

Tucson's Cowboy Connection

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Tuesday, 17 August 2010 08:43 - Last Updated Tuesday, 17 August 2010 08:56

Living in the Wild, Wild West used to mean cowboys, saddles and saloons. While some try to hold onto the cowboy culture, modern day has had its own influence in navigating people away from cow towns and toward malls, technology and luxury. This September, wannabe cowboys and spectators alike will have the opportunity to experience a true wild west event, The 95th Annual Sonoita Labor Day Rodeo.



Labor Day Weekend in Sonoita is synonymous with The 95th Annual Sonoita Labor Day Rodeo which will take place September 4-6 at the Sonoita Fairgrounds, 45 miles southeast of downtown Tucson in Southern Arizona's historic cattle country.

The hour drive south of Tucson leads enthusiastic culture seekers to a town that since 1915 has hosted this authentic Old West experience. Last year 700 cowboys and cowgirls competed in traditional rodeo events, including bull riding, bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, steer wrestling, and barrel racing; while dozens of young cowpokes wrestled with mutton busting and steer riding.

The event is all encompassing, not sending people home after the rodeo, but hosting traditional cowboy fare after the rodeo each day. This year's rodeo begins at 1 p.m. daily, followed by a steak fry and dancing to live music on Saturday and Sunday evenings.

Since the town of Sonoita is a steep hike from Tucson, accommodations are available within 1-15 miles. The Old West area's lodging options include the Sonoita Inn/Steak Out restaurant, Hacienda de Sonoita Bed and Breakfast Inn, and Spirit Tree Bed and Breakfast Inn.

Another options for spectators that want to harness the authentic cowboy experience is to sleep under the stars. Camping facilities are available at the fairgrounds, so bringing your own camping equipment might be a great way to sleep away each rodeo day.

Due to the time frame of the event and monsoons not being completely out of the clear, afternoon storms during this part of September are quite common. The presenters of the event recommend spectators bring rain gear for watching the event and for camping at the fairgrounds to ensure a smooth and fun experience.

To Learn More

For more details, call 520.455.5553 or visit www.sonoitafairgrounds.com.