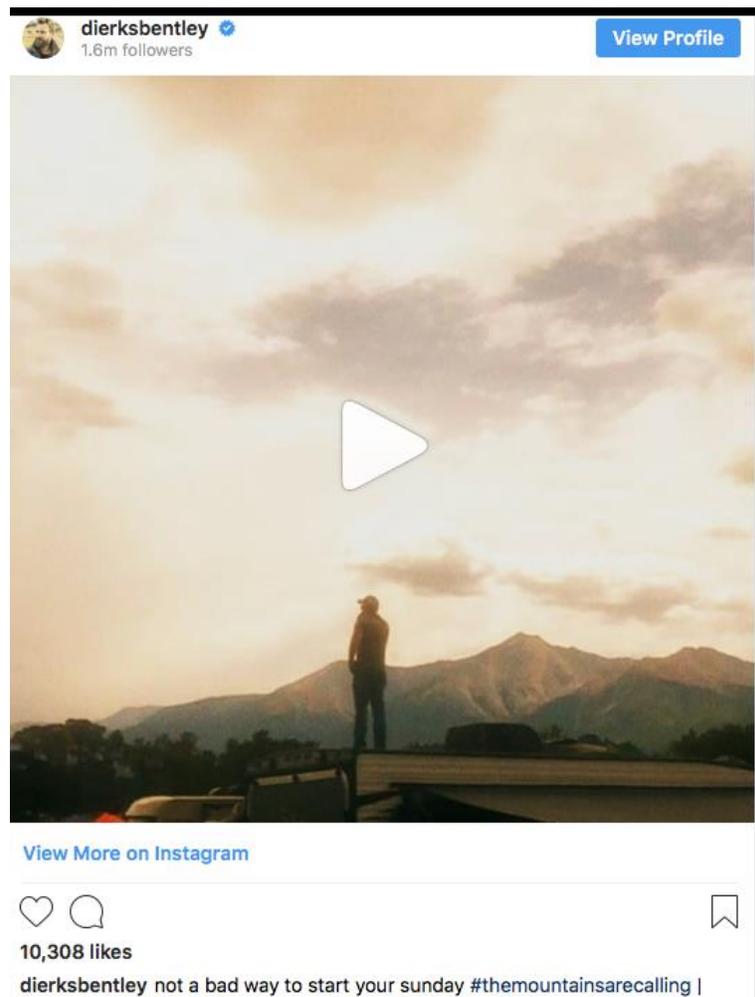
[Dierks Bentley](#) lived out a personal dream over Labor Day weekend, with the Seven Peaks Music Festival coming to life in stunning Buena Vista, Colorado. The inaugural fest went off without a hitch -- even avoiding looming thunderstorms in the weekend forecast -- and Dierks couldn't get over how perfect it came together. "It's totally exceeded my expectations," Bentley told *Billboard* backstage at the fest. "I'd been to the site three times before the actual festival, so I just saw it as a field, but to come back here now and see all the pieces and parts, it's like, 'Wow.' It just came together so well -- I feel kind of victorious."

Fans from 49 states came out to the first-ever Seven Peaks ("I wish I knew what that one state was," Dierks joked), coming together to create a festival that was as exciting as its setting. *Billboard* was on hand to experience what Bentley put together, and if the first year was any indication, Seven Peaks isn't a one-and-done kind of event.

Whether you were there too or hope to see what it's all about next year, take a look at some of the highlights from Seven Peaks Music Festival.

1. The views.

As the festival's name indicates, Buena Vista is surrounded by seven mountains, and Seven Peaks puts you right in the heart of the awe-inspiring scenery. There's nothing quite like waking up to the sun rising over mountaintops, and adding country music to the mix makes the setting even more serene.



2. The community feeling inside and outside of the festival.

Not only is the atmosphere amazing, but Dierks encourages festival attendees to get out and enjoy Buena Vista. Music doesn't start until mid-afternoon, which allows for fans to go hike the mountains or check out the shops and restaurants the city of Buena Vista has to offer. He even offered excursions for ziplining, white water rafting, and ATV riding to make the experience as simple as can be.

"There's a lot of people going to stores and businesses, so it's kind of cool to see that it's having a positive impact on the community," Bentley added. "Working with the community has been really fun -- a lot of happy people here."

3. The variety of entertainment.

Along with what's accessible outside of the festival grounds, Seven Peaks itself has so much to check out aside from the music. There's a man-made lake with food and hammocks to hang out in until the party gets started at 11 -- then it turns into a raging pre-party on the beach (Somewhere on a Beach, as the area is [aptly titled](#)). Dierks kept college football fans in mind too, with two game viewing tents that was especially important Friday night for the Rocky Mountain Showdown between Colorado State and University of Colorado Boulder. The music is equally varied: Though every artist on the inaugural bill technically classifies as country, the lineup spanned generations, introducing attendees to artists whether they're legendary like Clint Black or Terri

Clark or current hitmakers like Dan & Shay or Miranda Lambert -- also giving you a taste of Bentley's personal music interests.

4. The chance to meet Dierks.

Though the singer wasn't scheduled to make an appearance until his weekend-closing Sunday night set, fans were able to catch him all around the fest across the three days -- and he wasn't hesitant to say hey, sign autographs or take pictures. He was on hand to officially open the gates on Friday, playing some acoustic tunes for those who showed up early.

Later that night, Dierks popped on stage with Del McCoury Band and Clint Black, followed by a little DJing (and even some crowd surfing) at the after-party with his tour DJ, [Aydamn](#). He made another appearance with Aydamn at the Somewhere On a Beach party on Saturday, then joined Sam Bush, Kiefer Sutherland and Brothers Osborne during their sets. And even on his performance day Dierks was hopping around, playing with local group Rapidgrass and catching Dan & Shay's show just hours before his own.



5. The positive vibes.

With a setting as beautiful as it is laid back, nearly everyone in attendance was in a great mood and in the same mindset throughout the entire weekend. The staff were just as friendly and welcoming as fans were to each other, and it was clear the artists on stage were excited about being part of an inaugural festival during their sets. Frankly, it's hard not to be happy when you're listening to live music in perfect weather in a breathtaking setting.

"It has that mountain vibe," Bentley suggested. "It has a good flow to it, a good energy. It's just different than any other festival I've ever been to. Even the feel of backstage -- everyone's been sending me texts messages telling me how they've never played a festival that feels like this backstage ... I got a text from Mark Miller [lead singer of Sawyer Brown], and he said, 'Pal, I have to tell ya. I've been doing these festivals for a long time, and the vibe here was so cool. That comes from you my friend, well done.'"

6. The family-friendly atmosphere.

Aside from the occasional F-bombs dropped on stage, Seven Peaks was overall a nice atmosphere for all ages. The campground, the beach and inside the venue were all very spacious, and the music was about as innocent as it could've been -- well, other than Elle King's more rebellious lyrics, which even parents found more endearing than offensive.

7. The contagiousness of Dierks' energy.

Dierks [previously told Billboard](#) what a passion project this fest was for him, but it was easy to feel his excitement for a dream becoming reality once the fest was underway. If he wasn't making surprise appearances on stage with his fellow acts, Dierks was more than likely on the side of the stage taking in the music, even shining his flashlight and snapping video footage like all the fans in the crowd. And when it came time for him to perform, he showed zero signs of exhaustion despite his jam-packed weekend, running up and down the catwalk and giving fans one hell of an ending to a perfect weekend.

